

A Call For Criteria

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ABSTRACT

Defining terms and goals is one of the most important issues in any decision making process. This thesis will examine the role of criteria in CEDA debate.

It will begin by examining the history of academic debate and the evolution of CEDA. The role of criteria in both NDT debate and CEDA debate will be examined. It will then examine the past and current theory regarding criteria and the move on to an analysis of two different ways of viewing criteria: criteria as a rule and criteria as a definition.

Finally, it will advocate a strict prima facie standard for criteria and conclude with an analysis of two recent debate topics.

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CHAPTER I -- THE ROOTS OF CEDA

A Brief History of NDT

Academic debate has existed for thousands of years. Its origins go all the way back to the ancient Greeks. Wood and Midgley (1989) refer to the infamous sophist Protagoras as "the father of debate," (p. 5).

However, intercollegiate debate has emerged only in the past 120 years. Wood and Midgley (1989) say the first intercollegiate debate occurred between Harvard and Yale in 1892 or between the Universities of Wisconsin and Minnesota in 1893 (p. 5). Bartanen and Frank (1991), however, report that the first debates were held in the 1870's (p. 8).

While the experts do not agree on the date of the first debate, they do agree on what these activities looked like. They were extraordinarily popular events on campus drawing more people than even football games (Bartanen and Frank, 1991). Huge audiences would turn out to hear the debaters. Debate teams had as many as five members, who gave oratorical, memorized speeches (Wood and Midgley, 1989; and Bartanen and Frank, 1991).

The occasional debate scheduled between two schools was the norm until 1923 when Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas, hosted the first intercollegiate debate tournament (Wood and Midgley, 1989). This tournament was probably the most significant innovation in academic debate.

The introduction of tournament debating forced a variety of changes in the activity itself. The changes included limiting

speaking times and reducing teams to two members (Wood and Midgley, 1989).

Under the tournament model created in 1923 and refined after World War II (Wood and Midgley, 1989) several schools gathered at one place to debate. This is the same model used today.

Each school brings several two-person debate teams. Each team completes six to eight preliminary debates against different teams from other schools, and a different judge decides which team wins each debate. The most successful teams advance to the elimination rounds to begin a series of single elimination playoffs until there is only one team left. That team is the tournament winner.

As tournament debating grew so did reliance on a single debate topic -- a single resolution. The first national resolution was selected in 1923. That topic was used at all tournaments within the academic year.

In 1947, the U. S. Military Academy at West Point sponsored the first National Debate Tournament, or NDT. This tournament determined the first national champion team.

The nature of the national resolution gained a measure of consistency from year to year. The debate community chose a single policy resolution for an entire academic year. In a policy resolution, the team supporting the resolution must support a plan or law that it thinks congress or some other governing organization should adopt.

Debate became a highly competitive activity. Each team needed to win enough rounds to qualify for the NDT. Additionally, there

was a good deal of prestige in winning tournaments.

One of the most obvious manifestations of this competitiveness was an increase in delivery speed. Since the speeches in a debate round all have time limits, debaters who wanted to make more arguments had to speak more quickly. Debaters wanted to make more arguments in an effort to overwhelm the other team, which then also had to speak more rapidly to respond to all the arguments the other team advanced. To many people, these speaking rates seem incomprehensible. However, with practice most debaters and judges have no trouble understanding a debater who speaks quickly but enunciates well. After all, despite the fact that the normal conversational speaking rate is 125 words per minute, humans can listen at a rate of 400 to 600 words per minute (Glatthorn and Adams, 1983). The average speaking rate in the finals at the NDT was 284 words per minute (Colberg, 1991) -- well within human hearing capabilities.

In order to gain yet another competitive advantage in the 1960's, affirmative teams began arguing "squirrel cases" (Tomlinson, 1983). A squirrel case is one that interprets the resolution in a very narrow, unexpected sense. When an affirmative team used this strategy, they were hoping to catch the negative team unprepared.

As these changes went on, the research burden on debate teams increased dramatically. Between tournaments, debaters basically needed to live in the library. The more evidence a debater could find, in the form of quotes from qualified sources, the better

prepared that debate team would be. Debaters could advance few arguments without an evidence "card" to support their arguments.

Debate theory began to stabilize in the 1950s and 1960s (Wood and Midgley, 1989). With the basics settled, the activity grew more complex. A new debater had to learn an entirely new language, a series of concepts essential in understanding how debate worked. This language barrier, combined with the heavy research burden and high delivery speed, made it very difficult for the inexperienced debater to meet with any success (Wood and Midgley, 1989).

Many people within the debate community considered these changes an abuse of the debate activity. The communication process had been obliterated. It was only a matter of time before some sort of revolt occurred.

The Birth of CEDA

In 1971, Jack Howe along with five other debate coaches formed the Southwest Cross Examination Debate Association in response to what they felt were abuses in the debate community (Bartanen and Frank, 1991). Later, this new form of debate would drop the word "Southwest" and become known simply as CEDA. The traditional form of debate became known by the name of its most popular tournament - - NDT (the National Debate Tournament).

According to Howe (1981), CEDA was formed as a reaction "against a prevailing style of debate that both participants and their directors found increasingly difficult to support," (p. 1). Howe (1981) describes three main differences between CEDA and NDT. CEDA differs "1) in its attitudes toward evidence; 2) in delivery

techniques; and 3) in its emphasis on an audience-oriented approach to debate," (p. 1).

For Howe (1981), CEDA needed to strive for a better balance between evidence and analysis. Students should be able to think on their own and support their arguments with something other than a plethora of "cards." Debaters should use logic and analysis along with evidence for their arguments. But they don't need to use evidence for every point they make. According to Howe (1981), "The good CEDA debater has, and uses, evidence, but his stock of materials is numbered in the hundreds of items as opposed to the thousands required for NDT competition," (p. 1).

Howe (1981) also wanted a drastic decrease in delivery speed. If the speaker does not have enough time to make all of his points, then he shouldn't try to make so many. Judges should also be forgiving of this if a speaker does not respond to certain arguments due to a lack of time. The debater who speaks too quickly is failing to communicate properly.

Howe's (1981) third difference between NDT and CEDA is related to the evidence-analysis balance and the slower rate of delivery. The CEDA debater should have a more audience-oriented approach. That means not, "addressing [the judge] . . . as a machine-like evidence analyzer," (p. 2). Speeches in a debate should have a more oratorical flair and feature both introductions and conclusions. A debater should also be willing to make every effort to bring humor into the debate. It makes the audience a little more comfortable and can make a team more effective (Howe, 1983).

Wood and Midgley (1989) describe five main differences between the two styles of debate: 1) CEDA uses two topics a year; 2) CEDA uses propositions of value instead of propositions of policy; 3) the CEDA points system rewards schools instead of individual teams in an effort to encourage squad cohesion; 4) CEDA has a shorter season per topic (the topic changes at semester); 5) CEDA has a better balance among evidence, reasoning, and delivery.

While CEDA may be far from reaching these goals in 1993, they are not moot. These goals have defined, in a large part, the context in which CEDA exists. They are the reason many schools have joined the organization; and schools have joined in droves. In 1971, only 18 schools competed in CEDA (Tomlinson, 1983). By 1985, however, 300 schools were competing (Wood and Midgley, 1989).

By referring to the goals of Howe (1981) and the tremendous growth of CEDA, there is a tendency to see CEDA as a better form of debate than NDT. The important thing, though, is not to set up some sort of hierarchy, but to simply allow that the two activities are different. In fact, for Loudon and Austin (1983) these differences should not be attacked, but, rather, "celebrated" (p. 7). "It should be clear by now that both NDT and CEDA debate operate from different pedagogical models, each offering important contributions to a complete forensics education" (Louden and Austin, 1983, p. 9).

Criteria in NDT

While it may be difficult to tell a CEDA debate from an NDT debate by watching how debaters speak (the CEDA world has been speeding up ever since its inception), there's a marked difference in the debate theory each style embraces. There is one significant deviation -- the Spring 1993 CEDA topic -- which I will discuss in more detail in Chapter V. By debate theory I mean the guiding principle that determine what to argue, how to argue, and why an argument matters.

There are three main types of propositions: propositions of policy, value, and fact. NDT has, since the 1920's used only propositions of policy, while CEDA has been more closely associated with value debate. However, it is impossible to completely separate value debate from all policy implications. No CEDA resolution has ever done that, and it is unlikely to do so in the future. Usually, CEDA topics fall somewhere in between the policy world and the value realm. The distinction is best made by Bartanen and Frank (1991): ". . . policy and value debate consider policy making in different ways. To think that value debate discusses abstract or philosophical values is errant. Most value debate resolutions (for better or worse) concern the value implications of a policy decision." (p. 10)

Different types of resolutions call for different types of criteria. Criteria, in its most basic form, is the tool the debate judge uses to decide which team has won the debate. And since a criteria of some sort is always used when a judge makes a decision

in a debate round, it is probably the most important issue in a debate. In CEDA the term "criteria" has become both singular and plural. Debaters rarely use the word "criterion," though some do occasionally use the word "criterias." For this discussion I will use only the word "criteria."

