

MONASH DEBATING

R e v i e w

vol. 8 2010

an annual
publication
of the
monash
association
of debaters

Proudly supported by

 MONASH University



It's amazing what a **DOODLE** can reveal:
 Imagination... Interests... Intelligence. In short,
 the things we look for in our lawyers.
 If that sounds like you, give us a call
 or visit our website.



Call us - 99r.com.au/careers

LEGAL PRACTICE
 Application of legal & practice
 legal practice & people

Introduction "Introduction and practice of law"
 Forensic

TEXT CODE 28
 28 132
 29 132

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| EDITORIAL | 5 |
| FEATURE ARTICLE | |
| There is no spoon: Beginner, intermediate and advanced first principles debating <i>/Tim Sonnreich</i> | 7 |
| DEBATING POLICY | |
| Liberal argument and its discontents <i>/Douglas Cochran</i> | 18 |
| The role of trust in political culture when teaching debate: the Kosovo Cas study <i>/ Leela Koenig & Maja Nenadovic</i> | 27 |
| Judging debates: a pragam-dialectical perspective <i>/ Daniel Schut</i> | 34 |
| Populism, debate and the Tea Party: how the appeal of populism seperates debate from the wider public <i>/ Daniel Berman</i> | 43 |
| The motion as koan: seeing debate as transformative practice <i>/ Stephen M Llano, Ph.D.</i> | 51 |
| RESULTS | 58 |

MONASH DEBATING REVIEW

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Harish Natarajan

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Pralabh Gupta

Andy Hume

Padraic Ryan

MARKETING/ORDERING MANAGER

Matthew Kokas

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Vice-Chancellor's Office, Monash University

Faculty of Law, Monash University

Monash Association of Debaters

Please address all correspondence to:

Monash Debating Review

PO BOX 10

Monash University

VIC 3800

Australia

Email: mdr.orders@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.monashdebaters.com/mdr>

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 8th edition of the Monash Debating Review. The MDR is a multi-disciplinary, peer reviewed journal that addresses issues of interest to debaters. Our International Editorial Board helped us solicit submissions from across the globe, and we hope that the MDR assists in furthering discussion among the debating community, and provides different perspectives on classic issues.

In this issue, Tim Sonnreich looks at how to make arguments from First Principles, and how understanding the basics of First Principles can help you become a better debater. Douglas Cochran looks Liberalism in debating, and ways to challenge it. He suggests some ways of deploying Marxist, Classical Conservative and Libertarian arguments. Daniel Schut introduces Pragma-Dialectics to the practice of judging debates, and shows how it can be useful. Reading these articles will be useful to debaters and judges of all levels of experience. They suggest new arguments, new approaches, and new ways to think about old issues.

The piece by Leela Koenig and Maja Nenadovic uncovers some of the problems teaching debating in Democratizing Countries. By looking at their experiences in Kosovo, they show some problems teaching debating that most of us will never experience. Daniel Berman's article looks at populism in debating. Drawing on the Tea Party Movement, and the US Debating Circuit, he looks at ways of understanding populism, and explains its limited appeal in Parliamentary Debating.

The final article, by Steve Llano, is something a little bit different from our other submissions. He looks at Zen Buddhism and debating. He argues that debating practice should extend to the transformation and improvement of the whole person. We are sure that you will all find it as interesting and stimulating as we did.

We hope that you all enjoy reading the articles, and find them varied, and adds to your understanding and appreciation of debating!

Regards,

Harish Natarajan, Editor, IONA
Paralabh Gupta, Associate Editor, Oceania
Andy Hume, Associate Editor, Asia
Padraic Ryan, Associate Editor, North America

FEATURE
ARTICLE

MONASH
DEBATING
ReviEw

THERE IS NO SPOON: BEGINNER, INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED FIRST PRINCIPLES DEBATING

About the author: *Tim Sonnreich* graduated from Monash University in 2008 with a MA (politics) and BA Hons (politics) and is currently employed as a Senior Advisor to the Premier of Victoria, the Hon. John Brumby MP.

During his time as an intervarsity debater Tim was a runner-up at the 2003 World Championships, three-time winner of the Australasian IV in 2000, 2001 and 2004 and twice best speaker in Australasia in 2002 and 2003. He has judged the grand final, and served as a deputy chief adjudicator of both competitions.

He is a Life Member of both the Monash Association of Debaters (MAD) and the Australasian Intersvarsity Debating Association (AIDA), having served in a variety of elected positions including as President of MAD and was the founding editor of the Monash Debating Review (MDR).

The concept of ‘first principles’ debating is gaining traction, particularly in Australasian debating, but as yet there no truly clear and comprehensive definition of the theory available for speakers or coaches.¹ That’s a great boon to those of us who are invited to provide training in distant and exotic lands, but at the cost of reduced consistency and access to the ideas. This article seeks to redress that by providing an overview of the core concepts, and demonstrating the progression from beginner to advanced skill sets. It should hopefully be useful to speakers and coaches alike.

Making Cases from First Principles

Many people reading this article may not be familiar with the term ‘first principles debating’, so it’s worth defining it before attempting to unpack it in detail. Essentially, first principles are a methodology for approaching topics and case construction when you lack a detailed understanding of the specific issues in the topic. The idea starts off quite simply, with some basic logical principles, and then becomes more complex as speakers gain experience.

¹ My own previous effort Introduction to Training Guide for University Debating: Tips, Tactics and First Principles is close but incomplete. My apologies to anyone who has compiled such a resource without my knowledge.

Basic first principles – logically consistent

▫

Basic First Principles has two key elements:

- (1) A good understanding of the principles of logic (i.e knowing how to show that an argument is logically flawed without knowing any facts about the issue).
- (2) A good understanding of the key concepts that form the fundamental ‘clash’ in the debate.

Novice debaters often think case building is simply an exercise in stacking together as many arguments as they can think of without necessarily having any clear organising principle or structure. Clearly this is a flawed strategy.

Therefore, the most basic first principles skill is applying a clear principle to your case. One of the first such ‘debating useful’ principles that people learn is the ‘role of government’, which can be characterised as the choice between ‘big government’ and ‘small government’.

‘Big government’ thinkers are conventionally on the Left, and want government to take a direct role in a range of social and economic issues, such as services like electricity and water, or regulating aspects of speech and behaviour in the interests of society as a whole. ‘Small government’ advocates tend to be on the Right and argue for government’s economic role to be minimal, replaced by the efficiencies of the private sector, and for individual liberties to override wider social concerns.

That’s about all you need to know to make a basic and logically consistent case for a wide range of topics, from privatisation to free speech, from gun ownership to gambling, and many more. As long as you can correctly identify which side of the debate fits most comfortably with the logic of either big or small government, then even if you know nothing of the successes or failures of privatised public services, you can build a case about why the government does or doesn’t have a role to play in directly providing those services.

Naturally, such a case would be unsophisticated, and unlikely to prevail against more experienced teams, but no other realistic strategy is likely to leave a novice team better off. The point is that your case will have core consistency, and for novices that is the crucial thing to master, as it forms the basis of more advanced techniques.

The next level of sophistication comes from recognising that structurally the number of debate-types is limited. A few examples of these debate-types are:

- Tradeoffs – choice between two objectively good, but zero-sum options
- Values – choice between two mutually hostile visions of what is right
- Cookie Cutters – debates where the same collection of issues repeat, across ostensibly dissimilar issues

A classic example of a Tradeoff is Efficiency versus Accountability. If you were designing a government you would surely think both these concepts were crucial, but the reality is that in many instances efforts to increase one of these values necessitates a reduction in the other.

Consider the choice between unicameral and bicameral parliaments. Theoretically, a unicameral parliament is more efficient at decision making, but a bicameral parliament allows for greater accountability. It's a subjective question of which arrangement best suits the country in question. The same tradeoff applies to a range of politically themed topics, while other tradeoffs, such as equity versus efficiency cover off on a range of economics topics, etc.

However, the Values debate-type is a different style of topic, with the two competing values systems rather than a tradeoff between two objectively good choices. Stripped of all the hyperbole and practical limitations a death penalty debate is a clash of values – fundamentally you either think it's right and proper for the state to kill criminals or you don't, you must support one value to the exclusion of the other.

Finally, there are Cookie Cutters, which are cases which have reoccurring constellations (rather than just a single core difference like in Tradeoffs) of arguments in otherwise seemingly different topics. Ban versus Regulate debates are the best example – whether its drugs, gambling, prostitution, etc, similar arguments repeat (protection of consumers, quality of product, taxation of product, minimising harm, etc).

These are just three examples, and not every topic fits conveniently into one of these moulds, but many do, and for the novice speaker these basic insights can reduce the seeming randomness of topics and help them to leverage what little experience they do have in a logically consistent way.

Intermediate First Principles – Spectrum of Ideas

Basic first principles helps to give new debaters confidence and consistency. However, this approach also risks oversimplification, with speakers looking for binary dichotomies in every topic. While these crude cases are far superior to the disorganised aggregation of ideas they replaced, they will remove too much of the art and strategy of case construction by blinding teams to the options available to them in the topic.

Therefore the aim of intermediate first principles is to broaden speaker's ideological horizons, revealing the gradation of options from moderate to headline that exist on both sides of the topic.

The simplest way to illustrate this is through a spectrum of ideas, with the most polar opposite views on either end, and more moderate positions closer to the centre. This is a method used by many academics to show the range of views in a given discipline. One example I give is a bastardized version of the spectrum of views on environmental politics I was taught as an undergraduate by Prof. Robyn Eckersley. With apologies to the professor I sometimes summarize her spectrum as this:

First Principles: Environmental Politics

Ecocentric views ----- Anthropocentric views
Deep Green Ecology ----- Sustainable Development ----- Technological Ecology

The further 'left' you travel, the more you move into the traditional environmentalist perspective, basically the view that the environment's true value cannot be expressed in monetary terms, and that animals and even ecosystems should be protected because of their intrinsic value. On the 'right' is a more human-centred ethic that respects the environment but gives preference to human needs and interests, and sees the environment in essentially instrumental terms – the environment is important because of what it does (eg. produce fresh water), not what it is. These benefits can often be monetized and commoditized, which helps to judge when it should be protected or exploited. Unsurprisingly, the middle position seeks a balance of both philosophies, recognising that while it is not inappropriate in principle to seek to exploit environmental resources, commoditising nature is a cause way of assigning value.

To briefly illustrate this, consider topics regarding the commercial trade in endangered species, the most common version of this is probably commercial whaling, but it could also be the ivory trade in Africa², or less well know issues like the coral trade³, are all cookie cutters that come from the environmental politics spectrum. Assuming both sides accept that the species in question is endangered, then both will likely agree that conversation is important. But how can we best protect them?

² While stocks last, The Economist online, 16/3/10

www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=15712922

³ Victoria Gomelsky, "Jewellers Divided Over Use of Coral", International Herald Tribune, 8/12/09

www.nytimes.com/2009/12/08/business/global/08iht-rbogcoral.html

Deep Green Ecologists will all say that making the species commercially available is a mistake. Endangered species should be protected, through a ban on their harvesting and trade, plus protection for their natural habitats. No level of profit or human enjoyment can justify risking the extinction of an important species. Technological ecologists will say that giving them a commercial value helps to protect them.

Without the ability to profit from them, local people/government's have no incentive (or obvious source of revenue) to protect them. But if you making your living from selling a given species then you have a strong incentive to do so sustainably. The market is self-regulating – the less there are, the more they are worth, the more incentive to invest in protecting them. Sustainable Development theory would look for a way to balance the environmental and human needs – probably through some kind of quota system, as currently exists for various fisheries industries around the world. Each of those debates is a little different, but at its core, the fundamental clash is the same.

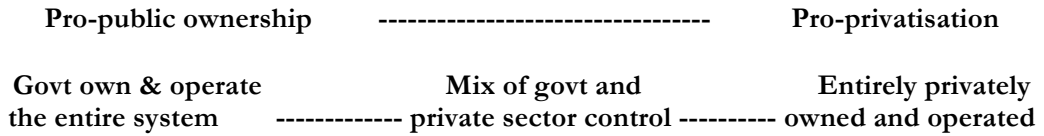
From that example, it should be easy to think of how you would run a case on whether mining should be allowed in ecologically sensitive areas, whether the topic is about drilling for oil in Alaska, or controversy over the proposed Crucitas open cut gold mine in Costa Rica.⁴ The ideological options are essentially the same, regardless of how much you know about either of those issues. That's the essence of first principles.

That's very helpful if you've had the lecture (preferably by Prof. Eckersley) and have a good idea of the principles on which each of those ideologies operates, but what do you do if you don't have any such background?

Well you should be able to intuit the key points of the spectrum through logical inference. To stick with one of the earlier examples I used, privatisation, for any given service or asset in question, the spectrum of views on privatising it should be obvious. The spectrum is really all the possible answers to the central question of the debate – should the government own and operate its public services? Broadly there are really only three answers to that question – yes, no and sometimes:

⁴ Leslie Josephs, "Costa Rica gold mine stalled by environmental claims", Reuters, 26/4/10
www.reuters.com/article/idUSN2614311620100426

First Principles: Privatisation



So thinking about the topic from (intermediate) first principles reveals all the options for both your team and your opposition. The wording of the topic will determine which team has the option of the middle position. Those choices are profoundly significant strategic decisions for teams, but they are revealed with little or no specific knowledge of the issues, just the application of logic.

Of course that's not to say there is no value to research and specific knowledge – it is incredibly valuable, but you don't need it to construct a valid and consistent case. However, since you can construct various models for each of those positions, and the subtle differences in them might affect your arguments, you now know what to research (i.e. models of full government ownership and operation, hybrid models and fully privatised models) which is a lot more effective than simply researching 'privatization' and hoping you cover all the issues.

Effective research will reveal a plethora of options for models. For instance, transport academic Paul Mees' recent book 'Transport for Suburbia'⁵ included a spectrum with seven options for models (three kinds of government operations models, two hybrids public/private models and two forms of entirely private ownership), but the differences between the three kinds of government operations models only really matter in real world of public policy making and are unlikely to be relevant in the more limited context of a debate. Knowing all seven of those options might give you some useful ideas, but I would be surprised if a pro-public ownership team ever had need to clarify whether they were proposing the "public transport federation or verkehrsverbund" model or the "public corporation" model (options 3 and 2 on Mees' spectrum respectively). Similarly, there are other positions on Eckersley's spectrum, but the additional distinctions are too fine to be picked up in the vast majority of environment topics at debating tournaments.

The key difference between basic and intermediate first principles is nuance. Basic first principles seek to draw the clearest black and white distinctions between the two teams, but intermediate first principles introduce a little grey. But why does that matter? How does it help you?

⁵ Mees, Paul, 'Transport for Suburbia'; Beyond the Automobile Age, Earthscan, London, 2010, p.72-75.

The benefits are three fold, firstly if you know all the options for your case then you can choose the version of your argument that you think is strongest. Secondly, you'll know what your opponent's options are, and that allows you to quickly identify their case from the earliest point in the debate, and to know exactly how it differs from yours. That will affect your tone and your prioritisation of issues. Finally it gives you a more refined version of the benefit that comes from basic first principles. Basic first principles gives you a clear principle to build your case on – so you know what you can agree with, and what you have to oppose. Understanding the spectrum develops this skill further, so you should always know how to react to an argument (or importantly, how to respond to an unexpected POI or definition).

Advanced First Principles – Spectrum of World Views

While intermediate first principles has a significant degree of nuance that is absent in basic first principles, it still suffers from oversimplification of ideas. Take the environment politics spectrum described above. Each of those points on the spectrum is a legitimate and well constructed philosophy, but in the real world very few people conform entirely to such easy categorisation of their views. They are, in essence, characterisations of how people might choose to see the world, but the world is too complicated for any one theory or philosophy to point the way on every issue. It's a point comedian Chris Rock makes well, if crudely:

“The whole country's got a screwed up up mentality. We all got a gang mentality. Republicans are idiots. Democrats are idiots. Conservatives are idiots and liberals are idiots.

Anyone who makes up their mind before they hear the issue is a fool. Everybody, nah, nah, nah, everybody is so busy wanting to be down with a gang! I'm a conservative! I'm a liberal! I'm a conservative!

Be a person. Listen! Let it swirl around your head. Then form your opinion. No normal, decent person is one thing. Ok I got some stuff I'm conservative about, I got some shit I'm liberal about. Crime - I'm conservative. Prostitution - I'm liberal.”⁶

If all you have is basic first principles skills then you can get away with running a case based on crude big/small government thinking, but you'd be better off with a more nuanced position such as you would find if you plotted the intermediate first principles spectrum for the debate. But similarly, you would be better off again if you had a fully nuanced worldview. Not just a philosophy but a set of principles mediated by real world considerations, because then you

⁶ Chris Rock Never Scared, HBO, 2004.

truly have principled and practical arguments that are consistent and well considered.

That does not mean that you always abandon the more hardline views for the centre of the spectrum, it means understanding what that there is always a range of equally philosophically valid options available to you in any topic, so you should choose the one that best suits the context – the specific topic, the strengths and weaknesses of your team, etc.

In the case of the environment spectrum there are many examples of this. Nuclear power is an extremely common topic, and ostensibly the affirmative and negative teams' cases should slot nicely into the spectrum I described earlier, with the anti-nuclear team taking up a 'deep-green' position, and the pro-nuclear team choosing one of the other positions, but most likely a technological ecologist position (which advocates for technological solutions to environmental problems like pollution). Such a debate would work well, both teams would understand and be clearly differentiated from their opponent. But in the real world the debate isn't always as neatly defined as that. Certainly most deep green ecologists oppose nuclear power, but they don't all do so and those that don't are able to reconcile their support for nuclear with their eco-centric worldview. An example of this is the noted author and environmentalist James Lovelock who is as much a deep green ecologist as any member of Greenpeace, but who supports nuclear power because he sees it as necessary to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change.⁷

He acknowledges the parochial risks of nuclear energy, but sees protection of a stable climate as an over-riding concern, and doesn't see alternative policies as viable without nuclear power. In other words he supports nuclear power because he's deep-green, not in spite of it. If climate change didn't exist he'd oppose nuclear for the usual reasons, but since it does exist it's the pre-eminent environmental concern.

Why does this matter? How is it superior to intermediate first principles? Well firstly by definition a worldview is more practical than an ideology. As Homer Simpson famously opined, "Marge, I agree with you - in theory. In theory, communism works. In theory".⁸ A consistent principle is crucial for a strong case, but that's the beginning of case construction, not the end. The other ingredient in a strong case is clear and practical benefits. Advanced first principles encourages you to not only know what you are (deep green ecologist,

⁷ Lovelock, James, "Nuclear power is the only green solution", The Independent, 24/5/04, available at www.jameslovelock.org/page11.html

⁸ The Simpsons, "Bart Gets an Elephant", Episode 15, Season 5.

etc) but to know who you are (Lovelock, etc) which is more difficult, but much more potent.

In the earlier discussion of intermediate first principles I argued that there was a little value to further breaking down the spectrum beyond three or four key positions, and yet advanced first principles is about finding extra nuance. This apparent contradiction is easily resolved. Further fragmentation of the intermediate spectrum beyond three or four key points is ill-advised because the new points on the spectrum you would create are too similar to the existing points to be of any use (one legal structure for full privatisation of public transport, is effectively the same as any other in a debate because you never really get into that sort of detail). But advanced first principles are useful modifications or variations to those intermediate points – not wholly new and discrete points on the spectrum. So a deep green ecologist that can support nuclear power is a useful variant, but only in one instance (the instance where you need to defend nuclear power), whereas points on the intermediate spectrum are useful in a wide variety of topics.

How can you learn the appropriate worldviews for any given first principles spectrum? Unfortunately here is where the limits of pure logic are reached. The only way to learn that within the deep-green point of the spectrum there is a Lovelock version and say a George Monbiot version (who says that nuclear power is “second from last in my list of preferences” for energy systems, just ahead of coal⁹) is to read. But again, the spectrum helps because it tells you what the broad options are, and then you can progressively research variations on the core principles to suit particular topics. So while in a debate about traditional conservation issues (eg. whaling) there is unlikely to be any useful variation to the orthodox deep-green perspective, but in a debate about nuclear power as a solution to climate change, there are differences and knowing them gives you more options for how to frame your case.

It’s worth remembering the point of having a basic and intermediate levels of first principles, when clearly advanced first principles is the most effective technique. It’s not a choice between the levels, it’s an expectation that people will progress through them with effort and experience. The basic level is a way for novice debaters to quickly improve their case construction skills through the application of a small number of ideas. Once mastered, the speaker can develop more complex intermediate skills, but still the purpose is to find a ‘shortcut’, to compensate for the speakers lack of detailed knowledge about the specifics of any given topic. But finally, at the most advanced levels speakers are confident enough about their intermediate skills to allow for some attention to be given to

⁹ Monbiot, George, *Heat: How to Stop a Planet Burning*, Allan Lane, Victoria, 2006, p.99.

studying arguments specific to a small number of topics – the luxury that novices couldn't afford because of the diversity and unpredictability of topics they face.

Ultimately that's what first principles are about – giving teams more options for building their case, so they can make the best strategic choice. In its advanced form it should also mean that debates are as closely grounded in the real-world policy discussions as possible. That's important if you think debating is fundamentally a training ground for good citizens – people who have well considered opinions and are capable to persuading others to agree with them. It's also important if you want to have complex, nuanced and challenging debates. These are difficult techniques to master, but the rewards are more than worth it.

DEBATING POLICY

MONASH DEBATING Review

LIBERAL ARGUMENT AND ITS DISCONTENTS

About the author: Douglas Cochran is an LLM student at Cambridge University. He has Undergraduate degrees from Cambridge in Law, and from St Andrews in International Relations and Economics.

As a debater Doug is a twice World Semi Finalist, a European Finalist. He has judged the grand final of Worlds, and served as a deputy chief adjudicator of the 2010 European Championships.

Most university debaters on IONA¹ could probably be identified as ‘liberals’. Inter-varsity debating in these Isles tends to attract and reward a certain type of worldview² consistent with the traditions of liberal thought. This is not to suggest that all debaters are themselves liberals (some are religious conservatives, for example), or that illiberal arguments are de facto inadmissible; but liberal ideals shape the default assumptions that most debaters and judges apply. Challenging the liberal paradigm is possible, but difficult. Debaters aiming to garner the maximum number of points are generally better served to ‘play it safe’ and offer liberal arguments.

There is undoubtedly something to be regretted about the near-monopoly that liberal discourse holds over contemporary debating. If all teams readily agree (implicitly or explicitly) to adopt a liberal perspective, debates risk some of their potential richness and complexity. Worse still, constant reaffirmation, rather than re-examination, of the basic precepts of liberal thought can serve as a prophylactic against critically examining (and potentially adopting) illiberal viewpoints. Inter-varsity debating in the English-speaking world thus risks duplicating the poverty of argument seen in its contemporary politics.

This paper seeks to outline a number of alternative ideological paradigms and their challenges to liberal hegemony. We assess their utility and limitations within the context of Inter-varsity debating.

The liberal paradigm

Broadly speaking, the liberal debating paradigm appeals exclusively to reason, as opposed to tradition or revelation, in defence of claims. The liberal debater holds that individual, as opposed to people groups or ideals³, and their worlds

¹ Islands Of the North Atlantic: Great Britain and Ireland.

² A similar claim could be made for university debating societies worldwide; the author’s debating experience have been largely confined to the UK and Ireland.

³ This is not to say that the liberal debater regards people groups or ideals as worthless, merely that she is reluctant to ascribe value to them as such, and analyses them through the lens of personal experiences.

of conscious experience are the only possible subject matter of value. The liberal paradigm asserts that the proper role of the state is to facilitate the progress of individuals towards the outcomes, and experiences, that they themselves have declared to be meaningful.

To an extent, narrowing debates to focus on the liberal paradigm is inevitable. The topics selected by most adjudication teams will generally offer ample room for presenting a range of alternative liberal theories. But the confines of a five or seven minute speech rarely allow a debater to critique the prevailing paradigm and to prove why their alternative framework demands a certain stance on the motion⁴.

Furthermore, as most debaters adhere to a broadly liberal worldview, debates held within the liberal tradition are most likely to provide arguments that are either congruent with the participants' existing beliefs or credible substitutes for them. This can serve to make the experience of debating a tool for honing and developing one's own views, rather than simply a game of intellectual showmanship.

The liberal tradition and libertarianism

If 'liberal' thought is the governing tradition of Inter-varsity debating, then 'libertarianism' must be a strong candidate for the official opposition. As with the term 'liberal', use of the term 'libertarian' is fraught with difficulty, as it is used to represent a diverse constellation of viewpoints⁵. The Anglo-American tradition of libertarianism is perhaps the most familiar to university debaters. It can provide an attractive intellectual toolbox for those seeking paradigmatic challenges to liberal hegemony.

Libertarian challenges owe much of their attraction to the fact that they require only a limited departure (and many would say no departure at all) from the liberal tradition. Indeed, some exponents of libertarian thought⁶ openly acknowledge their debts to their liberal progenitors and style themselves as the rightful heirs to their legacy. Sharing many of the same assumptions as their liberal counterparts and relatively well-known to the educated layperson, libertarian arguments can be readily deployed in debates with a little or no need to establish entirely fresh premises.

⁴ See Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (1988) for a full discussion of the way time limits lead to reproduction of dominant paradigms

⁵ Anarcho-syndicalists, and other anti-statists of the radical left will often embrace the label 'libertarianism', as well. For the sake of clarity, this article will not refer to such thought as 'libertarian'.

⁶ see Milton Friedman's *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962). He eschewed the label of 'libertarian', preferring to self-identify as a 'liberal' or a 'classical liberal.'