There is a major difference in the way CEDA and NDT approach criteria. In NDT, criteria has basically been settled for 30 years or so. In CEDA, criteria is often argued in each round.

In NDT or policy debate, the resolution demands that the United States government, or some other governing body, adopt a policy to meet certain goals. The affirmative team presents a plan to meet those goals. The judge must determine whether or not the plan should be adopted.

In order to make that decision, the judge usually relies on traditional "stock issues": significance, inherency, workability, solvency, advantages/disadvantages, and topicality. The resolution calls for a change in the status quo, and the affirmative must show that a change is justified, and the change they are mandating is a good one. They do this in relation to the six stock issues, and the judge decides whether the "case", or first affirmative speech, meets these burdens.

At first glance, it may seem that this policy criteria is biased against the affirmative team. However, these are reasonable questions to ask of any plan that seeks to change a status quo. If the problem is not significant, it probably does not justify a change in federal policy. If the problem is not inherent in the

status quo, then changing policy won't solve the problem. If the plan is not workable, adopting it would be counterproductive. If the disadvantages of the plan outweigh its advantages, it would be foolish to adopt it. And if the plan is not topical, the affirmative may be presenting a good plan, but they are not affirming the particular resolution.

NDT is often seen as being based on stock issues, and not criteria, which is often associated solely with CEDA. However, stock issues are criteria. They form a criteria of efficacy for evaluating affirmative teams. They explain how to decide who wins a debate. If an affirmative team wins all six of these issues, they can win the round. If the negative team wins one, however, the negative team will win the round.

Criteria has a similar function in CEDA, though it takes a very different form. In NDT, debaters are not likely to argue over whether or not a team is obligated to show workability or inherency. Those burdens are just assumed. Two teams may argue over whether or not the affirmative plan is workable, but they will argue that for the affirmative to win, the affirmative must demonstrate that the plan is workable. Zarefsky (1981) said, "But we don't notice the criteria [in NDT debate] because . . . there exists a fairly broad consensus as to both the rules and the process by which one demonstrates their application" (p. 15).

In CEDA, due in part to the way resolutions are worded and the fact that they shift back and forth along the policy-value continuum, consensus about criteria does not exist. And so in a

CEDA round, debaters will argue over what constitutes an acceptable criteria, as well as how they meet it. While it is rare to argue over the appropriate criteria in NDT, it is quite common in CEDA. This is probably the most fundamental difference between CEDA and NDT.

The remainder of this paper, will explore the evolution of criteria in CEDA, some new ideas about criteria, and finally some implications of accepting or rejecting criteria in the debate world.

CHAPTER II -- THE EVOLUTION OF CRITERIA

Over the years criteria has become an essential element in CEDA. Criteria is crucial in a CEDA debate -- it decides how we debate. By explaining what a resolution means and how its merits should be weighed, criteria sets the framework for the entire debate.

No one said, though, "Let there be criteria." Criteria has evolved and grown while CEDA evolved and grew. Different debate theorists contributed bits and pieces to criteria theory through conferences, ballots, and articles.

One of the earliest was Zarefsky (1980). He divided a debate judge's job into two parts. "First, each type of non-policy question requires judgement on the standards or criteria for decision -- the decision rule," (p. 15). If the affirmative team introduces their criteria and the negative team introduces a counter-criteria, the judge must first decide which criteria to use when making a decision. "The means of resolving the dispute are themselves subject to argument," (Zarefsky, 1980, p. 15). Deciding how to decide is one of the most important decisions a judge can make. Once the judge makes that decision, part two of the job begins. Zarefsky (1980) said that, "Second, a judgement must be made as to whether the circumstances in question satisfy the conditions stipulated in the decision rule," (p. 15). In other words, the judge must then apply the criteria, or decision-making process, to the arguments advanced by the affirmative and negative teams.

Brownlee (1980) said that evaluating non-policy resolutions by looking at values in a vacuum is just plain silly. He points out, "Propositions that entail extrinsic values are most common in academic debate," (p. 43). It is only possible to weigh values in terms of what they promote. "If there is no evidence that the item under consideration can serve as a means to accepted end-states of existence, then the advocate cannot claim that the item possesses extrinsic value," (Brownlee, 1980, p. 45). Therefore, Brownlee (1980) felt that it is appropriate to evaluate a round using criteria borrowed from policy debate -- ill, blame, cure, and cost. While many later theorists would reject the strict policy interpretation advocated by Brownlee (1980), the idea that a value in the resolution should lead to something else, usually another value, would become a major component of criteria.

Vasilius (1980) argued that all debate must ultimately consider values. Even in NDT, "the sanctity of human life, the desirability of efficiency, equity, the need to save money are integral to debate," (p. 50). Because different propositions need to be argued differently, however, criteria becomes a central issue.

Vasilius (1980) argued that criteria ought to be considered a type of topicality argument. "In value debate, without a plan to serve as a validation of topicality, the affirmative case stands as the sole interpretation of the resolution. It is, therefore, not a partial issue. If the negative succeeds in winning topicality, there is a total victory. It is a winner take all, definitely,"

(p.52). And since criteria explains how case interprets the resolution, it becomes a key issue in the topicality dispute.

For Vasilius (1980), the affirmative had tremendous latitude in choosing its criteria. "The failures of the status quo may be qualitative, quantitative, philosophical, or a combination of ills. The failure may, depending on the skill of the affirmative team, be identified as past, present or future. The criteria may come from God or some other unascertainable source," (p. 52). Even though the affirmative can lose the round because their criteria is not topical, Vasilius (1980) still gave them a great deal of flexibility in choosing it.

Kelly (1981) agreed that criteria is a form of topicality and that topicality should be a voting issue. "Topicality is an arguable issue to value debate since criteria for the value is set up in terms of definitions," (p. 10). Further, the main focus of the affirmative team must remain with the resolution. "In a non-policy debate, a value must be supported by a system without exception. Thus, a topicality argument in CEDA rests with the affirmative's ability to entirely justify the resolution," (p. 10).

Verch and Logue (1982) detailed the role criteria plays in a debate round in a five-step plan they label "Value Clash Resolution," (p. 27). Under this plan the affirmative must first "identify the value to be affirmed and the value to be refuted" (p. 27) through resolutional analysis. Second, the affirmative should "present the criteria to be used to resolve the value conflict, and demonstrate why it is reasonable for resolving this conflict." (p.

27). The next three steps involve actually using the criteria in the round. The third step is to "apply the criteria to the value to be affirmed and show why the criteria is met," (p. 27). The fourth step is to, "apply the criteria to the value to be refuted and show why the criteria, though reasonable, is not met" (p. 27). And finally, the fifth step is to "demonstrate why winning this value conflict should resolve the conflict over winning the ballot," (p. 27).

This five-step approach is the first concrete structure dealing with the application of criteria. Rather simply saying what criteria is, Verch and Logue (1982) actually explained how to use it.

Jones and Crawford (1984) took the application of criteria a step further. They argued that values are only meaningful in terms of action. We advance or support a value based on the ends of that value. Jones and Crawford (1984) state, "Because value judgements are the basis for policy implementation, consideration of values is dependent upon policy direction" (p. 11). They further state that, "The affirmative demonstrates the merits of the value through the action that the value elicits" (p. 13). If this sounds like a strong case for policy debate in CEDA, it's no coincidence. Jones and Crawford (1984) were strong advocates of a modified policy paradigm for CEDA.

Criteria theory took a major step forward in 1986. Church (1986) was the first to indicate that criteria in and of itself is a prima facie burden of the affirmative team. He says criteria

"should be an a priori [sic] consideration and a requirement of prima facie construction," (p. 32). This means that if the affirmative team fails to provide a usable criteria by the end of the first affirmative constructive (the first speech in a debate round) and the negative team point this out in the next speech, the affirmative team should lose the debate on that issue alone.

This is obviously a very significant burden. For Church (1986), though, that burden made perfect sense. "[T]he necessity of a very specific definition or clear criteria seems almost indisputable," (p. 32). He goes on to say, "Without a method of measurement or evaluation, there is no way to debate the resolution in a meaningful way. Thus, there is no reason for the debate to proceed unless there is a clear method of measurement. . . . Indeed, to continue the debate without a clear definition might even be counterproductive to an intelligent discussion of the topic" (p. 32-33). Since the affirmative's job is to advance the resolution, the affirmative first must be able to define it. If they can't define it clearly through criteria, they can't advance it. And if they can't advance it, they can't win the round.

Cole, Boggs, and Twohy (1986) probably made the most significant advance in criteria theory. While Verch and Logue (1982) were the first to clearly articulate how to use criteria, and Church (1986) was the first to consider criteria a prima facie issue, Cole et al. (1986) were the first to explain the theoretical requirements criteria needs to meet in order to be considered prima facie. They indicated five theoretical standards that a team

should meet when building a criteria or when attacking one as inadequate. They are: early presentation, explicitness, threshold, probability, and justification. Their article and list of burdens serves as a debater's guide to criteria theory.