Libertarians share the liberal's adherence to individualism and its tolerance toward differing accounts of the good life. They break with the liberal utilitarian tradition of Bentham, Mill, and Sidgwick. To liberal utilitarians, legal orders that afford individuals a wide range of autonomous choice are justified as they are more likely to produce happiness, pleasure, or utility. As Gordon Scott (1991: 256) explains, "One should note that John Mill did not defend freedom of thought and expression on the ground that man has a 'natural right' to them or because they are intrinsically good in themselves. The argument is utilitarian; these freedoms are useful."⁷

To the libertarian rights are not established because they make society a happier place (though they may very well do that⁸); they are the political parallel to the entitlements owed to each individual by dint of their personhood. When present, a legitimate right renders null and void any discussion of social interest or utility maximisation. Rights are to be vindicated, whatever the cost to others.

In their absolutist defence of rights, libertarians find common cause with that branch of Kantian liberalism⁹ which sees rights as necessary weapons to defend individual dignity against the encroachment of state power. Liberal defences of absolute rights tend to emphasize the uniqueness and dignity of every person. Individuals' rights, properly conceived, are not subject to trade-offs against others, because each individual is rightly viewed as an end rather than a means - for whom do they garner utility if not for themselves? To Dostoevsky's famous question about the permissibility of torturing one person to purchase bliss for the whole world, the rights-conscious liberal would reply that such an arrangement would be unjust as a universe abounding in utility would be no compensating advantage to the individual who is tortured. Each world of perceptive experience created by a human life is unique, and no means yet devised can absorb the pleasure and pain experienced by multiple persons, because the means of weighing pleasure and pain is the individual, herself. As such, interpersonal utility tradeoffs are impossible to justly procure.

Libertarians break decisively from liberals by their insistence that property rights ought to be accorded the same inviolability afforded to personal rights such as freedom of religion and bodily integrity. They argue that the appropriation of an individual's property is morally indistinct from seizing the

⁷ H. Scott Gordon *The History and Philosophy of Social Science* (1991)

⁸ Some who self-identify as libertarians do so exclusively on the perceived utilitarian merits of a society that offers a robust defence of individual rights and a laissez- economic order. I would prefer to classify such persons as 'free market liberals' on the basis that their methodology is liberal rather than utilitarian, they simply have different empirical beliefs about the benefits of the free market economy to many of their fellow liberals.

⁹ Endorsed by John Rawls and Ronald Dworkin, among others.

labour that she used to produce that property (slavery¹⁰). Here we have possibly the greatest obstacle to the successful employment of libertarian analysis in debates. The idea that taxation is a form of slavery is simply incongruent with the intuitions of most liberal debaters.

Moreover, libertarianism is particularly vulnerable because of the absolutist claims to property that it makes. If the worker's wage or the capitalist's profit is not entirely his, his claim to it is not one of absolute right but one of many claims to be considered and weighed. Once property is recognised as the locus of legitimate competing rights claims, then the libertarian has already lost.

Further compounding the inherent vulnerability of the libertarian position, the structure of Inter-varsity debating generally favours those arguing against libertarian principles. Numerous challenges to absolutist conceptions of property rights can be mustered and deployed quickly and efficiently. For example:

- 1) Natural resources are the common heritage of humanity. Nothing in our personhood gives us the right to exclusive use of a scarce resource.
- 2) Property doesn't do justice to generations as yet unborn, who have no chance to claim resources that are currently being monopolised by those currently living (even if they did have a right to them).
- 3) Government protects property from outsiders and thus demands some share in it. Those who benefit most from state protection (the rich) should pay the most in taxes.
- 4) Common goods (e.g. a healthy environment) will only be provided by a society where government controls property (at least to some extent).
- 5) Each individual was cared for in their infancy and thus bears some responsibility to the society that protected him.

Clever libertarians can (and have) marshalled rebuttals to these arguments, but the responses that libertarians give are generally more complex¹¹ than the challenges and less intuitive to most judges.

Thus, in a seven-minute speech, libertarian arguments are at a distinct disadvantage; the libertarian debater must generally refute all challenges to the absolutism of property rights in order to win the point. His critic needs only to

¹⁰ See Nozick (1974) *Anarchy, State and Utopia*

¹¹ See the work Michael Otsuka's (2003) *Libertarianism with Inequality* for a thoughtful defence of left-libertarianism against its liberal critics.

cheapen that claim at one vulnerable point to win. As a result, libertarian-minded debaters aiming for to break are probably best served to concentrate on liberal arguments for free-market economics.

Fortunately, most libertarians (e.g. Milton Friedman, Ayn Rand) also supply a range of plausible arguments as to why liberalized markets generally contribute to human freedom and the general prosperity. Improvements to human freedom and social welfare will generally be more persuasive as reasons for decision to a judge than absolutism claims concerning property rights.

Classical Conservatism

If it is difficult to discern a distinctly conservative¹² debating tradition, this may be due to the fact that scholars have consistently struggled to offer an agreed definition of what it is to be a conservative. To some thinkers of the Right, conservatism is less a set of policies than a political disposition ‘to prefer the tried to the untried, fact to mystery, the actual to the possible, the limited to the unbounded, the near to the distant, the sufficient to the superabundant, the convenient to the perfect, present laughter to utopian bliss.’¹³ To other conservatives, such as the disciples of Edmund Burke, conservatism consists of defending the role of non-state associations (families, communities, religious organizations) as necessary tools for the maintenance of social order.¹⁴ Conservatives are not, however, anarchists, and tend to see the institution of law as a necessary complement to religious teaching, parental authority, and community values.

Despite its innumerable variants, nearly all conservative philosophy has one particular feature in common: it is extremely difficult to successfully employ within the context of an Inter-varsity debate. The reasons for this are fairly obvious; it would be difficult to imagine a debating culture that deferred to tradition, authority, or religious revelation as reasons for decision, unless that debating circuit was entirely composed of members who accepted one particular tradition as authoritative (e.g. Roman Catholics). So long as Inter-varsity debating continues to be a cross-cultural phenomenon, certain liberal precepts will probably inform the structure of argument¹⁵.

¹² As distinct from libertarianism or market conservatism more generally. Conservatives of the Burkean tradition generally allow some role for relative free markets as a means of generating wealth, but they are often suspicious of the market’s impact on social relationships and traditional allegiances.

¹³ Oakshott, Michael (1956) ‘On Being a Conservative’ in *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays* (London: Methuen, 1962),

¹⁴ Roger Scruton’s *The Meaning of Conservatism* offers an accessible account of the Burkean tradition.

¹⁵ See Eusebius McKaiser’s article in vol. 7 of the MDR on the fate of conservative argumentation for more on this theme.

Moreover, the context of a motion will generally force the government team to propose some sort of state action (or philosophical precept by which state action could be informed), which creates a state-centric discourse within the debating community. As such, though debaters are usually willing to accept that state authority ought to be curtailed when the scale of governmental coercion causes immense suffering, they are less willing to accept that certain spheres of life are inherently beyond the purview societal control (e.g. parental authority over children or intimate relationships) and therefore not the rightful subject matter of legislation.

Thus, when conservative doctrines are employed successfully, they are usually explained as pre-existing attitudes that ought to be respected rather than the ideals of a utopian society. A straightforward example of this would be making an argument for the preservation of retributive justice in the penal system on the basis that a non-retributive penal system would excite a desire for vigilante justice amongst the aggrieved citizenry. In other words, though it may be difficult for debaters to argue that conservative thinking is correct, they may have occasion to suggest that it is prevalent, and that the ability of the state to liberalise contemporary values through legislation may be limited.

Again- and more controversially- whether or not women are inherently better suited to care for children than men are, a society which believes that women make better parents may be one in which women (as a result of their upbringing) feel a stronger obligation than men to care for children and will be under stronger social pressure than men to do so, thereby making them more effective parents¹⁶. In short, conservative values (like any values) can often be performative: belief in them may actually make them true.

The God that failed: Marxism's false start

Given the alignment of many Inter-varsity debaters with the politics of the left and their exposure to the thinking of contemporary academia, one would expect the liberal tradition to come under scrutiny from adherents of a Marxist point of view.

Contemporary practice, however, shows this not to be the case. Quite possibly, many debaters are simply not equipped with a sufficiently robust knowledge of Marxist thinking to employ such argumentation in a debate. Given the daunting scope and theoretical complexity of Marxist thinking, those with merely a lay

¹⁶ Obviously, there are very strong reasons not to perpetuate gender norms which see childcare as exclusively 'women's work', even if this leads to short-term gains in the quality of childcare provided.

interest in political philosophy may feel that even the rudiments of Marxist criticism would be beyond them. Even if such critiques could be articulated, debaters may fear that their arguments would do little to persuade a liberal judging panel.

Perhaps more critical to the fate of Marxist argumentation is the fact that most debating traditions (British Parliamentary, American Parliamentary) allow proposition or government teams the benefit of fiat, or an absolute license to craft the world in a manner conducive to the fulfilment of the motion. Thus, if the motion is THB: That the USA should immediately end all military and economic assistance to Israel, it is generally impermissible for opposition teams to argue that the American government would be very unlikely to do such a thing.

The rationale for such a rule is perfectly sensible. Fiat rules prevents debates disintegrating into mere jousts over political analysis. Moreover, in a debating culture without fiat rules, there would be very few topics that could be guaranteed to past muster- those motions that stayed within the frontiers of policymakers' explicit agendas- thereby winnowing down the potential subject matter available for debate to rather mundane questions about the optimal distribution pattern for public services and dead peoples' organs.

The difficulty that this creates for Marxist debaters is that much of the most insightful Marxist analysis concerns the impossibility of achieving liberal goals, not their undesirability, per se. Thus, many government teams will tout the ability of certain policies to significantly reduce economic inequality or to improve the long-term welfare of the poor. To many Marxists, the contradictions inherent within global capitalism and the realities of class struggle will prevent governments from adopting such egalitarian measures, but fiat prevents them from demonstrating the veracity of their claim. As a result, Marxist analysis is far more prevalent on the circuit than Marxist argumentation.

Many successful debaters are more than able to launch criticisms using Marxist ideas and language, without adopting a purely Marxist critique. Thus, concepts like 'false consciousness'¹⁷, 'emancipatory violence'¹⁸, or 'alienation' can be used to discuss the failures of the capitalist order, even if the teams appropriating the

¹⁷ The theory that material and institutional processes in capitalists society are misleading; representations of the social relations systematically conceal or obscure the realities of subordination and exploitation. For instance, a Marxist analysis may suggest that social relations and ideology has naturalised the belief that a women's place is in the home. Some women may thus suffer from exploitation and subordination without realising it.

¹⁸ Certain states of the world are taken to be pre-political and natural, hence are unchallenged by the exploited. Violence can shatter that worldview. See Fanon's (1962) *The Wretched of the Earth* for more details.

language of Marxism are only interesting in altering, rather than abolishing, the capitalist order.

Nonetheless, undiluted Marxist argumentation can still have a place in the post-fiat world. Though proposition teams are allowed sufficient fiat to pass whatever legislation they like, they are generally not permitted to claim fiat for any subsequent actions, unless those actions can be said to be inherent to the motion itself (e.g. the policy receiving approval from constitutional courts as well as passing the legislature). Any other subsequent behaviours, either by the actor named in the motion or other actors, are not given the benefit of fiat but must be proven by the teams to be a likely consequence of the policy (e.g. reduced US support for Israel resulting in improved relations between the US and certain Arab states). The post-fiat world, then, is assumed to be controlled by status quo forces, tempered only by the demonstrable effects of the motion's enactment. Thus, when faced with the motion THW: Allow parents full genetic control of their children, opposition teams can argue that passing this motion will allow wealthy, upper-class parents the ability to solidify their position of privilege by using their superior resources to obtain the best available genetic improvements, thereby gaining near-exclusive access to positional goods and ensuring a self-perpetuating retrenchment of class privilege¹⁹.

Moving Forward: Thinking Inside a Bigger Box

Inter-varsity debating is likely to continue being a game played by liberal rules. Those arguments that seem to critique liberalism generally offer another account of liberalism, rather than an illiberal worldview. A number of reforms to the activity, however, might help the debating community to broaden its horizons. Adjudication teams could seek to set motions that explicitly challenge liberal norms (eg THB Overwhelming social disgust is a sufficient reason for the censorship of art) Motions that can be supported and opposed entirely in liberal terms, generally, will be. To see extra-liberal thinking in action, adjudication teams could use knockout-round motions as a means of presenting the debating community with challenging topics that force at least one side to substantially depart from the liberal tradition.

To some extent debating will always be a liberal activity. The values of its participants, the norms of their political cultures, and the relatively short timeframe given for speeches all limit the distance from liberalism that we can expect to see on display within the confines of an Inter-varsity tournament. Perhaps the greatest hope for exposing debaters to a variety of philosophical

¹⁹This point was successfully argued by the team in first opposition in the ESL Final of the 2009 European Debating Championships on the same motion.

viewpoints comes from the ability of Inter-varsity debating to unite an otherwise disparate group of individuals who have expressed an interest in explaining, clarifying, and amending their views. If the debating chamber remains the preserve of liberal thinking, the foyer outside is an ideological no-man's-land. But the frontier where the great advances in the community's thinking may yet be found.

THE ROLE OF TRUST IN POLITICAL CULTURE WHEN TEACHING DEBATE: THE KOSOVO CASE STUDY

About the authors: *Leela Koenig* is finishing an MA in Applied Ethics and is about to enroll into an MPhil program on Moral Philosophy at the University of Edinburgh. She was the Chief Adjudicator of Amsterdam Euros 2010 and held dozens of CA and DCA positions around Europe. As a debater for the Leiden Debating Union, she broke at many tournaments, is a Euros quarterfinalist and she was best ESL speaker at Tallinn Euros 2008 and Koç Euros 2007 as well as best ESL speaker of Corks Worlds in 2009.

Maja Nenadović is a doctoral candidate at the European Studies Department, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Her research focuses on the development of democratic political parties and party systems in post-conflict internationally administered countries, provisionally titled "Installing Democracy in the Balkans: Assisting Political Parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo." When not busy with research and writing, she is a freelance consultant in public speaking, advocacy, campaigning, strategic planning and fundraising in the civil society sector. In the past decade, she has founded several debating societies and clubs across Europe and actively continues to coach debate.

This article draws on debate training experience that took place in Prishtina Kosovo, in the summer of 2008. As part of the effort to jumpstart debate in Prishtina's universities we held a workshop introducing the British Parliamentary debate format to students. Soon into the training it became apparent that certain underlying preconditions are essential in order to have a debate at all.

To debate government and opposition roles, participants need to understand the formal role these occupy in a democratic system. Further, and more crucially, they should trust that these roles will be performed. Any debater needs to be under the assumption that governments indeed perform their roles, but little did we know how the structural failure of a government to function in such a manner would, for example, affect the ability of a participant to set up a simple first proposition case.

Teaching debate in substantially different political contexts can be a great challenge for coaches. The purpose of this article is to discuss these challenges and offer suggestions for dealing with them. Although this article was inspired by our experiences in Kosovo, its findings are applicable to a wide array of cases, such as teaching debate in post-conflict societies or authoritarian/totalitarian regimes. The suggestions offered here are simply a starting point for developing a method for preparing to teach debate in areas where there is little faith in government.

We start with a brief description of Kosovo's problematic political culture, after which we describe what took place during our training. We then describe how a lack of trust in one's government affects a beginner's ability to debate. Lastly, we offer a few suggestions on how to deal with such a situation as a coach.

Kosovo

When our debate training took place in July 2008, Kosovo had declared its independence five months earlier. It has the youngest population in Europe – the average age of the two million inhabitants is estimated at twenty-five. These young people are facing grim prospects; an official unemployment rate of 40%, visa-restricted travel and continued uncertainty regarding Kosovo's status in the international system.¹

In terms of the prevailing norms, values and attitudes of both people towards their political elites, and among politicians themselves, Kosovo's political culture is directly influenced by decades of clandestine movement for independence which was closely linked with, if not synonymous with, organized crime networks in both the Balkans and in Kosovo Albanian diaspora communities living abroad. Think-tank analysts, academics, military investigators and journalists all paint Kosovo as “a clan-based society in which a handful of criminal leaders controls the population – and are tolerated by bureaucrats from Europe and the rest of the world...”²

This political culture was based on historical-cultural and psychological legacy of both communism and conflict. In this environment, the political parties are seen as “typically failing to represent the interests of their constituents in many

¹ Serbia challenging independence at ICJ. The Court's advisory opinion issued on July 22, 2010 stated that Kosovo's proclamation of independence was not illegal under international law. Nevertheless, Serbia is not expected to ease its blockade of Kosovo's entry into various international intergovernmental organizations (e.g. the UN). Kosovo had the status of autonomous province of Republic of Serbia within the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia. Serbian President Slobodan Milošević revoked its autonomy in 1989, which further cemented the deterioration of relations between the Albanian majority and Serbian minority ethnic groups living there. The guerrilla Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) began fighting Serb police and military forces in mid-1990s. In 1999, NATO launched the Operation Allied Force which consisted of military combat sorties and air strikes against Serbia from March until June of that year. This unprecedented intervention – conducted without the United Nations Security Council Resolution, on humanitarian grounds – targeted the Serbian President Milošević and his policy of human rights violations against ethnic Albanians living in Kosovo. Since 1999, Kosovo has been under international administration, embodied by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), Special Representative of Secretary General (SRSG) and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) organizations.

² Walter Mayr, “Confusion and Corruption in Kosovo: The Slow Birth of a Nation,” *Der Spiegel* / Global Research, April 24, 2008.

areas...and are more correctly characterized as vehicles for patronage and advancement of their leaders and the extended families...”³

Other analysts have pointed out that the international community’s effort of state building in Kosovo is in a “state of denial” as Washington and Brussels are in fact “...ushering into existence [what] looks set to become a heavily criminalized state in the heart of Europe, with far-reaching implications.”⁴ The UN police spokesman in Kosovo is cited as saying that it “is not a society affected by organized crime, but a society founded on organized crime.”⁵

Moreover, the general perception that organized crime and corruption are endemic in Kosovar society is confirmed by several surveys and opinion polls of Kosovo’s citizens,⁶ as well as by Misha Glenny’s research on organized crime worldwide which features Kosovo whose political elites had “consolidated [it] as a new centre for the distribution of heroin from Turkey to the European Union.”⁷

Political culture in Kosovo is not one in which citizen’s interests are represented. We now turn to describing an experience of teaching debating in such an environment.

Teaching Debate: Description

Prishtina currently hosts several dozen universities.⁸ During our visit, the introductory debate workshop attracted approximately twenty students from three universities. After explaining the basic model of British Parliamentary debating, we decided to brainstorm a bit to practice argument generation for each of the positions at the table.

Opening government came first. The motion we selected came from that year’s European Championships: “This House Would Make Fines Relative to

³ Fred Cocozzelli, “Political Parties in Kosovo,” *Global Security and Cooperation Quarterly* 11 (Winter 2004): 7, in: Jeff Fischer, Marcin Walecki, Jeffrey Carlson (eds.), *Political Finance in Post-Conflict Societies*, report prepared by IFES – funded by USAID (May, 2006): 81 – 82.

⁴ Svante E. Cornell, Michael Jonsson, “Creating a State of Denial,” *The New York Times*, March 22, 2007.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Global Corruption Barometer 2009*, Transparency International, available online at: <http://www.transparency.org/publications/publications/gcb2009> (accessed: August 10, 2009). Transparency International ranked Kosovo the world’s 4th most corrupt country in 2007.

⁷ Misha Glenny, *McMafia: Crime Without Frontiers* (London: The Bodley Head, 2008), 55.

⁸ The most established oldest university of the University of Prishtina. However, in the post-war development boom, several dozen private universities were founded throughout Kosovo, but mostly based in the capital. Quality-control, copying educational programs and syllabi from prestigious Western universities and lack of academic standards, as well as corruption and diploma-selling are considered as greatest challenges facing the Ministry of Education in accrediting and organizing all these universities currently functioning in Kosovo.

Wealth”. It is not abnormal for a silence to occur after a motion; participants need some time to reflect. However, this silence took longer than normal, so we asked if anyone had any thoughts about the reason behind this motion. Did they see what which problem was targeted by this motion? More silence.

We decided to explain the Government case to the class. We explained that low fines were an insufficient deterrence for really wealthy people and that they were therefore ineffective. Furthermore, we suggested that, for example, it might be unfair that rich drivers were proportionally less harmed by a fine than poor drivers and that this policy would have an equalizing effect.

The response from the participants was not one in which they had picked up the problem and further developed or nuanced it; instead, they challenged something we had taken for granted – namely, that these fines would be paid. “Rich people will just bribe the officers and not pay any fine, what are you talking about?” was the incredulous response from the students. Though slightly startled, we mentioned that although bribery was a possibility, we had to consider the debate as if the actual payment of the fine would occur and mainly debate the merits of the case.

This did not work out as we expected. Instead of pretending it would actually work, they mocked the entire idea of this policy ever being effective. “Why should we think about this? It will never work this way, rich people will bribe officers and this policy sounds stupid.”

At that point, we changed the perspective on this motion, and reminded the participants that we were “playing parliamentarians” – we had the job to think as politicians and debate a proposed policy. Unfortunately, this only fanned the flames. The students offered all sorts of objections; “Why would politicians do this?” “They are the rich people in this country, so why would they ever implement a policy that is against their own interest?” “Even if this policy is implemented, these politicians will also just bribe the officers!”

In our last attempt, we argued that if we can prove that a policy is intrinsically fairer than the status quo, we could argue that a politician would have good reasons, perhaps even a moral duty, to implement it. A few disappointed participants had left the classroom at that point, and although, as debaters, we continued to encourage the remainder to join the bandwagon of government policy and rule of law, we could no longer ignore the wall we came up against.

The main obstacle to having a debate was that participants could simply not put themselves into the shoes of an elected politician who serves the public good. Based on their experiences, a politician would never introduce a policy that was against his or her own interest, especially if it would only increase the number

of bribes the rich had to offer to the law enforcement in total. This utter distrust in government and the political system in general imbued the atmosphere in our training room with the question: “Why bother discussing policies at all if politics is so corrupted?”

The role of trust in political cultures and how it relates to the practice of debate

After the workshop, we sat down to discuss how we could have succeeded to involve the entire class in a discussion on the merits of this case. We realized that in a country where there is a widespread and deep lack of trust in parliament, a debate coach has to be inventive in making the first step in order to enthuse students to debate and think outside of the box of their own disappointing political culture experience.

In established democracies, citizens have a set of expectations of a politician or political party. A level of trust in the executive power is embedded in this set of expectations. Politicians are held accountable by the electorate, rule of law and the (independent) press. Corruption of politicians, when exposed, is publicly condemned and is usually likely to have consequences for the party in the next elections as well as for the individual politicians whose reputations get tarnished in the process and who could face criminal charges for their wrongdoing. In a debate context, we mirror such a political system. Having trust in one’s political system makes debate plausible and meaningful.

Yet what if the situation is completely reverse? Living in a country where corruption is so deeply ingrained that it is considered normal, debating the role and responsibilities of publicly elected officials hits a wall. This wall consists of a failure to trust politics, a low level of expectations from government and inability to imagine a different political system. It is hard for students to consider themselves as having the power to challenge politics. Even if they imagine themselves as one of the politicians they see, they cannot seem to adopt an attitude of service. They struggle to see a point in engaging in a debate about government practice at all.

As debate coaches, how can we deal with students who come from background of paralyzing disillusion with politics and who have disempowering ideas of their role as individuals and active citizens within those political systems? How do we combat this disillusion as debate coaches?

Suggestions

Various studies of democratization processes and democracy assistance point to the limits of institutional engineering and the constraints that are inherent in (political) culture.⁹ In other words, instituting the façade of a democratic system is relatively easy, but changing the norms, values, attitudes and behavior of both political elites and citizens within those systems is by far the more challenging and long-term process. To be sure, where we come from influences how we think, and debate coaches coming from consolidated democratic political systems often realize this when travelling to other countries. However, there is a lot to learn and share regarding teaching debate in countries different from one's own and we would like to make a modest attempt to share some of our ideas.

We would now like to offer a few simple suggestions of debate exercises that might be useful to coaches who teach or are about to teach in areas with very little trust in government. Needless to say this list is in no way exhaustive, and we hope other coaches will further refine and improve the suggestions we make.

One way to get students in new democracies excited and interested in debate is to start from the basics - exploring together what the role and purpose of government in a democratic system is. Discuss with students what their image of a government is, and what their expectations of a good government is. Perhaps a comparison of a government with a way in which a family household is run, or the way in which another familiar authoritative system is run provides a stepping stone towards the more abstract 'government'.

After establishing the idea that a government is something along the lines of 'people in charge who have an important responsibility towards citizens' it is worthwhile to discuss whether an idea is at its best when unopposed or unchallenged, or whether it is better if ideas are discussed and scrutinized by several parties. This is one way in which the importance and the role of the opposition can be illustrated.

Furthermore, we discovered that the values which often 'clash' in debate are hard to imagine for some beginners, or at least, they do not have the intuitive appeal we expect. For example, in the debate on making fines relative to wealth, the values of 'equality' and 'justice' or 'fairness' did anything but inspire. It is worthwhile to spend some time just discussing these concepts, what they mean and how opinions can differ about how important a given value is.

⁹ Christopher J. Coyne, *After War: The Political Economy of Exporting Democracy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008); Francis Fukuyama, "The Primacy of Culture," *Journal of Democracy* 6:1 (1995); Iain King, *Whit Mason, Peace at Any Price: How the World Failed Kosovo* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2006), etc.

It makes sense to introduce motions which have very clear clashes between the values, or a motions which focus on whether a given means is justified in order to obtain a certain value (e.g whether positive discrimination is a fair way of achieving equality, or whether a legal system is more just if it assigns lawyers, instead of allowing the rich to pay for better lawyers).

Another worthwhile exercise is introducing a bit of acting into the workshop. A coach can assign certain roles to participants and they each have to advocate their position. One of the participants can act as the ‘government’ and one as ‘the opposition’ while other participants are ‘the tax payer’, the ‘environmentalist’, the ‘parent’, the ‘religious minority’ or whomever is a relevant stakeholder in a motion you as a coach want to analyze and debate. Besides this being a lot of fun, participants can identify with the role governments can play when they play this role or when they see their fellow classmates play this role.