Early Presentation

There are two levels to the first burden. The first is that criteria must be present in the first affirmative constructive (1AC). The second is that the criteria cannot be self-fulfilling (Cole et al., 1986).

Since criteria defines the resolution and explains what the debate is going to be about, it is essential that it be presented in the first speech. Without a criteria to unify and serve as a focus of argumentation, a debate can easily degenerate into nothing more than dueling oratories. When this happens, a team's chances of winning the round are the same as if they'd simply flipped a coin.

If the negative team does not like the affirmative's criteria, the negative must address that issue in their first speech, the first negative constructive (1NC). Cole et al. (1986) state, "Because of the prima facie and jurisdictional nature of criteria, the negative team must address the affirmative's criteria in the first negative speech. Failure to do so grants the affirmative criteria as the only jurisdiction in the round" (p. 38).

Since definitions and criteria are designed to clarify and give direction to the round, it is important that the criteria not be too biased towards the affirmative team. It must be possible

for either team to win the debate under the affirmative's criteria. Cole et al. (1986) state, "It should be noted that this establishment of jurisdiction must not be self-fulfilling for either team, but that it allow for competing values to be compared. For example, an established standard for measurement is necessary to compare which is more important, democracy or capitalism" (p. 38). Under this example, a criteria that argued that "whichever system best promoted majority rule should win" would be a bad criteria because it is obviously self fulfilling.

Explicitness

The next Cole et al. (1986) burden is explicitness. A criteria needs to be explicit in the 1AC. "A criterion is vague when, in the context of [the] resolution, no clear meaning can be attached to the evaluative word or phrase," (p. 38). An example would be a criteria that argued "whichever team best supports the public interest should win the round."

"The public interest" is a phrase that means different things to different people. For some it means doing what the public wants, for others it means whatever encourages economic growth, for still others it may mean whatever helps the people grow as moral individuals. There are so many different meanings for the term that by itself, it is almost entirely vacuous. It clarifies nothing. Thus, it would create a vague criteria. And, as Cole et al. (1986) argued, "Arguing a vague criterion without specifying a territory is fallacious argumentation and leads to unclear analysis" (p. 39).

Threshold

The next burden a criteria must meet is that of threshold. In the debate world, as in the real world, things are rarely black and white. There's a whole lot of grey. Often, debaters find themselves arguing within those grey zones. However, a judge still needs to make a decision to vote for the affirmative or the negative team -- a black and white decision. Thus -- a threshold, or point at which the affirmative team meets its criteria and, thus, justifies the resolution -- is needed so that both teams and the judge clearly understand what it would take for either team to receive the ballot. Failure to provide a threshold is, again, a failure to meet a prima facie burden.

Probability

The next burden is that of probability. If the affirmative team is claiming that cataclysmic actions will result unless the affirmative value is implemented, then the affirmative must be able to demonstrate that such calamities are very likely. "For example, it would be reasonable for a negative team, when confronted with an affirmative claim that any risk of future harm justifies the resolution to demand . . . a high probability that this harm would actually occur" (Cole et al., 1986, p. 40). If an affirmative wants to argue such a case without showing probability, the negative can win on that issue alone.

Justification

The final burden of criteria is that of justification. "Probably the most overlooked aspect of criteria argumentation is not the criteria themselves, but the justification of the criteria" (Cole et al., 1986, p. 40). Since criteria makes such a significant difference in a round, it is essential that the affirmative team justifies it. That is, they must explain why the other team and judge should accept the value system -- or philosophical system or value hierarchy or way of thinking -- that serves as the basis of the criteria. If the affirmative team cannot show why their criteria is an appropriate one, then the affirmative case should be rejected.

Cole et al. (1986) also discuss the issue of counter-criteria. They state, "Because criteria are prima facie in nature, the negative can refute the affirmative criteria and thus justify a negative ballot" (p. 41). The negative can also offer counter criteria, however. "By providing alternative criteria the negative established a method by which the affirmative case can be shown to fail to measure up to the resolution. Counter-criteria also provide a means, other than the affirmative's criteria, by which the negative off case argumentation may be weighed," (Cole et al., 1986, p. 41). Counter-criteria must meet the same five burdens that affirmative criteria must meet: early presentation, threshold, explicitness, probability, and justification.

Counter-criteria, however, has shaky theoretical support. In order for counter-criteria to be advanced, the negative must show

that the affirmative criteria fails to meet at least one of its burdens. However, since criteria is a prima facie issue, and failure to meet all five burdens means the affirmative loses the round, counter criteria is theoretically moot as are all other issues in the round. If the affirmative criteria meets all of its burdens, it is the only criteria that matters and counter-criteria is again moot. The only reason that counter-criteria even exists is a strategic one in a debate round. If a judge is reluctant to decide the round on a single prima facie issue, counter criteria gives that judge an additional reason to vote for the negative team.

Since the publication of the Cole et al. (1986) article, there have been very few new advances in criteria. Many articles written since then deal with an aspect of criteria, often getting a little more detailed, but nothing revolutionary or evolutionary has been published.

Brownlee (1987) took a similar approach to Cole et al. (1986), when he articulated his own standards for criteria. His standards are: clarity, relevance, consistent application, and good support. The only standard not included by Cole et al. (1986) was consistent application. In this, Brownlee means, a criteria cannot contain multiple exceptions. "The more exceptions that exist to the application of a criterion, the less certainty that the criteria should be employed in this instance. [sic] . . . The standard of consistency, then, can be taken as a measure of the criterion's relative importance and validity" (Brownlee, 1987, p.60). Thus,

while Cole et al. (1986) approach this standard in their discussion of threshold, they never quite articulate it. Brownlee's (1987) standards, however, are rarely employed as arguments in and of themselves.

Gill (1988) calls for an increased focus on the justification of criteria as a way of stopping catastrophic argumentation. "Although catastrophes can be of any species, the catastrophe of choice seems to be nuclear war. Using unrelated evidence and a deductive chain of reasoning, the conclusion of one argument is linked to the major premise of another by a common or similar word or phrase in the evidence that is, more likely than not, used in different contexts by the authors cited," (Gill, 1988, p. 38). Since 1988, the "catastrophe of choice" has shifted from nuclear war to "eco-death" or destruction of the environment. The point is the same, though. The other team's action are going to cause a chain of events that will kill us all.

Besides the shaky argumentation and out-of-context link cards in the arguments themselves, catastrophic argumentation has also hurt criteria. Gill (1988) states, "An accompanying phenomenon of the move to such catastrophic arguments by teams is the underdevelopment, or disappearance altogether, of criteria as standards for judgment" (p. 38). In such cases, criteria is dying because debaters do not try to justify a criteria and say why a value or goal other than life may be important. Gill (1988) explains that teams that make catastrophic arguments simply assume that the judge will apply a criteria of cost-benefit analysis and

that, therefore, tremendous destruction or loss of life will win any debate round. "Even some teams who do not posit a criterion instinctively seem to understand this with their use of the popular jargonistic phrase, 'nuke war outweighs,'" (Gill, 1988, p. 40).

For Gill (1988) the solution is for teams to develop better justification for their criteria and not simply assume that life or survival must always be the highest value. They need to be willing to look to other value systems. Even cost-benefit analysis needs justification if it is to be used as a criteria. It needs to define what a cost is and what a benefit is as well as explain why this weighing mechanism is the most appropriate one to use.

Murphy and Murphy (1990) crystalize a lot of criteria theory. They argue that the role of criteria is to operationalize the resolution, that is, to put it into action and allow it to be debated. They expand on Brownlee (1987) and argue that the most important standard for criteria is resolitional relevance. They explain that if an affirmative wants to prove the resolution true inductively, or by example, they have to explain and justify that approach through criteria. "If one accepts the position that the affirmative has an obligation to prove the resolution true, then the criteria should provide a vehicle through which the judge can make the inductive leap from affirmative to resolution" (Murphy and Murphy, 1990, p. 6).

Most everything else written on criteria in recent years has focused on specific Cole et al. (1986) burdens, different sources on criteria, and how criteria fits into the round. Nothing major, however, has appeared.

CHAPTER III -- TWO APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING CRITERIA

Two basic approaches to criteria emerge from both the literature and practice: a rules approach and a definitional approach. Though they never state it explicitly, Zarefsky (1980) and Verch & Logue (1982) seem to imply that criteria is essential because it functions as a rule. Vasilius (1980), Kelly (1981), and Church (1986), on the other hand, focus more on the definitional aspect of criteria. These ideas are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they are two different ways of achieving the same goal -- a clear, sensible debate.

Regardless of which approach a debater adopts, criteria still must meet the same Cole et al. (1986) standards. Both camps still require a clear, probablistic, justified criteria that is presented in the 1AC with a threshold. The two camps, however, give different reasons why criteria must meet these burdens.

The remainder of this chapter will analyze some of the literature from Chapter II and show how different theorists fall into different camps, first by looking at criteria as the rule in a debate round, and second, by examining criteria as the most important definition in a debate round. Through a deeper analysis of theoretical writings, I hope to reinforce the necessity of focusing on criteria in a debate round.