Our last suggestion for getting students interested in debate is to, at least initially, keep motions strictly ‘local’ and close to their political contexts. For example, in a previous debate training held in November 2007, trainer attempted to introduce the motion, “This House Believes Kosovo should be Independent.” This motion was debated in tournaments across Europe, and debaters called on sovereignty versus right to self-determination arguments. The problem in Kosovo was that no one wanted to debate the opposition side (which would essentially mean using Serbia’s arguments).

So we amended the motion to the hot issue at the time, meaning whether Kosovo should proclaim independence on December 10, 2007 following the release of Marti Ahtisaari’s report, or whether it should wait for multilateral international support in. (Needless to say, those advocating immediate proclamation of independence won the debate by unanimous audience vote.) Trainers need to be highly sensitive and attuned to the local environment, if they are to succeed in getting students interested in debate.

For us, teaching debate in Kosovo was a humbling experience that brought awareness of a whole host of issues that debate trainers working in established democracies do not generally encounter in their work. In order to spread debate as an enriching and valuable academic activity that inspires critical thinking – we need to be aware of the challenges similar to those presented in this short essay. We hope our experience will contribute to the discussion about how to teach debate in societies different from ours, in the hopes of expanding our debate training methodology – as well as our minds.

JUDGING DEBATES: A PRAGM-DIALECTICAL PERSPECTIVE

About the author: *Daniel Schut* has a master's degree in political science and currently works as a map maker for the Argumentation Factory. In 2006 he reached the Worlds and Euros ESL finals, and won the Oxford IV ESL final in 2005.

Judging debates is a lot harder than debating. As a debater, you can often rely on your common sense to determine whether your opponent's argument is flawed: you know it's wrong or not. You can decide how to attack it, based on experience and strategic insight. But how do you weigh up arguments as an adjudicator? What if the opposition didn't attack an argument that you thought was flawed? How do you weigh the relative persuasiveness of two equally good opposing arguments, when both sides haven't made these arguments clash?

There are a few general guidelines for judges. One is that a judge shouldn't factor in her own opinion of arguments. If a team by virtue of the draw has to argue that the invasion of Iraq was a success, and you think categorically that it wasn't, you can't blame them for arguing what you don't agree on.

On the other hand, you can't discount everything you know: when a proposition argues reams of utter nonsense, you can't fault the opposing side for not disputing every single claim they make. The general rule given to inexperienced judges in cases like this is that you should weigh arguments based on what an 'unbiased, intelligent observer' would think of an argument.

But how do we know what this hypothetical unbiased observer would think of an argument? More specifically, what would an unbiased intelligent observer think when two sides didn't make arguments clash or when one side didn't point out a potential flaw in an opposing argument? The 'unbiased, intelligent observer'-method doesn't provide much help here. Where else can the beginning adjudicator turn for guidance?

One approach to judging debates can be found in pragma-dialectics. In this essay I will first introduce pragma-dialectics, then discuss debating through the lens of pragma-dialectics. Finally, I will show how pragma-dialectics can be used to judge a debate. Contrary to the 'unbiased observer'-method, pragma-dialectics gives some very concrete pointers to judges.

What is pragma-dialectics?

Pragma-dialectics is a theoretical approach to analyzing argumentation, originally developed by two scholars from Amsterdam: Rob Grootendorst and Frans van Eemeren. It combines two schools of thought: one from philosophy, the other from linguistics. The philosophical school is that of formal dialectics, developed by Hamblin, Bart and Krabbe and critical rationalism, as developed by Popper, Albert and Naess. The linguistic school is the pragmatic philosophy of language, including speech act theory as developed by Austin, Searle and Grice¹.

Combining these two schools of thought allowed them to look at argumentation as both a philosophical practice of intellectual rigor, and as a sociolinguistic phenomenon, as two or more people performing speech acts with a specific goal in mind². That in turn allowed them to build a model of what they call ‘critical discussion’ that is both descriptive and normative.

For debaters, there are three elements of this ‘critical discussion’ that can be helpful. The first is the pragma-dialectical concept of ‘reasonableness’, the second is the four-stage ideal model of a critical discussion. A third element is related to pragma-dialectical analysis - analyzing the argumentative process.

The pragma-dialectical concept of reasonableness stems from Stephen Toulmin³. Toulmin introduced three perspectives of reasonableness: a geometrical perspective, an anthropological perspective, and a critical perspective.

¹ Frans H. van Eemeren, “Advances in Pragma-Dialectics” in Frans H. van Eemeren, ed., *Advances in Pragma-Dialectics*, Amsterdam, Sic Sat, 2002, p. 3

² Frans H. van Eemeren, Rob Grootendorst & Fransisca Snoeck-Henkemans, *Handboek Argumentatietheorie*. Groningen, The Netherlands, Martinus Nijhoff Uitgevers, 1997, p. 351.

³ J.H.M. Wagemans, *Redelijkheid en overredingskracht van argumentatie : een historisch-filosofische studie over de combinatie van bet dialectische en bet retorische perspectief op argumentatie in de pragma-dialectische argumentatietheorie*. Amsterdam, Amsterdam University, Dissertation for the Faculty of Humanities, 2009, p. 20 – 21. Can be downloaded here: <http://dare.uva.nl/record/314909>

The geometrical perspective is the logician's perspective: it starts from indisputably certain premises, through logically valid patterns, and arrives at necessarily certain conclusions. The anthropological perspective is the opposite end. They say that arguments are persuasive if the audience judging the arguments finds them to be persuasive. That is to say, if the argument 'rings true' with the 'epistemic background', that is, the knowledge, certainties, uncertainties, norms, values and beliefs of the audience.

The third, critical perspective is that of Van Eemeren and Grootendorst⁴. It stems from the intention which discussants have to resolve their difference of opinion according to procedural rules that they together hold to be universalisable. They adopt a working form of reasonableness which is procedural, normatively formalized and relative. Procedural, in the sense of critical rationalism, in that the truth value of claims is always tentative, and are and should be subject to procedures to critically evaluate them. Normatively formalized, in the sense that the participants in a critical discussion – implicitly or explicitly - agree to be held to normative standards, and try to adhere to rules of engagement (both behavioral and analytical) which can help them to resolve their difference of opinion. Relative, in the sense that the rules are intersubjectively valid: they need not be universal, but are at least universalisable.

The ideal model of a critical discussion is the process through which discussants, using the above-described concept of reasonableness, would resolve their difference of opinion. It goes through four stages: the confrontation stage, the opening stage, the argumentation stage and the concluding stage⁵.

In the confrontation stage, the discussants first notice their difference of opinion. In the opening stage, the discussants (implicitly or explicitly) establish the material and procedural starting points for discussion. In the argumentation phase, the discussants actually argue. In the concluding stage, the discussants decide the result of their discussion. Importantly, this model can be used both descriptively and prescriptively.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 22

⁵ Handboek Argumentatietheorie, p. 313 - 314

There's a lot more to pragma-dialectics than these two elements. A third helpful element doesn't relate to the analysis of argumentation, but rather to Van Eemeren and Grootendorst's description of what researchers who want to analyze any argumentative process, are doing. According to them, a researcher performs certain transformations in reconstructing argumentative language-use. These are: deletion, addition, permutation and substitution⁶.

Deletion entails deleting all utterances that are irrelevant to the performance of the critical discussion itself. Addition is adding assumptions which have remained implicit, but are clearly held by one of the discussants. Permutation is re-ordering the utterances in such a way that they can be analyzed clearly. The substitution transformation is substituting vague and similar utterances by more precise and meaningful sentences, at the same time trying to keep the meaning identical.

The guiding principle for all these transformations is that the utterances can be transformed in accordance with how they help or hinder the resolution-process. This means that the researcher can transform utterances, for as long as she can reasonably justify that in the eyes of the discussants these transformed utterances do not lose their function in regards to the communicative and deliberative goal the discussants had in mind.

Debating and pragma-dialectics

Viewing a debate through the lens of pragma-dialectics delivers interesting insights. A debate is a highly formalized critical discussion. The critical perspective of reasonableness seems tailor-made for debating: debaters are masters of challenging and critically examining truth claims made in a debate. It's what the game of debating is designed for. There is even a specific debate format dedicated to the originator of critical rationalism: the Karl Popper-debate format.

The four-stage ideal model of a critical discussion is also remarkably applicable to debating. The confrontation stage is the draw: that's where debaters get to know who is for and against a motion, and what they will be debating about. The opening stage takes place at several moments. The first moment takes place even before the tournament begins. The CA-team and OrgComm decide to

⁶ Ibid. p 375 - 376

hold a tournament, and they decide on the specific format they want to use. Most organizations don't really 'choose' the format, but use the style which is traditional for their region. But even then, there are choices for OrgCom and the CA-team, like how long should speeches last, and what's the policy in regards to speaking longer than the allotted time? All these procedural decisions for the opening stage are made by OrgComm and the CA-team. Moreover, the CA-team sets part of the material side of the opening stage by setting the motion.

The third stage is the argumentation stage, and that's the stage during which the debate takes place. But the first speech of the debate isn't just argumentation: it should also contain definitions of the motion and other 'speech acts' which set up the material side of the debate. Pragma-dialectics shows us exactly why and how being Opening Government can be such a difficult role: you're not just arguing, but you also have the task to enable others to argue, because you're partly responsible for the opening stage of the debate.

The concluding stage commences when the debate is finished: the adjudicators will analyze the debate and decide who won. An interesting shift takes place here: the concluding stage is performed by different people than the people performing the argumentation stage. This is not uncommon: there are many pragma-dialectical analyses of the courtroom-situation, which has a similar set-up. But it does create specific problems: the adjudicators are in one sense part of the debate, because they are tasked with performing the final stage of the ideal model, but on the other hand, they are not part of the debate because they try to be 'objective' analysts of the debate, who use deletions, additions, permutations and substitutions to arrive at a conclusion of the debate.

And this double role of adjudicators is exactly what makes judging debates so hard: adjudicators both are and are not part of the debate they just watched.

How pragma-dialectics can help adjudicators

So, how can pragma-dialectics help adjudicators in reaching a decision? I'll start with the use of transformations first, turn to the four-stage ideal model afterwards and end with the concept of critical reasonableness.

Obviously, there is a lot of deletion going on. Seven minute speeches are often reduced to a few notes scribbled on a piece of paper the size of an A5-paper,

with entire debates captured on both sides of two A4's. While I'm not doubting the incredibly efficiency in note taking and recollection of some judges, the first pointer for any adjudicator would be to be conscious of what you delete (that is: be conscious of what you don't write down) and why. This is especially important at the beginning of the debate: during the first speeches, a judge can't be sure of which arguments and strands of thought will be picked up later in the debate, so she has to make sure she gets the gist of everything which might be relevant later on.

During the summary speakers, adjudicators can be expected to write less substantive material down. Since the summary speakers are acting as very partisan adjudicators, one would expect the adjudicators to add 'meta'-notes to the notes they took during the previous speeches, based on where the summary speaker 'tells' them where to put these notes.

Addition and substitution are both dangerous transformations to perform as adjudicators, especially when judges have deleted much of the debate by not taking enough notes. They are dangerous because they require 'mind-reading' by the adjudicators, which often leads to projection of 'what they actually meant to say'. If, as a judge, you feel inclined to do just that, do a reality check, in one of the following two ways. The first is to check if your fellow adjudicators have the same interpretation of what you thought you heard. The second check is going back to (your notes or recollection of) the debate, and ask yourself if you can reasonably believe that all debaters from the other teams had the same interpretation of the argument as you did. If they did, you're probably right. If they didn't, you could well be wrong. If you feel you're right nonetheless, and the other teams didn't understand the argument, you can still ask yourself if a debater's job isn't to state an argument so clearly that everyone gets it – meaning you're right in your interpretation of the argument, but still have a reason to not count it as much as you wanted to.

That being said, substitution is crucial for listening to debates at international tournaments. When listening to ESL-teams, or even English-as-a-First-Language-teams from very different debate communities, you can be reasonably sure they each have a different linguistic register for debating. Unfortunately, pragma-dialectics doesn't offer much help here, other than point you to the need to be conscious of the different registers that debaters can use internationally.

Permutation is the final transformation a researcher/adjudicator can perform. The reshuffling of arguments generally can be very helpful indeed, but judges need to be mindful of ‘even if...’-constructions. If the debaters themselves haven’t clearly stated that they are only conceding an argument for the sake of an ‘even if’-scenario, the adjudicators should wonder whether they actually meant to state that, or whether they have just unwittingly pulled a knife.

Turning to the four stages of the ideal model, we find more helpful hints for the beginning adjudicator. As said above, the debaters are mostly performing the third argumentation stage, except for the opening speaker, who also performs part of the second opening stage. As we all know from experience, this brings with it several difficulties for debates as a whole: whereas later speakers can screw up their speech and their team’s chances of winning, the opening speaker actually has the power to screw up the entire debate for everyone by providing incoherent, inconsistent or incomplete definitions of the motion. Adjudicators should take this into account.

This is especially important when the debate runs smoothly with no definitional issues. A judge might then be inclined to judge an Opening Government team solely on the basis of their arguments, find them lacking in those arguments and thus give them a fourth. But in doing so, he actually discounts half of the job that Opening Government is supposed to do. If Opening Government succeeded in setting up the debate properly so that everyone can provide good, well-developed arguments against the Opening Government case along the lines of the debate one would ideally expect (that is, if Opening Government managed the transition from the opening stage to the argumentation stage successfully), then actually, Opening Government has done reasonably well, even though their case might have been argued effectively against.

The summary speakers have a similar ‘double role’. They should ease the judges from the argumentation stage into the concluding stage. They can and should help the adjudicators in reaching their conclusion by tying all the relevant arguments together and pointing them this way or that way. In the pragma-dialectical sense, the summary speaker can thus be seen as a very partisan adjudicator, closing the argumentation stage and gearing up for the concluding stage, which is exactly why there shouldn’t be any new substantive matter in the summary speeches. The more an adjudicator is guided through his

notes or recollection of the debate, and the more the summary speakers delete, add, substitute and permute the arguments for the adjudicators so as to make their task easier, the better they are.

The performance of the other debaters should be decided on how well they perform as actors in the argumentation stage. Importantly, in this stage, it is their role to be decisive, that is, to put forward arguments, attack other's arguments and defend their own arguments to maximally enable the judges to decide that their team won the debate. Of course, every pure argumentation-stage-debater will necessarily always intend to be as decisive as possible, since that is the only way they can make their contribution to the debate relevant to the communicative exchange. But in how far they succeed in realizing this intention is exactly what constitutes the heart of debating. What constitutes decisiveness is in large part determined by the concept of critical reasonableness.

The most interesting contribution that pragma-dialectics has to make is at the same time the most abstract and controversial. It stems from the concept of critical reasonableness. Remember that critical reasonableness in a critical discussion stems from the intention which discussants have to resolve their difference of opinion according to procedural rules that they together hold to be universalisable. For a debate, as a formalized critical discussion, this means first and foremost that an adjudicator should judge a debate on the (intersubjectively agreed upon) procedural criteria. This has many implications for how to judge a debate.

One implication of this is that if Opening Government gives an argument, which subsequently all four opposing speakers take turns to tear apart, then at least that argument has succeeded in being tested the most during the debate, and is therefore good reason to value Opening Government, even though substantively speaking, the argument's standing might be in doubt by the time it arrived in the hands of the last summary speaker.

If the first and second opposing speakers didn't successfully deal with the argument, and it only got killed by the third opposing speaker, then Opening Government stands a good chance of deserving to be first in the debate, even if the third opposing speaker totally demolishes the argument. The reason for this is procedural: it's Closing Opposition's procedural role to kill arguments, but Opening Government's procedural role to both set up the debate and deliver

arguments, and if the argument makes it that far, then clearly they have succeeded very well in taking up their role so far.

A second implication of this is that you need to look for the criteria that the speakers themselves put forth to judge the discussion by. These criteria can be explicitly verbalized, but need not be. They are explicitly verbalized in phrases like ‘the clash of this debate will be...’, or ‘we are going to run this case on the principle that...’. But you can also infer them from the behavior of the debaters: if all debaters decide to spend most of their time on an argument which you think is silly and irrelevant to your perception of the case, you will have to ditch your perception and run along with the debaters, since they apparently all agree that this specific argument is the most important.

A third, and final implication is that you are free to judge a debate on formal, procedural criteria for argumentation, like ‘how well developed’ an argument was, in the sense that every relevant truth claim was argued to be true, was argued to be relevant and has been supported with ample illustrations, or how ‘internally consistent’ an argument was, but that you should be careful in judging the substantive value of any argument. Since, pragma-dialectically speaking, you are part of the debate, you are allowed to bring in some substantive ‘common knowledge’, but you can only bring in specifically that substantive common knowledge which you can justifiably expect to be shared by the debaters you’re judging – which, given the fact that most judges have debated for longer than the people they’re judging, is probably less than you think.

Conclusion

We’ve looked at debating through the lens of pragma-dialectics, and found that both the game of debating and adjudication are a whole lot more complicated. Pragma-dialectics has pointed us to unforeseen depths and complications in what we do for fun. But these complications are exactly what we like so much about this game: the challenge of trying to establish intersubjectively shared, universalisable criteria and procedures for saying something true and relevant is exactly what drives us towards this game. Debating helps us in becoming more true and more relevant with every speech, and every tournament, and pragma-dialectics helps us in discovering the road to get there.

POPULISM, DEBATE AND THE TEA PARTY: HOW THE APPEAL OF POPULISM SEPARATES DEBATE FROM THE WIDER PUBLIC

About the author: *Daniel Berman* is a Masters student at Kings College London. He holds degrees from St Andrews and Bates. At St Andrews, Daniel won the Scottish Mace. He has finalled at several other competitions, including the 2010 SOAS IV. He has judged at the 2010 World Universities Debating Championship.

The arguments and appeals used in Parliamentary Debating differ from those used in politics. Connection between the discussion of politics in a Parliamentary debate and those within wider society is limited. Pragmatic considerations ranging from the selfish (“Will I be reelected”) to the practical (“Will it work”) dominate the thoughts of politicians. Debaters have the opportunity to engage on a higher level. Parliamentary debates often discuss philosophical issues, but often are detached from political realities. Debaters share the interests and passion for policy of those in the political field without any of the responsibility or consequences. The gap between the arguments effective in debating context and those effective in a broader environment are most clear when we look at the field of populism.

Populism has a long history in the art of public speaking. One could say that the original purpose of public speaking was to move the mob, at least in the Greek context, and the ability to instill emotional vigor in a listener would almost surely defeat any effort to appeal to logic or reason.

Modern Parliamentary debating, however, is an elitist activity. It is not necessarily elitist in its membership, but debating is elitist in terms of how it is evaluated. The limitation of the franchise to a handful of judges means that a successful speech, by necessity, must target a small audience. Debaters must play to the judges rather than the crowd. And more than few final rounds stand as testaments to the fate of teams that forget the difference between the two.

Partly, as a result, when most debaters hear an appeal to nationalism, parochialism, or religious conviction, they all too often dismiss such claims. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the reaction to the Tea Party Movement in the United States. To the average debater, emotional incantations to “take the country back” and attacks on “big government” seem to be nothing more than generic catch-phrases when deprived of their emotional content. These “generic catch-phrases” rely on the listener’s belief that they have been cheated,

that they have lost, not because they did not earn success or recognition, but because it was stolen from them.

Nevertheless, while the effectiveness of the attacks on elitism may fall flat even with many Republican debaters, whose admission to Harvard or BU stands as a testament to the justification of the meritocratic system, the extent to which these sentiments have appeal to those who have feel disenfranchised is testified by the American Parliamentary Debate Associations own struggles with charges of bias.

In the US, parliamentary debate is hampered by the triple challenges of money, geography, and the lack of an effective an effective feeder system, with the former two deriving from and exacerbating the problems of the latter. The impact is that participants in parliamentary debating tend to be more liberal than the population as a whole.

Parliamentary debate does not exist in any real form at the secondary level in the US education level. Debate programs, where they exist, falling into the categories of either the various formats used by the National Forensics League or policy. As a consequence, the bias at the University level is towards policy debate. Even in the institutions that also feature competing parliamentary programs, such as Harvard, the parliamentary societies are the poor cousins of their policy brethren, often receiving little to no funding. Parliamentary debate is therefore relegated either to institutions with a long history of Trans-Atlantic connections, which are mostly older schools in the North East or West Coast, or newer institutions with large financial reserves that wish to establish such connections. The only prominent non-private institution on the list is West Point⁷.

Given APDA's concentration in the nation's northeast quadrant, it is prohibitively expensive for schools outside of the region to participate regularly. The result is a situation in which the American debater is overwhelmingly likely to attend a private institution in the Northeast.

The political contours of such a concentration should be readily apparent to anyone with a passing familiarity with contours of American politics. Of the American teams represented at Worlds in Koc last year, twenty one out of 25 are located in states won by John Kerry, and 23 are represented by Democrats in Congress.

Within the US, where social views contour more to class than partisan lines, even Republican debaters at most schools steer away from questioning the

⁷ See http://www.apdaweb.org/wiki/doku.php?id=teams:individual_teams

legality of abortion, the desirability of gay rights, or the science of global warming.

The existence of “APDA Tight” on the circuit testifies to this trend, just as its description on the organization’s website speaks for itself:

[APDA Tight] means that although some people argue for each side of the debate, the general characteristics of APDA as a community of college students make the opposition side too difficult to defend. Legalizing sodomy may be debatable, but a vast majority of APDA debaters would support that case, so the case could be considered tight. Debaters who choose to run a government case in favor of banning sodomy would be forced to defend the position they choose.⁸

While the language is defensive, and the arguments reasonable, the general points of criticism that led to the adoption of the rules regarding “APDA Tight” cases mirrored those of many in the Tea Party.

While they may not be announcing their intention to ‘take the circuit back’ or blaming its leadership for the problems, some debaters lost rounds and thought they lost them unfairly, and concluded that the pattern they detected indicated systematic bias. APDA responded by passing regulations. While it is worth noting that most tournaments now disclaim the usage of the “Apda Tight” call because of its dubious reputation, what is more interesting is why it was instituted.

The answer is the same for any organization, because it made people feel empowered, and no one is more determined to assert authority than when they feel discriminated against and powerless to change it. It is this seeming powerlessness, in the face of social changes, that in my view, drives the Tea Party Movement.

After all, the supposed “Marxism” of Barack Obama pales in comparison to even the most hard-line of conservatives in Europe. To such observers, it seems especially odd to see a revolt of rural America and the lower middle class, when it is exactly these groups that Obama’s policies are intended to help. The truth is that the appeal of someone like Sarah Palin is something that it is based not on a rational cost-benefit analysis, but on one’s understanding of the

⁸ <http://www.apdaweb.org/guide/rules>

national identity, and whether one considers her success a failure or an affirmation of the American system is dependent one's position in it.

The US has always been much further to the right than Europe in terms of policies regarding social welfare⁹. This historical predilection, and its current eruption in the form of the Tea Party Movement, cannot be understood without describing the central role the family or at least the idyll image of the family, plays in the lives of millions of rural and suburban American.

Whereas in Europe, or in post-religious societies generally, society is often approached in terms of individuals relating to the state, and the major influence on an individual's social interactions and relations is their peers rather than their family, in the United States the opposite is still true in many places. It makes far less sense to talk of individuals joining a church, or buying a house, or even interviewing for admission to a secondary school than it does to speak of a family unit doing so. Families are members of a local church, families belong to local sports leagues, and most clubs offer membership on the basis of family rather than the individual. Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone*¹⁰ focused on this concept of family and community as the bedrocks of democracy, and while left-leaning himself, in blamed the decline, which he saw as a negative, on among other things, woman entering the workforce, female empowerment, and the rise of communication technology.

Whatever the causes, the real effects, and whether any such society ever existed, most Americans like the idea of it and like to believe it did. Hence the enormous value placed on parental authority over children, which in the US often goes much further than in other Western countries. Provided they receive some sort of educational experience and do not face outright and obvious physical abuse, children can be all but imprisoned by parents until they are 18. The concept of a parent forcing a 17-year-old into an ex-gay program or sending them to a boot-camp would be unthinkable in much of Europe. It is looked upon as a regrettable if legally untouchable parental prerogative in the states, more to uphold the principle rather than the individual circumstance.

While the reality, even in rural America, is far from any sort of idyll, the very preponderance of failed marriages and broken homes in many cases makes the imagery even more important. As a consequence, both fiscal and social issues are often viewed in the context of an attack on it.

This can be seen in the different way America and Europe view single-mothers. In Europe, single-mothers are an accepted cog in the wheel of society. Recent

⁹ See Alesina et al (2001) *Why Doesn't the US have a European Style Welfare State?*

¹⁰ Robert Putnam (2000) *Bowling Alone*

revelations about the marital status or lack thereof between the new Labour Leader Ed Milliband and his long-time partner focused more on the birth certificates of the children than on the acceptability of the relationship itself.¹¹ This can also be seen in the outcry over efforts by the new UK Conservative government to cap benefits - the controversy is whether £26K a year is too low, rather than over whether the benefits are deserved¹².

In America by contrast, single-mothers are viewed as result of social failure, with figures ranging from pro-choice activists who define the right to chose in terms of eliminating “unwanted” children to those on the right who blame the perverse incentives of the welfare system, all agreeing that they are a burden, and that their very existence symbolizes a failure of governmental policy. Whereas criticism of Ed Milliband was mostly localized to right-leaning tabloids, discussion of out-of-wedlock pregnancy of Bristol Palin mostly focused on how well her mother had handled, or not handled, the “tragedy”. The media asked whether her “parenting” was to blame, and CNN being sure to note that “Sen. McCain knew this and felt in no way did it disqualify her from being vice president... Families have difficulties sometimes and lucky for her she has a supportive family.”¹³

That the revelation was an open invitation for Andrew Sullivan to suggest that Palin’s son Trig was not in fact her own,¹⁴ and for the comedy show Saturday Night Live to posit an incestuous relationship between Todd and her daughter illustrated the willingness of many to see pregnancy as a negatively indicative character trait.¹⁵ If a mother ran a family where a 17- year old girl could get pregnant, what other awful things could that mother be guilty of?