Criteria as Rules

One of the most important functions that criteria plays is that of rules. Debate can be viewed as a game and, as such, the game needs to be guided by some sort of rule so that everyone knows how to play and how to win. The only rules that are actually written down, however, are structural rules: a debate consists of eight speeches and four cross-examination periods with time limits. Most everything else is up for discussion -- including what each team must do to win the round.

Zarefsky (1980), however, referred to criteria as the "decision-rule" (p. 15). The role criteria played for Zarefsky (1980) was articulating how the topic should be debated. In the absence of stock issues detailing what each team must do to win, criteria became essential. When the judge compares the issues in the debate to the criteria, the judge is determining which arguments are valid under a given rule in a given debate.

Verch and Logue (1982) also fall into this rules camp. When they articulated their five-step "Value Clash Resolution," they were setting up a framework for using the criteria rule in a debate. Their first standard asks the affirmative to present a value and their second asks the affirmative to present a criteria. Once the affirmative has met these burdens, it has demonstrated what will be required of each team to win the ballot. In fact, the final step of "Value Clash Resolution" is for the affirmative to demonstrate why winning the value conflict justifies winning the ballot. In other words, criteria for Verch and Logue (1982) is a

how-to-win guide. By defining these obligations, Verch and Logue (1982) fall squarely into the criteria as rules camp.

To further explore the rules camp of criteria, consider the following example from the fall 1990 CEDA resolution, "Resolved: that government censorship of public artistic expression is an undesirable infringement on individual rights." There are a variety of ways a team can approach this topic. They can take a generic approach and argue at a philosophical level that censorship is always bad. Another option would be to take one or two specific examples and claim that if censorship is bad in these cases, an affirmative ballot is justified. They could combine the two approaches and say that because censorship is bad in one or two cases, it is always bad, and try to prove the resolution inductively. They can argue that censorship is bad because it undermines democracy, creativity, the womyn's movement, the men's movement, the African-American movement, school newspapers, AIDS research, etc.

It is criteria, however, as Zarefsky (1980) said, that decides what the debate will revolve around. And, as Verch and Logue (1982) told us, it is criteria that specifies exactly what each team must do to win. Criteria delineates specific burdens and brings focus to the debate. With all the different ways to argue a topic, criteria becomes a necessary item to prevent one team from arguing Toyotas while the other team is arguing Volkswagens.

Approaching criteria as a rule has another interesting implication. Since the negative team may choose to argue that the

criteria is a not a good one, the two teams are not just debating the topic, but they're also debating the rules for the debate. Zarefsky (1980, p. 15) said, "The means of resolving the dispute are themselves subject to argument." In essence, the debaters are debating how to decide while, at the same time, trying to decide. Often the debaters never agree on criteria, and it's left for the judge to decide the criteria or rules for the round and then to decide which team wins under that particular set of rules.

Criteria as Definition

The other camp views criteria not from a rules perspective, but, rather, from a definitional perspective. It sees criteria as important because criteria defines the competitive ground in the debate. Criteria is simply an extended, pivotal definition.

More specifically, criteria is definition of the evaluative term in the resolution. The evaluative term in a resolution is the word or phrase that the judgment centers around. In the censorship topic, for example, the evaluative term is "undesirable."

Falling into this camp are Vasilius (1980), Kelly (1981), and Church (1986).

While Vasilius (1980) gave the affirmative tremendous freedom in choosing its criteria, she also linked it to topicality. For Vasilius (1980) the affirmative case is the only interpretation of the resolution in the absence of a plan. Thus, as an essential element of the affirmative case, criteria is a key issue. If the case is not topical (i.e. it does not appropriately define the resolution), then the affirmative must lose the debate.

Here, then, criteria becomes a definitional issue. Because the case must interpret the resolution, the case defines the resolution. The part of the case that balances the judges decision, then is also an interpretation of the evaluative term. If this interpretation -- or definition -- is not a valid one, then the affirmative case is not topical and the affirmative should lose the debate.

Kelly (1981) also connected criteria with definitions. Kelly (1981) stated, "criteria for the value is set up in terms of definitions" (p. 10). Thus, the only way to look at values and the evaluative term is to have some sort of weighing mechanism or criteria, one that is embedded within the definition of the evaluative term. For Kelly (1981), to look at criteria without considering its role as a definition is inappropriate.

Church (1986), who argued that criteria is a prima facie obligation of the affirmative team, uses the definitional basis of criteria to advance his theory. Church (1986) requires a "very specific definition or clear criteria" Church (1986, p. 32). Church (1986) felt that it was the burden of the affirmative to advance the resolution. It is impossible to advance the resolution without first defining it, however. The affirmative needed to define the resolution through its criteria.

To see how this definitional perspective works, again, consult the censorship topic from pp. 28-29. When first reading the resolution, it seems like it would be easy enough to understand what "undesirable", the evaluative term, means. On closer

inspection however, the term is actually rather vague. What's undesirable for some people is not necessarily undesirable for someone else. Some people really desire brussel sprouts. Others find them repulsive. The same things occur at the level of government censorship. Some people support it and some don't. That's why it's a debatable topic. But before we can argue whether or not censorship is undesirable, we first must decide what is meant by undesirable.

Dictionary definitions are pretty useless. They offer definitions such as "not desirable" or "not wanted." They simply define one vague term by substituting another vague term. It takes something more to explain the term undesirable so that everyone will understand what it means in a given debate round.

Criteria defines and explains the evaluative term, in this case "undesirable." Criteria will explain what an important value or goal is, why that goal is important, and what the affirmative must do to show how censorship prevents society from reaching that goal. It also articulates what the negative must do in order to meet that goal. After criteria, everyone should know exactly what is meant by undesirable and, therefore, how the round is to be decided.

When the negative attacks criteria, they are saying that the affirmative failed to define the evaluative term in an appropriate way and, hence, their interpretation of the topic is also inappropriate. And if their interpretation of the topic is inappropriate they should lose the round.

Both the rules and the definitional perspectives on criteria are useful and appropriate ones. Regardless of whether criteria is viewed from a rules perspective as Zarefsky (1980) and Verch & Logue (1982) did or whether it's viewed as a definitional issue as Vasilius (1980), Kelly (1981), and Church (1986) did, criteria remains an essential issue.

A judge must have either some sort of rule to determine which team wins the debate, or the judge must know just exactly what a word like "undesirable" means. The theorists are right to refer to criteria as a prima facie issue. As such, criteria must meet certain standards, such as those articulated by Cole, et al. (1986).

CHAPTER IV -- THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CRITERIA

In the preceeding two chapters, this paper has shown how debate theorists view criteria and how two different, but compatible avenues of thought. Now it's time to take this material from the abstract theoretical realm and see how it actually applies in a debate round. This chapter will first examine criteria structure in an affirmative case. Next it will examine the structure a criteria attack, and finally, it will discuss the counter-criteria.

Criteria Structure

The following criteria is taken from an affirmative case I wrote with my Carroll College debate partner, Christopher Huck during the Spring of 1992. The topic was, "Resolved: that advertising degrades the quality of life in the United States." (The complete 1AC is presented in Appendix B. In the sample structures that follow, APA source cites have been omitted in favor of debate "short cites" which seemed more appropriate for establishing context. Full citations appear in the "works cited section of this paper.)

Observation II -- Criteria

A) The value for this round will be the "Market Place of Ideas."

1) Truth depends on the Market Place of Ideas

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

In order for truth to emerge, all ideas must get a fair hearing; there must be a "free market place" of ideas and information. Minorities as well as the strong must have access to the press. This is the theory of the press that was written into

our Bill of Rights.

2) Access to information is a basic human right

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

Access to information is such a basic human right and communication so central in the development of national cultures that these should be considered a common good and a public trust. Information should not be considered simply a marketplace commodity distributed only to those with the capacity to pay.

3) The Market Place of Ideas is directly linked to the quality of life since the quality of life focuses on participation and communication. The Marketplace of Ideas and the quality of life cannot be separated.

B) Market should be controlled by individuals

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

But consider "the market." It holds that the priorities of the society should be determined not by the cake of custom or the directives of the few, but rather by the aggregate of *individual decisions* -- all individuals, not simply the elect or select.

C) The Market Place of Ideas will be weighed through Diversity

1) Definition of Diversity

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

It may be contended that the central issue in the dissemination of ideas and information in the libertarian or neo-liberal media environment is that of diversity. The essence of diversity is that as many voices as possible must be represented.

2) Diversity is needed for truth

Phillips in '86

However, they believed that, through diversity, out of the vast welter of conflicting ideas that would be put before the public, that the truth would emerge, and that it would emerge more effectively than through any efforts to impose standards of truth from the outside or through any other means yet devised. The evidence over 200 years -- at the local courthouse level as well as at the more cosmic levels of Vietnam and Watergate -- is that truth does indeed emerge in this fashion.

3) Specialized Media hurts the Market Place of Ideas

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

Putting it another way, if we have quantitative diversity, there will logically be many different media vehicles available for the expression of differing views. But, if media vehicles are increasingly specialized by interest groups, the views that are likely to be expressed will tend to be comforting rather than controversial, placid rather than provoking. We choose media vehicles to reflect our own relatively narrow interests, and the content reflects these biases.

D) Decision Rule

If the Affirmative team can demonstrate that advertising hurts the Market Place of Ideas through a lack of Diversity, the quality of life has been degraded and an affirmative ballot is justified.

The evaluative term in this resolution is the phrase "degrades the quality of life." In Observation I of this case, quality of life is defined in terms of participation in decision making. Defining the word "degrades" as "to lower in quality or degree" really doesn't clarify the topic. A criteria is necessary to define the issue.

A criteria consists of three parts: a value, a justification, and a weighing mechanism, already mentioned in the previous chapter. Together, these three structures define the evaluative term of the resolution and tell the judge how to decide.

The value indicates the highest goal to be addressed in the debate. In this case, the Market Place of Ideas is the value. The affirmative team then argues that the quality of life has been degraded because the Market Place of Ideas has been hurt.

The competitive "ground" in the debate is now more clearly delineated. The affirmative must show that advertising hurts the Market Place of Ideas. The negative must show that either the

Market Place of Ideas is not being harmed, or that advertising helps the Market Place of Ideas.

Although the issues at stake in the debate are now a little clearer, the criteria still has a ways to go before being useful. A harm to the Market Place of Ideas is easier to measure than a harm to the quality of life, but it is still difficult. And that's when Diversity enters the picture.

This brings us to the second main part of a criteria -- the weighing mechanism. In this criteria, "Diversity" is the weighing mechanism, or decision rule. It determines how to measure a decline in the Market Place of Ideas. A decrease in Diversity equals a harm to the Market Place of Ideas, and, when there is a decrease in the Market Place of Ideas there is a harm to the quality of life.

Consequently, the affirmative team would then demonstrate through the rest of their case that advertising limits differing views, resulting in a decrease in diversity. If they can show this, then the judge should vote for the affirmative team.

The third part of a criteria is the justification. The justification explains why the Market Place of Ideas, evaluated through the framework of Diversity best defines "degrades the quality of life." It is the justification that makes up the bulk of the criteria. Subpoint A (parts one, two, and three); and Subpoint B justify the Market Place of Ideas as the value, while Subpoint C (parts two and three) justify diversity as the weighing mechanism. It is this part of the criteria that Gill (1988)

claimed is being ignored so debaters can build cataclysmic arguments.

Subpoint D brings it all together. It serves as the decision rule and articulates as simply as possible the burdens each team must meet in order to win the round. The rest of the affirmative case is dedicated to showing how the affirmative meets its decision rule.

Negative Options

The negative team has a variety of options for responding to the affirmative criteria. One option is to accept criteria as a whole and agree that the affirmative chose a pretty good criteria. Then, the negative will try to show that the affirmative case does not meet the criteria by refuting arguments in the remainder of the case. Another option is to meet the criteria through off case arguments.

Off case arguments are arguments that the negative advance that don't directly answer an argument advanced by the affirmative. Rather, they answer the thesis of the affirmative case, address an undiscussed implication of the affirmative case, respond to the resolution instead of the affirmative case, or demonstrate some theoretical flaw in the affirmative case.

In other words, the negative may feel that advertising increases diversity by allowing different media vehicles to stay afloat. Or that without advertising, the media would be run by the government, which would also kill diversity. If the affirmative did not argue these positions in the 1AC, they would be considered

off case argument, initiated by the negative team.

The final option for the negative team is the criteria attack.

Criteria Attack

If the negative feels that the affirmative has presented a bad criteria, they can argue that the affirmative has failed to meet its prima facie burden. The affirmative should therefore lose the round. The best way to make this argument is by using an SVI block.

SVI stands for standards, violations, and impacts. It is a structure for clearly arguing that the affirmative has made some sort of procedural error.

The standard is the exact burden that the negative feels the affirmative is not fulfilling. For example, if the negative feels that the criteria is vague, they would use the standard of explicitness, explain what the standard is, and why it is important.

Next is the violation. This is where the negative shows exactly where the criteria is vague, if they can. The negative must show how the standard is not met. If the violation does not concern the standard, the entire argument is moot.

Finally, under impact, the negative explains why the judge should care, usually indicating that the criteria argument is a prima facie, a priori, voting issue.

An SVI block for the Market Place of Ideas criteria would look like this:

A) Standards

- 1) Criteria must be defined

Cole, Boggs, and Twohy in '86

Another requirement in making standards explicit is the avoidance of vagueness. A criteria is vague when, in the context of the resolution, no clear meaning can be attached to the evaluative term or phrase.

- 2) Must be explicit in 1AC

Cole, Boggs and Twohy in '86

All criteria must be explicit. This means that the first affirmative speech must establish a non-vague criteria as a jurisdictional issue that allows for comparison of values.

B) Violations

- 1) The link between the quality of life and the market place of ideas is only a vague argument about participation in government.

- 2) The diversity weighing mechanism is unclear. The affirmative hasn't specified whether diversity is qualitative or quantitative.

C) Impacts

- 1) The affirmative case is not prima facie

Cole, Boggs, and Twohy '86

Specifically, the negative team may present arguments that the affirmative has failed to meet its prima facie burdens - it has failed to present and justify a valid decision rule or value system.

- 2) Prima Facie is an absolute voting issue

Wood and Midgley in '86

If the affirmative does not meet the prima facie burden by the end of the first affirmative constructive speech, they may lose the debate. The reason for this is logical and clear. If the case has not established sufficient reasons to lead a reasonable person to make the judgement called for. . . then no justification for an affirmative decision exists.

This process may seem like it would eliminate debate on the actual topic and allow the activity to degenerate into nothing more than criteria debates round after round. In reality, however, this doesn't happen. Most negative teams are not willing to gamble the entire round on their criteria arguments. Instead, they will use a variety of approaches. They will argue on case that the affirmative doesn't meet their own criteria. They will also pursue off-case arguments in order to maximize their chances of receiving the ballot.

The search for alternative negative strategies has also led to the development of counter-criteria, despite its lack of sound theoretical support.

Counter-Criteria

A counter-criteria is a criteria advanced by the negative team. Reluctant to rely solely on judges' willingness to vote on prima facie issues, many negatives include another impact on the SVI block -- the right to argue counter-criteria.

Cole et al. (1986) posit that counter-criteria must meet the same burdens as normal criteria, in order to be valid. A further obligation is that the negative must first be able to defeat the affirmative criteria or the counter-criteria is inadmissible.

For example, a negative might wish to argue that the best way to determine whether advertising degrades the quality of life is to look at economic considerations. If, however, the affirmative criteria is the Market Place of Ideas, then the negative's economic arguments are completely irrelevant. In order for the arguments to

make any sense, they must be part of an economically based criteria.

So the negative wants to issue a counter-criteria that says the only way to determine the quality of life is to consider economics. The first thing the negative needs to do is to demonstrate how the affirmative criteria is flawed, using an SVI block. Then, they can propose a counter-criteria. If it is a competitive counter-criteria, many affirmative teams will also try to demonstrate why their case meets both their own criteria and the negative counter-criteria. Each team ends up arguing two entirely different interpretations of the topic, but they are still clashing with each other.

While many negatives see counter-criteria as a viable and even necessary element of criteria argumentation, there is one major theoretical flaw with the approach that makes every counter-criteria moot.

If the affirmative criteria is a viable one, or the negative fails to convince the judge that the affirmative is violating some standard, the judge will have to accept the affirmative criteria and never look at counter-criteria. If, on the other hand, the negative succeeds with its SVI block and convinces the judge that the affirmative criteria is bad, then, since criteria is a prima facie issue, the judge should vote negative on that issue alone. Again, there is no need to even look at the counter-criteria.

The only purpose of counter-criteria, it would seem, is to gain ethos and use up a minute and a half of speech time.

CHAPTER V -- CRITERIA AS A PRIMA FACIE ISSUE

Increasingly, theorists are arguing that criteria is not a prima facie issue (Berube, 1990; Meldrum, 1990). These theorists argue that each team should be allowed to present a different criteria and that at the end of the round the judge must then choose the criteria to use.

This movement is frightening.

When criteria becomes unimportant, rounds become muddled, or debates degenerate into impact wars, as each team tries to destroy the world as much as possible.

It's time to reestablish criteria as a prima facie issue.

The main theoretical purpose of criteria is to explain what the debate is about. In order to have coherent argumentation, it is important to focus on one interpretation of the resolution and one definition of the evaluative term. Refocusing on criteria as a prima facie issues will preserve the affirmative right to define terms, increase clash, and help cut down on cataclysmic arguments.

Traditionally, the affirmative team has been given the right to define the terms of the resolution. It would be rather silly to assign that duty to the negative, since the negative doesn't even begin speaking until eleven minutes into the debate. If the negative could define the terms, the entire first affirmative speech would be moot.