For all the talk of big government in Europe, the idea that it is the government’s job to ensure that single woman do not have or raise children would be met with mockery, but it is an accepted gospel in small government America. When states vote to ban single parents from adopting, as Arkansas did

¹¹ “Ed Milliband Becomes First British Political Leader of a Major Party to be Living with His Family out-of Wedlock” Glen Owen The Daily Mail September 27th 2010

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1315289/Labours-new-chief-British-political-leader-round-conventions-wedlock-fatherhood.html>

¹² Probably the most right-leaning mention I can find is the Economist which termed the announcement of the cap “inept” while noting it was a move in the “right direction”

http://www.economist.com/node/17209532?story_id=17209532&fsrc=rss

¹³ “Palin’s Teen Daughter is Pregnant” CNN Dana Bash September 1st. 2008

<http://edition.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/09/01/palin.daughter/index.html>

¹⁴ “Transparency Please” Andrew Sullivan The Daily Dish, The Atlantic Monthly, 6th of October 2008

http://andrewsullivan.theatlantic.com/the_daily_dish/2008/10/proof-please.html

¹⁵ “SNL “Palin Incest” Skit Angers Viewers” The Boston Channel September 22nd 2008

<http://www.thebostonchannel.com/r/17528426/detail.html>

in 2008, a clear difference exists in terms of individual rights - irrespective of whatever focus the Tea Partiers may place on claims of constitutional fidelity.¹⁶

As such, there is substantial hostility to welfare because individuals are far less likely to see programs as promoting the “general welfare” as opposed to that of a group that is not part of the greater whole. When Obama says that “we need to” insure the uninsured, his use of “we” did not include the uninsured, at least not for all his listeners. Implied was that “we”, the taxpaying, married, productive citizens who actually have insurance should carry the burden of those “people” who for some reason or another haven’t managed to get their insurance (or work) in order.

Most of all however, these policies are a direct threat in the eyes of Americans who embrace the traditional “idyll”. This is because they threaten to undermine the vertical structure in favor of a horizontal one. In the view of the Tea Party, the current employer based system of health care leaves a family dependent on the insurance of its working member. Leaving aside for a moment that this leaves the family at the mercy of potentially losing their breadwinner’s job, this creates an incentive to keep the family together, and reinforces the vertical power of the parents and the husband in particular. By contrast, national health care threatens to leave the individual dependent on the state, and therefore with no intermediary, and welfare or other programs for single-mothers actively encourage divorce. As absurd as it may seem, Talk Radio is awash in stories of social workers “urging” women to divorce their husbands in order to go on welfare, and like myths about Obama’s Health Care plan, the very volume with which they are repeated adds the legitimacy which the lack of a factual basis fails to provide.

This focus also explains the reflexive social conservatism of so many in rural America. For all the talk of whether social or fiscal conservatism should be preeminent among the “intellectuals” of the movement, the “Tea Party” candidates are without exception Pro-Life and opposed to Gay Rights. The latter, so often indecipherable to observers who note that Gay issues affect no one other than, well Gay individuals, makes perfect sense in the context of the idyll of a vertical family structure. While same-sex marriage is increasingly open to debate, the increasing efforts to pass anti-bullying legislation, and to teach

¹⁶ The Amendment in question was mostly fought on the issue of adoption by Gay couples. There is however no legal standard for proving that an individual is part of one, as all Gays in Arkansas, were, per a 2004 Amendment, legally single. As a consequence, necessity, as well as the rhetoric of “every child having a right to a mother and father” paved the way for the state to ban adoption for all individuals cohabitating outside of marriage. In any event, Ed Milliband would have his children taken by child services in Arkansas. [http://ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/Arkansas_Unmarried_Couple_Adoption_Ban_\(2008\)](http://ballotpedia.org/wiki/index.php/Arkansas_Unmarried_Couple_Adoption_Ban_(2008))

tolerance in the schools, is a direct attack on the very basis of the American family: the control of parents over the education of their children.

As for Sarah Palin, she is seen as the personification of the American idyll. She didn't go to Harvard. She had trouble paying for and completing college. She married her high school sweat-heart, and instead of abandoning family for work, she brought up three kids. And despite all this she made good. She went all the way to being the Vice Presidential nominee of a major party, and perhaps a positional President. Her reward for her achievements? An unprecedented assault from the elites of both parties and the media, attempting to term her stupid, provincial, and simple-minded, not to mention an effort to attack her family, to make an issue of her daughters pregnancy, and to turn her own potential future son-in-law against her. She is the daughter to many older rural Americans wish they had, and they don't take kindly to her treatment, as her martyrdom has rapidly become their own.

Such anti-elitism falls on deaf ears in a debate. Debaters are almost by definition more accomplished educationally than Palin, and as a consequence her success is a failure of the system to recognize "merit". In effect, Sarah Palin, rather than being "someone like us" who made good, is someone less intelligent, less distinguished, and less qualified, who through a failure of the system, founder herself in a position of unwarranted importance.

In the end, what the current political conflict in America represents is a battle over the meaning of the word "merit". Does merit come from earning an impressive degree and gaining a high paying job? Or from doing the "right thing" and settling down, raising a family, and "working hard," since implicit in this belief system is that people cannot completely fail unless they fail to try. Because each individual tends to define merit so as to apply it themselves, different social classes in America are speaking a different language.

Debate, the province of University students occurs in a universe in which the very presence of a debater in the room implies merit, and as a consequence there is little patience for rhetoric that assumes the contrary. Unless of course one feels that their "merit" is not being rectified, in which case the same accusations of symptomatic bias are all too often heard, whether on the basis of school, or politics.

The reality is that while the appeal of specific populism is always based on one's position in the social structure relative to the target audience, populism generally is invoked in many fields. That what we all too often term "populism" does not exist in debate is not a claim that populism as a whole is non-existent, but rather that this particular strain is not effective in the university debating

context. Its appeal is emotional and debaters can be as vulnerable to it as anyone else.

THE MOTION AS KOAN: SEEING DEBATE AS TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICE

About the author: *Stephen M. Llano, Ph.D.* studies the practices and pedagogy of debate and argumentation. He researches rhetoric, rhetorical criticism argument theory, and their connections to literature. He currently directs the St. John's University Debate Society in New York City, and has served as a teacher of debate at the University of Rochester and the University of Pittsburgh.

In 2005, the internationally famous author and Zen monk Thich Nat Hahn was allowed to return to his native country of Vietnam. While there, he founded a new monastery, Bat Nha, for practitioners of Zen Buddhism. In 2009, the Vietnamese government engaged in practices that denied the monks their religious freedom. Human Rights Watch claims that “undercover police and local communist party officials terrorized and assaulted several hundred monks and nuns,” and “authorities have relentlessly harassed and pressured the Bat Nha Buddhists to vacate Phuoc Hue and other pagodas that took them in, periodically cutting electricity and water and barring local lay people from providing food and supplies.”¹ Disturbing reports indicate the use of incredibly loud music, assaults, and physical intimidation of the monks by gangs of thugs.²

In response to the international attention to these terrible crimes of religious persecution, Thich Nhat Hanh wrote a response – he compared the political prosecution of these religious followers to the koan, a method of Zen training:

A koan cannot be solved by intellectual arguments, logic or reason, nor by debates such as whether there is only mind or matter. A koan can only be solved through the power of right mindfulness and right concentration. Once we have penetrated a koan, we feel a sense of relief, and have no more fears or questioning. We see our path and realize great peace. “Does a dog have Buddha nature?” If you think that it's the dog's problem whether or not he has Buddha nature, or if you think that it's merely a philosophical conundrum, then it's not a koan. “Where does the one return to?” If you think this is a question about the movement of an external objective reality, then that is not a koan either. If you think Bat Nha is only a problem for

¹ Human Rights Watch, “Vietnam: End Attacks on Bat Nha Buddhists,” Human Rights Watch, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/12/16/vietnam-end-attacks-bat-nha-buddhists>, Dec 16, 2009 (Accessed July 20, 2010).

² “Zen master: Vietnam paid mobs to evict followers,” *The Herald*, January 12, 2009; Simon Montlake, “Buddhist Sect Decries Lack of Freedom in Communist Vietnam,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 5, 2009; Andrew Buncome, “Vietnamese Evicted My Flock , Says Zen Master,” *The Independent*, January 12, 2010.

400 monks and nuns in Vietnam, a problem that simply needs a “reasonable and appropriate” solution, then that too is not a koan. Bat Nha truly becomes a koan only when you understand it as your own problem, one that deeply concerns your own happiness, your own suffering, your own future and the future of your country and your people. If you cannot solve the koan, if you cannot sleep, eat or work at peace, then Bat Nha has become your koan.³

This response is valuable to debaters. Hahn argues we cannot understand or help until we fully absorb the situation into our daily lives. Instead of keeping the issue on the level of esoteric discussion— what solutions should be offered, who is to blame, what international agency should intervene – we should confront it with our being.

Hahn’s followers and supporters in this matter certainly feel distant, powerless, and unable to offer the help that they want. Hahn attempts to redirect their desires toward what he feels is greater. To help Bat Nha is to absorb the issue into your own life, and confront this issue daily. If you do not internalize and own the situation, nothing will come of it, and the ground remains fertile for repetition.

Thich Nhat Hahn’s suggestion for how to solve Bat is compelling as an analogy to debate practice. Much like those wishing to help the persecuted nuns and monks in Vietnam, the conversation about which agency should intervene and placing responsibility often dominates caring debaters’ minds, and the participants feel good during such debates. This feeling of satisfaction at our knowledge and words is only a part of the practice of debate. In this essay, I argue that complete debating practice should extend to the transformation and improvement of the whole person – an engagement that assists in winning more debates, and in critical and careful consideration of daily speech, daily acts, and daily understanding.

If we think of the practice of debate as a forum for refining and developing our abilities as human communicators, we broaden the value and importance of debate tournaments. Debate becomes more about improving the whole person within society rather than creating an enclave of practitioners of a strange yet powerful art that have trouble discussing important issues in a non-threatening tone. When we don’t internalize practice, as Thich Nat Hahn reminds us, the political consequences can be dire. We easily lose sight of how our debate practice convinces us we are the total masters of our words. A quick inventory

³ Thich Nhat Hanh, “Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh's compassionate response to the persecution of his students in Vietnam,” January 24, 2010 <http://www.plumvillage.org/letters-from-thay/241-bat-nha-a-koan.html> (Accessed July 20, 2010).

of your personal life or personal experiences is a sobering reminder as to how little control and influence we have over how our words are interpreted. Such carelessness can lead to unintended violence.

Debate is such a powerful tool for the transformation of lives that I seek to re-connect it to the aesthetic, imaginative, and spiritual side of communication. It is in this dimension that a huge amount of our interactions with other human beings occur – but we spend such little time investigating this realm with the other intelligent people we meet due to unreflective debate norms.

Thich Nat Hahn suggests that the methods for teaching enlightenment in Buddhism should be “skillful means” – one must not predicate others’ understanding on your own connections between symbols, objects, and actions – a difficult proposition at best. “These means are only skillful if they are suitable to the particular circumstances.”⁴ In debate, nothing could be more valuable than to develop “skillful means” for reaching adjudicators, opponents, your partner, and of course, others in the community. The point of using these practices is the same as the point of improving one’s ability in debating. “One of the greatest potentialities of skillful means is to free beings from their prisons of knowledge and prejudice.”⁵ Many times, without our even trying, we are taught how much of what we ‘know’ about an issue or region of the world is not actually so. Approaching debate with the attitude of “skillful means” creates a goal in the practice of debating outside of tournament success. It is my belief that the pedagogical principles behind the use of Koans in Buddhist teaching can be applied in this manner. The first step is simple: One should think of the motion as if it were a Koan.

Instead of seeing the motion and thinking “What are the arguments I can win on, that are related to the motion?” you articulate a response to the motion that does not seek to use it as an instrument to win its own particularities. You instead articulate persuasive belief that the motion will serve as an example.

A Koan is designed to separate the practitioner from the limits of reason, rational, and logical thinking. But this, from the point of view of a rhetorician, is merely a transition into another type of discourse. Zen and Chuan masters are not looking for the correct answer, for a check box when they are evaluating what students say when responding to a Koan. They are looking for a much deeper understanding, and it comes in the form of a way of speaking and engaging the speech of others. This discourse is rooted in the experiences of the everyday, but articulates these experiences and this information differently.

4 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Zen Keys* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 52.

5 Hanh, *Zen Keys*, 52.

It attempts to critically question deep assumption and hierarchy. The koan is an opportunity to speak critically and display one's mind in hopes of enlightening others. The debate motion, if treated this way, could serve the same purpose, benefiting debaters both competitively and educationally.