With this right, however, comes a measure of responsibility. The definitions chosen by the affirmative must be reasonable enough

that both teams can use them. It is unacceptable for the affirmative to choose definitions that eliminate the negative team before the round even starts. And, of course, criteria is the definition of the evaluative term. Thus the right to define includes the responsibility to select a reasonable criteria for the round. If the affirmative fails to meet this obligation, then the win must be awarded to the negative team.

If there are two criteria in the round, one affirmative and one negative, a couple things happen. First, each criteria will be pragmatically useless. (Theoretically, though, if the affirmative wins only on its criteria, it should win the round. Ballots I have received in my career, however, indicate that this is rarely the reality.) There is no incentive for either team to write a criteria that is balanced. Both criteria will be self-serving. Additionally, there will be less clash. The negative team will not necessarily need to argue the specifics of the affirmative case because they can simply try to impact their own criteria. We end up with dueling oratories -- Toyotas and Volkswagens. Further, the round becomes even more subjective for the judge. The judge must first choose whichever value system she prefers and then decide the round. That means that to win a team must either know their judge's personal value system before the round and write an appropriate criteria, or they need to get lucky.

Keeping criteria as a prima facie issue solves these problems. First of all, there is only one criteria in the round so teams need to debate on the same level, if negative wants any chance of

winning. It is also in the interest of the affirmative, then to write a balanced, explicit, threshold-laden, probabilistic, and justifiable criteria. If they don't, they lose. If they do, then the debate is evenly divided between the affirmative and negative, with a clear focus as to what the round will be about.

Without the option of running a counter-criteria every round, the negative will have to make sure that their arguments link to the affirmative criteria. They will also need to argue more on case if they want to win the round. Thus, a prima facie criteria will lead to increased clash.

The other benefit to making criteria a voting issue should be a decrease in catastrophic and generic argumentation. When the affirmative team writes a criteria, confident that it will be the only one in the round, they will want to avoid a criteria that simply focuses on life or survival. They know that negatives will be prepared to destroy the world several times over if given the opportunity. Since most impact wars amount to little more than a mental coin-flip on the part of the judges, a strategic affirmative will do everything possible to avoid these arguments. And if they don't meet criteria, negative teams won't run them.

It might seem then that this limits ground too much for the negative, but it doesn't. While it does limit the arguments the negative can make, it gives them another avenue as well -- the criteria attack. If the affirmative criteria is self-fulfilling or flawed in any way, and the judge agrees with the negative, the negative wins the round right there. It is in the interest of the

affirmative team to write a balanced criteria, and it is in the interests of the negative to abandon catastrophic arguments.

CHAPTER VI -- RECENT TENDENCIES IN CEDA

Though its evolution has been slow, the use of criteria is an important element in the development of CEDA. Criteria has allowed the activity to change as needed, due to the flexibility of the criteria itself. While NDT achieved basically a theoretical stagnation with its stock issues, CEDA theory has grown.

Unfortunately, CEDA is threatened by recent changes in the way debaters argue criteria. Often they don't. Debaters -- both affirmative and negative -- have a tendency to ignore the criteria altogether and simply go for impact wars of all sorts. No matter what the topic, it seems that the winning team is the one that can destroy the world the most times. Each impact war round turns the activity more and more into NDT. This shift is most evident in the two most recent CEDA topics.

Fall, 1992

Debaters had a tendency to interpret the Fall 1992 topic as a resolution of fact, rather than a resolution of value, quasi-value, or quasi-policy. The topic was, "Resolved that the welfare system exacerbates the problems of the urban poor in the United States."

The difference between a resolution of fact and a resolution of value is a very subtle one. Both are trying to determine some sort of truth. They just go about it in slightly different ways.

Generally, debaters argued that the welfare topic was a resolution of fact if it could be answered yes or no with pragmatic, concrete reasons. A resolution of value, on the other hand, involves a greater focus on values or morals. The affirmative makes its case with reference to the value in criteria.

For example, a resolution of value might read: "Resolved: that honesty is a valuable quality." It is impossible to measure this resolution in a concrete, quantifiable way. The very wording requires reference to values. The topic, no matter how specific the affirmative team may get, will always remain somewhat abstract.

A resolution of fact, on the other hand, might be, "Resolved, that there is more snow on the ground this year than last year at the same time." This topic can be easily quantified. There is nothing abstract about. In fact, any answer other than yes or no simply wouldn't make sense. Once we have an appropriate ruler, we can measure the snow and compare it to records of the previous year to ascertain "the truth."

CEDA theory in general, and criteria theory in particular, have most commonly been associated with value debate, even though pure value topics have been rare. Consequently, when confronted with the welfare topic, which seems much more fact oriented, many debaters argued that criteria was not necessary.

They argued that there is no value inherent in the topic. Therefore, a criteria should not be used. It would force the topic into a value realm -- a realm where it does not belong. This was an especially common tactic with negative teams. If they could

convince the judge that criteria was not an important issue, they were free to run all the big impact, cataclysmic, generic arguments they found in their back files. Once again, the debate world discovered that food stamps lead to the complete destruction of the world's eco-system.

This approach, however, is flawed. It is based on the false assumption that criteria applies to value topics only. Nothing could be farther from the truth. We already saw in Chapter I how even NDT uses criteria. Resolutions of fact are not different than other topics in their need for criteria. They simply need a different sort of criteria.

Looking quickly at the simple "snow resolution," it may seem that criteria is not necessary. We simply need to measure how much snow there is. On closer examination, though, criteria is essential. After all, there are different kinds of snow. Sometimes it's fluffy and light. Sometimes it's more dense. As it gets older, it turns to ice and gets packed tighter. In order to answer the resolution yes or no, we need to know how we are going to measure the snow. Should we look at sheer depth or density? Inches or centimeters? A criteria addresses all these issues.

In a similar manner, the 1992 welfare topic also demands a criteria. The evaluative term in the resolution is "exacerbates the problems of the urban poor." Most dictionaries define the term as something akin to "to make worse." Of course, that definition is of little use. Criteria can define the term more clearly.

In a resolution of fact, however, a value may not be an

essential part of criteria. If a team chooses, they may try to evaluate the resolution in strictly economic terms. Or they may use some other concrete method of evaluation. They have a great deal of flexibility with a resolution of fact. They cannot, however, legitimately avoid the issue of criteria altogether.

Spring, 1993

The most recent CEDA topic is perhaps the most radical and most dangerous departure in recent years. The CEDA schools basically chose a policy debate topic. The topic was "Resolved: that UN implementation of its Universal Declaration of Human Rights is more important than preserving state sovereignty."

At one level, it would seem that this topic is a value resolution, setting up a clash between the values of human rights and state sovereignty. Occasionally, teams would argue this position. A team from the United States Air Force Academy actually argued the resolution in terms of Kant's Categorical Imperative. This approach, however, was a rarity.

Most teams grabbed hold of the word "implementation" and argued that because of that word, the resolution called for a policy. Affirmatives then began presenting plans dealing with one or two countries. Negatives responded with solvency positions and blow-up-the-world disadvantages. Affirmatives tried to claim for serious impacts from not implementing the plan. Debates, again, came down to nuclear war, eco-death, and epidemics of diseases like Ebola.

Just as they did with the welfare topic, many teams argued

that criteria was not an important issue. Because the topic is a resolution of policy, there is no reason to argue criteria. Many teams defaulted to the policy debate criteria of efficacy.

These recent tendencies cannot be healthy for CEDA. CEDA was created to be an alternative to NDT. And, while NDT may be a valuable activity, much of that value and the value of CEDA lies in the fact that the two activities are different. That difference should be cherished, not destroyed. More topics like the Spring 1993 topic will destroy that difference.

CHAPTER VII -- THE FUTURE OF CEDA

CEDA is proceeding down a dangerous path. Impacts are becoming all that matters in many rounds. Topic argumentation is giving way to generic argumentation. As this happens, the activity will lose more and more of its vitality. CEDA used to have the freedom of being the only alternative to NDT, but even that's not true any more.

There is another form of intercollegiate debate that is gaining in popularity. It is called APDA, which stands for the American Parliamentary Debate Association. Under this format, teams are given their resolution 20 minutes before each round, and they are not allowed to cite sources in their speeches. The activity places more value on oratory than argumentation.

This format has been popular among eastern Ivy League schools for years and has recently spread to the West. This year, tournaments at Colorado College and Northwest College both offered APDA as an alternative to CEDA.

Since CEDA and APDA are extremely different from each other, CEDA will probably not experience the same rapid decline that NDT did when CEDA was born. If CEDA does not make some changes, though, it will lose a good deal of strength.

Restoring vitality to the activity is the job of two groups of people: the debaters and the judges.

Debaters need to focus more on the quality of their arguments

rather than simply on the quantity. There are ways to win debate rounds without destroying the planet. A willingness to look at the issue of criteria will increase variety and logic in debate. Debaters need to stop offering judges only one way to evaluate debate rounds.

Judges also need to be willing to vote on the prima facie nature of criteria alone. If they are willing to do this, many cataclysmic arguments debaters like to make would simply be a waste of time. The most important phrase a debater can know in dealing with judges is "Adapt or Die." If judges are willing to vote on criteria issues instead of mandating destroy-the-world impacts, the debaters will adapt.

What's needed is a partnership between these two parties. If they are willing to address issues of decision criteria, perhaps they can solve some of CEDA's most serious problems.

Criteria is an essential element of that solution. Rather than simply the arbitrary issue as some debaters claim, it is fundamental to understanding any resolution. Without understanding the resolution, cogent argumentation is impossible. Occasionally, large impact arguments are good for CEDA. They encourage debaters to be more flexible in their style when such arguments come as a surprise. However, when they achieve the dominant position they currently hold in the activity, then there is a problem.

A new focus on criteria is essential to solving that problem. A focus that incorporates not just the rules of criteria, but the reasons for it as well. To ignore criteria is to ignore the most important lessons of debate -- clear, logical argumentation.

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APPENDIX A -- GLOSSARY

- a priori: An issue that must be addressed before any other issue can be considered. Topicality would be an example of an a priori issue. If an affirmative team loses an a priori issue that is also a voting issue, they lose the round regardless of any other issues in the round.
- advantages/disadvantages: A stock issue in policy (NDT) debate. An affirmative team must demonstrate that the advantages from its plan outweigh any disadvantages to it. If the affirmative cannot do this, then the plan should not be adopted and the affirmative team should lose the debate.
- affirmative team: One of two two-person debate teams in a debate round. The affirmative team is obligated to support the resolution.
- APDA: American Parliamentary Debate Association. A new and growing form of intercollegiate debate that is especially popular among eastern ivy-league schools. In APDA, speakers are given the resolution 20 minutes before the debate begins. They are not permitted to use evidence, and they are encouraged to focus more on speaking skills than argument skills.
- back files: The popular term for crates of evidence from previous topics that debaters carry with them, in case they can use the material again on a different topic.
- ballot: The paper a judge brings to each round to record the winner of the debate, reason for the decision, and critiques of the speakers. When debaters talk about "receiving the ballot" they are referring to winning the round.
- card: The popular name for a quote from some authority on an issue. The word "card" comes from older methods of organizing files. Debaters used to put each quote on an index card and carry boxes of index cards to rounds. In recent years, however, debaters have switched over to briefs (8 1/2 x 11 sheets of paper) which can hold 3 to 4 pieces of evidence. Briefs are easier to organize and lighter to carry than index cards. The name, however, has stuck, and debaters still refer to evidence as "cards."
- cataclysmic arguments: Arguments in which the debaters argue that affirming (or negating) the resolution will lead to unspeakable destruction, usually in the form of nuclear war, complete environmental destruction, epidemics of new diseases like Ebola, or the spread of the ice age.

catastrophic arguments: See cataclysmic arguments.

CEDA: The Cross Examination Debate Association. CEDA is the most popular form of intercollegiate debating and is commonly associated with non-policy debate.

counter-criteria: Criteria offered by a negative team, when the negative does not like the affirmative criteria. Often the negative team will attack the affirmative criteria before offering a counter criteria.

criteria: The definition of the evaluative term in the resolution. Criteria is where debaters argue how to determine the winner of the debate.

debate theory: Writings by individuals in the debate community (usually debate coaches or directors of forensics) that discuss different aspects of debate, such as the nature of criteria, the role of presumption, or whether topicality should be a voting issue. These writings are not dogma that everyone must accept, but, rather, serve to promote discussion about argumentation and about practices in debate.

early presentation: The first criterial burden Cole et al. (1986) articulated. To meet this burden, criteria must be presented in the 1AC and it must not be self-fulfilling.

evaluative term: The central term in the resolution around which the judge's decision hinges. This is often a vague term that must be defined through criteria.

evidence: A quote from some expert. Debaters read evidence to prove, or support, their points in a round.

explicitness: The second criterial burden articulated by Cole et al. (1986). In order to meet this burden, the criteria offered by the affirmative team cannot be vague in any way.

extrinsic values: A value that is good because it allows people to attain some other value. Extrinsic values have no inherent worth. The only value they have is the value that they can generate through other things.

first affirmative constructive: (1AC) The first speech in a debate round. The text of this speech is referred to as the affirmative case. The affirmative must offer its definitions and criteria in this speech.

first negative constructive: (1NC) The first speech offered by the negative team. If a team wants to attack criteria or make a topicality attack, they must do it in this speech. The 1NC follows the 1AC and the cross-examination of the first affirmative speaker by the second negative speaker.

impacts: The results of arguments, whether cataclysmic or theoretical. An impact can be the destruction of the planet, a decrease in a viable ideas, or that the other team should lose the round. An impact answers the question "So what?" about an argument. An impact is also the third part of an SVI block.

inherency: A stock issue in policy (NDT) debate. The affirmative must prove that the problems they are trying to solve are inherent to the status quo and cannot be solved without the affirmative plan.

intrinsic values: Values that are good in and of themselves. They do not need to have any practical benefits lead to anything else. They are an end, not a means.

jurisdictional issue: An issue, like topicality and criteria, that must be addressed the 1AC and, if the negative cares to, in the 1NC. Since jurisdictional issues are the framework of the debate, debaters must consider them first, or all other argumentation would be moot. If the negative wishes to attack a jurisdictional issue, it must do so in the 1NC. Failure to do so grants the issue to the affirmative team.

justification: One of three parts of a criteria. The justification explains why the criteria is an appropriate one.

NDT: Another form of intercollegiate debate that uses policy topics. Until the birth and rise of CEDA began in the mid-1970's, NDT was the dominant form of intercollegiate debate. People who had become dissatisfied with many aspects of NDT eventually migrated over to CEDA. Today, there are very few schools that still compete in NDT.

negative team: One of two two-person debate teams in a round. It is the job of the negative team to beat the affirmative case or defeat the resolution.

off-case: Arguments that the negative advances that don't directly answer an argument advanced by the affirmative. Rather, they answer the thesis of the affirmative case, adress an undiscussed implication of the affirmative case, respond to the resolution instead of the affirmative case, or demonstrate some theoretical flaw in the affirmative case.

on-case: Arguments that the negative makes that directly conflict with points on the affirmative case

plan: In policy (NDT) debate, the affirmative team offers a plan, or sample law, that congress, or some other governing institution, should implement.

policy implications: Arguments that one or more policy stock issues must be considered in a non-policy round. The two most common policy implications are solvency and advantages / disadvantages.

policy debate: Debate on a proposition of policy, which calls for the affirmative to propose a new law or policy that congress should adopt.

prima facie: A burden that an affirmative team must meet in the 1AC, in order to be considered for the ballot. If the affirmative does not meet all their prima facie burdens in the 1AC, they haven't presented a valid case, and should lose the debate on that issue alone.

probability: The fourth criterial burden Cole et al. (1986) articulated. If the affirmative is claiming large impacts or cataclysmic arguments, they must also show a high probability that these things will actually occur.

proposition of fact: A topic that calls for some form of concrete measurement without necessarily appealing to some abstract value or concept.

proposition of policy: A topic that requires the affirmative to present a plan which takes the form of a major policy change or new law that a governing organization should adopt. The debaters then debate the plan specifically, as opposed to debating the proposition.

proposition of value: A topic that calls for an evaluation rather than a measurement. This evaluation may be abstract rather than concrete. Such a proposition is difficult to measure.

resolution: The topic of the debate.

significance: One of the policy (NDT) stock issues. Significance means that the problem the affirmative is discussing is a major one. If they cannot demonstrate significance, there is no compelling reason to entertain the policy change.

solvency: One of the stock issues in policy (NDT) debate. The affirmative is obligated to show that if their plan works well, it will solve the problems it is supposed to solve. If the plan cannot solve, adopting it would be pointless.

squirrel case: A very narrow, often barely topical affirmative case. Squirrel cases are a strategic tool to try to catch another team unprepared.

standards: The first part of an SVI-block. The standards part is where the negative feels the affirmative has violated specific issues. The negative then lists those issues along with the violations and impacts

SVI block: A common way to organize negative, off-case theory, or procedural arguments. SVI stands for Standards, Violations, and Impacts.

threshold: The third criterial burden Cole et al. (1986) articulated. The threshold is the exact point at which the affirmative meets its criteria.

topicality: The broad name for a group of arguments that consider different ways of defining the resolution. If the negative feels the affirmative has inappropriately defined the resolution, the negative team may issue a "topicality attack".

"Value Clash Resolution": Verch & Logue's (1982) five-step plan for handling criteria in CEDA. See page 17 for more detail.

value debate: Debate that uses a proposition of value as its topic. CEDA is commonly associated with value debate.

violations: The second part of an SVI block. It is here that the negative identifies how the person has violated the standard.

workability: A policy stock issue that says that the affirmative plan must be workable. There must not be any obstacles that the plan does not account for.