This suggestion is esoteric, so deeper comparison with what Zen masters look for to determine if a monk has reached satori, or understanding is in order. Here are some of the principles of evaluation for practitioners of Zen Buddhism:

The "awakened" person naturally refuses to occupy the position of disciple, whose commentary is ipso facto "deluded." He insists rather on seizing and holding the position of master in the dialogue, which means that he must be prepared not only to comment on the root case, but to pass critical judgment on his teacher's remarks as well when the teacher tries the usual gambit of putting him in his place. The confidence to stand one's ground in this situation comes from understanding the basic message of Chou-chou's 'not' (and many other Ch'an/Zen dialogues) which is simply that words and signs utterly fail to convey the true dharma.⁶

The origin of the term Koan is a legal one, meaning "public case" - like the modern practice of stare decisis, where case law is commented upon to apply it to a contemporary legal question. One can therefore think of koans, at least in their origin, as a discursive challenge not unlike debating. The challenge is: Can you provide a commentary that can both explain anew, and keep in tone with the previous ruling? This spiritual stare decisis is the pedagogical tool of the master to see if the student is "getting it" - are they making sense within the rhetorical order of Zen? Are they making a valuable contribution with their words to the understanding of those who hear? Are they making an impact on the thought of those who are listening? This is where the koan breaks with traditional debate practice as mental gaming. The value to those listening is considered both above winning a contest and a central part of the evaluation of that contest just the same. When we discuss adjudication standards along the lines of "general persuasiveness," we are speaking closer to the way koan practice is evaluated. But when we discuss the tactics of what the motion allows us to "get away with," we lose sight of the broader and more critical component of debating.

6 T. Griffith Foulk, "The Form and Function of Koan Literature: A Historical Overview," in Steven Heine and Dale S. Wright, Eds., *The Koan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 41.

Foulk points out that the first step is to "stand one's ground," to occupy the position of the teacher, and to speak with confidence. What is important for my analogy between koans and motions here is that the confidence stems from understanding the "basic message" of the koan and making sure all arguments are relevant to the center. Frequently we see debates where the "basic message" is not only lost, but since it is absent, the speaker fails to perform even the most basic elements of confidence? Confidence comes not from what you think you know, but from your approach to the motion. Do you allow the basics of the motion to inform your speech, or do you allow your confrontation with the motion to determine your speech? In the metaphor to koan practice, the choice is clear – the confrontation of the whole self with the question is the genesis of a proper answer. Intellectualizing with semantics or other “gaming” methods will only lead to failure to grasp the principles, and judgment against your understanding on that question.

Foulk described his second criteria describes as a reversal of, “the prohibition against the interpretation of koans as symbol systems. All authoritative commentary, as modeled in the discourse records and koan collections, is grounded in the principle that the language of the old cases is figurative and the actions they report are symbolic. Clever commentary may acknowledge and play with the literal meaning of a saying, but it must never fail to interpret and respond to the figurative meaning.

By the same token, the comments themselves must be couched in indirect speech. The real sin of intellectualism or discursive thought does not consist in the act of interpretation, as Ch’an/Zen masters like to pretend, but in the expression of one’s interpretation in direct, expository language.”⁷

Foulk’s meaning here is a warning not to mistake a direct style for a good interpretation of a question. This means, I believe, that debaters are advised to treat all motions as if they were open. Why? Too often, the debater is imprisoned by the directness and simplicity of the motion - they merely argue what they think the motion logically includes.

But with the first step in mind, with basic understanding and the confidence of the self in confrontation with the koan in mind, why not approach the motion as something that is the base, not the telos, of one's argumentation? The "sin of intellectualism" might not apply to debaters, but perhaps it does in altered form - nobody likes a debate that sounds “debatey.” People like a debate that sounds persuasive. They like speakers that clearly make their point and back it up with interesting, relevant statements. They like speakers who speak with the

⁷ Foulk, “Form and Function,” 41.

appearance of the master in the moment. The “sin of direct language,”⁸ as Foulk puts it, is an indictment of directness. Stylistic remarks, the use of metaphor, analogy, and narrative, and the richness of the persuasive moment are not served when one speaks like an equation. Logic is in service to the debater, reason and rationality are too, but are not speech. Treating the motion as open allows you to use it as an example for your points, and argue something that the example would prove. Forwarding this idea might help debaters access those larger principles, values, and ideas that center and craft good debates. Now the requirements of the round and logic serve you.

Foulk concludes his criteria by making sure that we recognize that for all of Zen’s seriousness, full sight of the place of the koan is never lost: “Finally, the satori that gives one master over koans is traditionally expressed in statements to the effect that tone will never again be tricked or sucked in by the words of the patriarchs, which is to say, by the koan genre itself. . . Not to be sucked in is to realize that the words could not possibly embody or convey awakening, and that their imputed profundity is actually a function of the literary frame in which they appear. To fully master the koan genre, in other words, one must realize that it is in fact a literary genre with a distinct set of structures and rules, and furthermore that it is a product of the poetic and philosophical imagination.”⁹

As a direct analogy, we all need to realize that success in debating is predicated on the artificial rules of debating, and on the community of debaters who treat debate, past rounds, and excellent past speakers as a “literature” from which one can extract the standards of excellence. With the advent of inexpensive digital video and internet access, the breadth of this literature and its development will only continue. It’s good to watch past rounds and past champions, but it is also good to recognize their success is not crafted of shale, but as fluid as the standards of our always expanding, always altering international debate community.

Additionally, for the koan to be answered sufficiently by the student, the master must see that the student realizes that truth is an "arm's length" away. This is the realization that the requirements of form, genre, and appropriateness deserve due deference. And here in the koan tradition, there is nothing above, nothing superior, to the format of the koan interview. Why would this be a valuable step in the training of practitioners?

⁸ ibid

⁹ Foulk, “Form and Function,” 41.

One speculative answer is that the training must be specific. If one is dealing with something as important and precious as enlightenment, one had better not ignore the things that make human judgment possible - things like culture, community norms, and the like. In rhetoric, these are the most important considerations: Appropriateness, Decorum, and Timeliness (or Timing). They make meaningful speech possible. And when one only has limited words to convey what should be done, what could be more important? For debaters, the recognition that style can be imprisoning is important – yet it is equally important to realize its importance in making judgment possible. Recognizing deference to style is key in avoiding the fallacy of equating particular in-round practices with argumentative success.

Debate is a game, debate is not a game. The truth of either statement is hard to deny or defend. Deference to the genre helps us realize the limits in both statements. It helps us understand the interconnectivity. Opposites become essential to each other. Like the Taoist symbol of the yin-yang we find debate as advocacy training and debate as competitive intellectual game. The same is true for the koan - at once school exercise/graduation requirement and what you will be doing for the rest of your life as a Zen master. There is no distinction between the exam and the practice - and I feel debate, as important training toward a life of serious engagement with the world, should aspire to nothing less.

Thich Nhat Hahn's call to embrace the issue of Bat Nha as a personal investigation should not be seen as valuable only to those seeking enlightenment in Buddhism, but also to those who engage in the practice of debate. Without serious, deep engagement with each issue debated, one risks the loss of valuable self-improvement to the mind and being behind the arguments. In the end it is the transformation of the person debating and not the decision that is most important: The value of debating comes out of debating as an act. This essay has hopefully highlighted the importance of practice in reaching improvement as a debater. As Thich Nhat Hahn writes, "What is the good of discussing a musical masterpiece? It is the performance that counts."¹⁰

¹⁰ Hahn, *Zen Keys*, 140.

RESULTS

The Monash Debating Review would like to congratulate:

World University Debating Championships

Host: Koç University (Turkey)

Champions: University of Sydney A (Christopher Croke & Steve Hind)

Runners Up: Harvard (Adam Chilton & Cormac Early) London School of Economics (Rushabh Ranavat & Art Ward) Oxford (Jonathan Leader Maynard & Shengwu Li)

Best Speaker: Shengwu Li (Oxford University)

ESL Champions: Tel Aviv University

ESL Runners Up: IIUM, Haifa, Leiden

ESL Best Speaker: Manos Moschpoulous (Athens)

Masters Champions: Hybrid (Derek Lande & Jason Rogers)

EFL Champions: Moscow State Institute of International Relations

EFL Best Speaker: Filip Dobranic (Ljubljana)

Public Speaking Champion: Riva Gold (McGill)

Comedy Champion: Josh Taylor (Griffith University)

AustralAsian Intersivity Debating Championships

Host: University of Auckland, New Zealand

Champions: Victoria University of Wellington (Udayan Mukherjee, Stephen Whittington, Ella Edginton)

Runners Up: University of Auckland (Stephanie Thompson, Akif Malik, Katherine Errington)

Best Speaker: Victor Finkel (Monash University)

ESL Champions: Korea University (Seth Kang, Claire Minyoung Kim, Junbin Yun)

ESL Runners UP: Multimedia University of Melaka (Alexander Loh, Diane Maretelle, Tlotlo Galiemelwe)

United Asian University Debating Championships

Host: Assumption University (Thailand)

Champions: Ateneo de Manila University (Walter Wong, Cecile Gotamco, Danielle de Castro)

Runners Up: Nanyang Technology University (Parvathy Prem, Anindya Dutta, Satya Venugopal)

Best Speaker: Satya Venugopal (Nanyang Technology University)

European University Debating Championships

Champions: Kings Inn A (Patrick Rooney and Eoghan Casey)

Runners Up:

ESL Champions: Ljubljana A (Filip Muki Dobranic & Maja Cimerman)

Best speaker: Fred Cowell (University of London)

ESL Best Speaker: Jeroen Heun (Erasmus University)

North American Debating Championships

Host: York University, Canada

Champions: MIT (Adam Goldstein & Bill Magnuson)

Runners Up: McGill (Saro Setrakian & Sean Stefanik)

Best Speaker: Richard Lizius (University of Toronto)

Australian Intersarsity Novice Debating Championships

Host: University of Melbourne, Australia

Champions: University of Sydney Union (Bronte Lambourne, Nina Ubaldi, Tom Williamson)

Runners Up: University of Queensland (Emily Chalk, Lucy Wark, Rebecca Conrick)

Best Speaker: Dominic Bowes (University of Sydney Union)

Australian British Parliamentary Championships

Host: University of Sydney, Australia

Champions: University of Sydney (Steve Hind & Chris Croke)

Runners Up: University Monash (Steve Amit Golder & Tim Jeffrie), University of Sydney (Tim Mooney & Bronwyn Cowell) and Monash University (Colette Mintz & Nita Rao)

Best Speaker: Seamus Coleman (University of Melbourne)

Canadian National Debating Championships

Host: University of Alberta, Canada

Champions: McGill University (Sophie MacIntyre & Vinay Mysore)

Runners Up: McGill University (Saro Setrakian & Sean Stefanik)

Best Speaker: Sean Stephanik (McGill University)

Public Speaking Champion: Christopher McMillan (University of Calgary)

World Universities Peace Invitational

Champions: University of Sydney (Bronwyn Cowell & Tim Mooney)

Runners Up: University of Sydney A (Chris Croke & Steve Hind), Ateneo De Manila University (Ely Zosa & Gica Mangahas) and Ateneo De Manila University (Vicenzo Tagle & Shiveena Pramanand)

Pan-African University Debating Championships

Host: University of Botswana, Botswana

Champion: Rhodes University (Clive Eley & Ingrid Cloete)

Runners Up: University of Botswana (Ruth Mulenga & Umar Segadimo), University of Namibia (John Haufiku & Albert Titus), University of Free State (Moses Masitha & Mhlanganisi Madlongolwana)

Best Speaker: Clive Eley (Rhodes University)



MONASH DEBATING R e v i e w

For enquiries of the Monash Debating Review or to become an Update list member (keeping you informed) email:

mdr.orders@gmail.com

For submission guidelines, important dates for our next edition and past edition extracts please email us or visit online at:

www.monashdebaters.com/mdr

MONASH ASSOCIATION OF DEBATORS

www.monashdebaters.com

The Monash Association of Debaters (MAD) has established itself as a pre-eminent force in international debating and is now regarded as one of the most successful debating societies in the world. In the previous twelve months, MAD hosted and won the Australasian Debating Championships and was a Grand-Finalist at the World universities Debating Championships.



MONASH ASSOCIATION OF DEBATORS SECRETARIAT 2010

President: Kiran Iyer
Vice-President: Gemma Buckley
Secretary: Luke McGreevy
Treasurer: Dominic Guinane

*MAD is supported by the Office of the Vice Chancellor at Monash University
The Monash Debating Review benefits from that support*

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Established in 1962, MAD is involved in university debating in a number of ways:

- Through training and hosting competitions for members;
- Participation at the national, regional and global level of intervarsity debating; and,
- Active participation on representative bodies such as AIDA council and the WUDC

We provide strong support to women in debating, and also play an active role in encouraging participation by traditionally non-English speaking regional neighbours. We aim to enhance the role of debate in society by organizing and staging public debates and promoting the importance of debating through participation in media and policy discussion

Email us: monash_debaters@hotmail.com Visit us: www.monashdebaters.com



The Monash JD

Your Law Degree

The Master of Laws (Juris Doctor) gives non-law graduates the academic qualifications needed to practise law.

- Accredited law degree in under 3 years
- Work while you study
- Convenient CBD location
- Wide range of electives to choose from in specialist areas
- Small class sizes, quality teaching, interactive learning environment

To register for upcoming information sessions visit

www.law.monash.edu.au/jd

For further information

email: monashjd@law.monash.edu.au or phone (03) 9903 8500

CRICOS Provider: Monash University 00008C



MONASH University
Law