APPENDIX B
Sample First Affirmative Constructive

This is a case that I wrote with Chris Huck, my Carroll College debate partner, for the Spring, 1992 CEDA topic, "Resolved: that advertising degrades the quality of life in the United States." We used it in competition at a tournament in Boise, ID, and I later used it with John Robinson in competition at a tournament in Corvallis, Oregon.

I have used the standard "short cites" debate method for citing evidence. This does not follow APA standards, however, it seemed more appropriate. This includes my omission of the "et al." structure. Full source cites appear in the "Works Cited" section of this paper.

While Bill firmly sits, I firmly stand "Resolved: that advertising degrades the quality of life in the United States." In order to clarify the boundaries of today's debate, we offer the following:

Observation I -- Definitions

A) Advertising

- 1) Advertising refers to the industry.

Random House Dictionary, 1987
The profession of planning, designing, and writing advertisements.

- 2) Since advertising refers to the industry, we are going to see degradation as a result of industry action and not of actual commercials. Therefore, any benefits or other argumentation claimed by the negative team must also be specific to the profession.

B) Degrades

Oxford English Dictionary, 1989
To lower in character or quality; to debase.

C) Quality of Life

Pearce in '77

Now, participation in decision making is an integral part of the quality of life; if individuals are to have any influence on their own destinies, they must be informed of options and of the consequences of choosing any of them. Further, they must be able to communicate their views to the government institution involved. The absence of any of these conditions disrupts any social decision rule purporting to reflect individual preferences.

Since "degrades to quality of life" is the evaluative term in today's resolution, we offer further clarification in:

Observation II -- Criteria

A) The value for this round will be the "Market Place of Ideas."

1) Truth depends on the Market Place of Ideas
Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

In order for truth to emerge, all ideas must get a fair hearing; there must be a "free market place" of ideas and information. Minorities as well as the strong must have access to the press. This is the theory of the press that was written into our Bill of Rights.

2) Access to information is a basic human right

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

Access to information is such a basic human right and communication so central in the development of national cultures that these should be considered a common good and a public trust. Information should not be considered simply a marketplace commodity distributed only to those with the capacity to pay.

3) The Market Place of Ideas is directly linked to the quality of life since the quality of life focuses on participation and communication. The Marketplace of Ideas and the quality of life cannot be separated.

B) Market should be controlled by individuals

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

But consider "the market." It holds that the priorities of the society should be determined not by the cake of custom or the directives of the few, but rather by the aggregate of *individual decisions* -- all individual, not simply the elect or select.

C) The Market Place of Ideas will be weighed through Diversity

1) Definition of Diversity

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

It may be contended that the central issue in the dissemination of ideas and information in the libertarian or neo-liberal media environment is that of diversity. The essence of diversity is that as many voices as possible must be represented.

2) Diversity is needed for truth

Phillips in '86

However, they believed that, through diversity, out of the vast welter of conflicting ideas that would be put before the public that, the truth would emerge, and that it would emerge more effectively than through any efforts to impose standards of truth from the outside or through any other means yet devised. The evidence over 200 years -- at the local courthouse level as well as at the more cosmic levels of Vietnam and Watergate -- is that truth does indeed emerge in this fashion.

3) Specialized Media hurts the Market Place of Ideas

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

Putting it another way, if we have quantitative diversity, there will logically be many different media vehicles available for the expression of differing views. But, if media vehicles are increasingly specialized by interest groups, the views that are likely to be expressed will tend to be comforting rather than controversial, placid rather than provoking. We choose media vehicles to reflect our own relatively narrow interests, and the content reflects these biases.

D) Decision Rule

If the Affirmative team can demonstrate that Advertising hurts the Market Place of Ideas through a lack of Diversity, the quality of life has been degraded and an affirmative ballot is justified.

Contention I Tobacco Advertising

A) Tobacco advertising is morally bad

Wall in '90

In recent testimony before a Senate committee, Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis W. Sullivan explicitly condemned the tobacco companies for "trading death for profits." "It is morally wrong," he said, "to promote products that when used as intended cause death."

B) Cigarette advertisements increase the number of smokers

Lowenstein in '88

The industry's staunch opposition to a ban suggests that tobacco companies believe advertising expands their market. The fact that the relative incidence of smoking among American women surged coincidentally with massive advertising campaigns directed at women also suggests the effectiveness of advertising as a means of inducing people to smoke.

C) Advertising decides what does not get into magazines.

Clark in '88

Advertisers may also determine what does *not* get into magazines. In most general terms, this may be the move away from realistic subjects to more glamorous ones better suited to providing the right ambience for selling.

D) Magazines that advertise cigarettes ignore medical issues.

Clark in '88

Smith found a 'striking and disturbing' pattern. He wrote that in magazines which accepted cigarette advertising, 'I was unable to find a single article in seven years of publication, that would have given readers any clear notion of the nature and extent of the medical and social havoc being wreaked by the cigarette-smoking habit.'

E) Stories are dropped due to tobacco advertising.

Clark in '88

ACSH cites a third case, involving one of its own staff who was asked by *Harper's Bazaar* for an article called, 'Protect your man from cancer'. The author was paid in full, but the article was not used because, in the words of the editor, "it focused too much on tobacco" and "the magazine is running three full page, colour ads (for tobacco) this month".

F) Reporters have been fired for smoking stories.

Clark in '88

Individual examples do surface. One involved Paul Maccabee, a young reporter at the *Twin Cities Reader*, Minneapolis. Reporting a press conference on the annual Kool Jazz Festival, he included a list of great jazz men who had died of lung cancer. He was fired the next day. Mark Hopp, the publisher, later conceded that he feared losing the papers cigarette ads, and the paper's national sales manager wrote to all cigarette advertisers apologizing for the story and saying the twenty-six-year-old reporter had been sacked.

Contention II -- TV Advertising

A) Advertising affects the style of programming

Clark in '88

Where the advertiser is king, as on American network TV and in Latin America, the impact on programs is profound. It affects the actual style; they need to be fast to grip from the first second, stopping people from switching over before the first commercial. Because of that, it encourages TV that is jerky and sensationalist: in its own jargon, it has to deliver lots of 'Jolts per minute'.

B) Non-advertising content is watered down, bland, and uncontroversial.

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

This necessitated watering down the non-advertising media -- avoiding controversial themes, emphasizing the "lowest common denominator" that would attract the largest number of viewers, and other similar strategies.

C) There is a difference between what people want and what advertising will support.

Clark in '88

ABC which followed with a TV drama about incestuous child abuse (which also drew a large audience), complained about a dichotomy between what audiences want and what advertisers were willing to accept.

D) Advertising should not decide what viewers watch

Clark in '88

Advertisers do have the right to place their ads where they wish -- but this, surly, does not alter the fact that a system that means this can determine what is shown or not shown is wrong.

Contention III -- Newspaper Advertising

A) Fewer newspapers exist today.

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

There are 1,730 daily newspapers in the United States with a total daily circulation of approximately 61 million readers. Twenty newspaper companies control more than half the daily sales. One percent of the owners own approximately 34 percent of all papers sold daily. In 1900 there were 2,042 daily newspapers and 2023 owners. By 1980, there were 1,730 dailies and 760 owners. In 1900 there was an average of one newspaper owner for each 38,000 citizens, while in 1980 the average newspaper owner provided news for 300,000 consumers.

B) Advertising forces newspapers to close.

Clark in '88

Advertisers can -- and do -- of course, advertise where they believe they will reach the best mix of potential product buyers at the best price. But what Reidy was conceding, albeit to other advertising men, was that because of advertising, vast numbers of newspapers have been forced to close.

C) Concentration equals higher prices and lower quality.

Rotzoll and Haefner in '86

Reviewing this quantitative data, it appears that the concentration of media ownership is strong. How does this affect the quality of the media?

Eversole found that newspapers that were once competitive but were made monopolies by chains produced "higher prices and lower quality." The Brookings Institution, on the other hand, showed that though chain-owned papers charge 7 percent more for ads than independent papers, chains operating in areas where there are competitive papers have advertising rates 15 percent lower than those for their other chain-owned papers.

D) Papers are responsible to advertising and not to their readers.

Clark in '88

Given that the economics of newspapers are now based firmly on advertising not subscription, it also follows that a publication with readers that aren't attractive to advertisers has very real problems.

E) Advertising destroys the Market Place of Ideas

1) Advertising has control.

Ewen in '76

As the head of the advertising association, Hammerling provided ads (both political and consumer) for most of America's non-English-language newspapers, and exerted a vast control over their political and economic orientation.

2) Ads were fed to the American press.

Ewen in '76

Hammerling did not merely feed ads the non-English American press. Senate investigations into Hammerling's activities revealed that he also fed editorials and news material to these newspapers and required that they be published without the remuneration usually paid for advertising.

F) The system is at fault.

Clark in '88

It is not the individual advertisers who can be blamed. It is the system. What has happened is an inevitable result of an ad-dominated newspaper industry. The newspapers, however, have hardly been passive figures in their dealing with advertisers. Advertisers have been taken more into account in devising the finished newspaper.