### Method

#### The role of the ballot is to *evaluate the consequences of the affirmative’s policy proposal*.

#### Competing worlds is constitutive, fair, and educational.

Nelson ‘08 Adam F., J.D.1. Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Lincoln-Douglas Debate. 2008. <http://ldtheoryjournal.blogspot.com/2008/04/towards-comprehensive-theory-of-ld-adam.html>. MBPZ \*modified for language

But the NFL’s new Lincoln Douglas Debate Event Description explicitly repudiates such a model by placing parallel burdens amongst one of the hallmarks of the activity:

No question of values can be determined entirely true or false. This is why the resolution is desirable. Therefore neither debater should be held to a standard of absolute proof. No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves [their] ~~his/her~~ side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.2

And the truth-statement model of the resolution imposes an absolute burden of proof on the affirmative: if the resolution is a truth-claim, and the afﬁrmative has the burden of proving that claim, in so far as intuitively we tend to disbelieve truthclaims until we are persuaded otherwise, the afﬁrmative has the burden to prove that statement absolutely true. Indeed, one of the most common theory arguments in LD is conditionality, which argues it is inappropriate for the afﬁrmative to claim only proving the truth of part of the resolution is sufﬁcient to earn the ballot.

Such a model of the resolution also gives the negative access to a range of strategies that many students, coaches, and judges ﬁnd ridiculous or even irrelevant to evaluation of the resolution. If the negative need only prevent the affirmative from proving the truth of the resolution, it is logically sufficient to negate to deny our ability to make truth-statements or to prove normative morality does not exist or to deny the reliability of human senses or reason. Yet, even though most coaches appear to endorse the truth-statement model of the resolution, they complain about the use of such negative strategies, even though they are a necessary consequence of that model. And, moreover, such strategies seem fundamentally unfair, as they provide the negative with functionally inﬁnite ground, as there are a nearly inﬁnite variety of such skeptical objections to normative claims, while continuing to bind the afﬁrmative to a much smaller range of options: advocacy of the resolution as a whole.

Instead, it seems much more reasonable to treat the resolution as a way to equitably divide ground: the affirmative advocating the desirability of a world in which people adhere to the value judgment implied by the resolution and the negative advocating the desirability of a world in which people adhere to a value judgment mutually exclusive to that implied by the resolution. By making the issue one of desirability of competing world-views rather than of truth, the affirmative gains access to increased flexibility regarding how [they] ~~he or she~~ choose~~s~~ to defend that world, while the negative retains equal flexibility while being denied access to those skeptical arguments indicted above. Our ability to make normative claims is irrelevant to a discussion of the desirability of making two such claims. Unless there is some significant harm in making such statements, some offensive reason to reject making them that can be avoided by an advocacy mutually exclusive with that of the affirmative such objections are not a reason the negative world is more desirable, and therefore not a reason to negate. Note this is precisely how things have been done in policy debate for some time: a team that runs a kritik is expected to offer some impact of the mindset they are indicting and some alternative that would solve for that impact. A team that simply argued some universal, unavoidable, problem was bad and therefore a reason to negate would not be very successful. It is about time LD started treating such arguments the same way.

Such a model of the resolution has additional benefits as well. First, it forces both debaters to offer offensive reasons to prefer their worldview, thereby further enforcing a parallel burden structure. This means debaters can no longer get away with arguing the resolution is by definition true of false. The “truth” of the particular vocabulary of the resolution is irrelevant to its desirability. Second, it is intuitive. When people evaluate the truth of ethical claims, they consider their implications in the real world. They ask themselves whether a world in which people live by that ethical rule is better than one in which they don’t. Such debates don’t happen solely in the abstract. We want to know how the various options affect us and the world we live in.

This does not, however, mean this “worldview comparison” model would necessarily remove the ability of debaters to argue values or philosophy in the abstract. We have long recognized that purely deontological arguments have offensive impacts that can be compared against other such implications. This model would simply require debaters to more directly compare, for example, the importance of avoiding treating people as means to an end or protecting rights with the importance of saving lives or maximizing economic efficiency, for reasons I will explore shortly.

#### AFC—

#### A] New framing forces a 1AR restart which leads to underdeveloped, irresolvable debates and devastating 2NR collapses

#### B] Clash – forces the 1NR to engage the aff contention which outweighs because even if other phil is good, we can engage in depth in other rounds

#### Policy debates empower students to activism. Apolitical narratives become coopted by institutions.

Coverstone ’05 Coverstone, Alan (Alan Coverstone is a debate coach at Wake Forest University). “Acting on Activism: Realizing the Vision of Debate with Pro-social Impact.” Acting on Activism: Realizing the Vision of Debate with Pro-social Impact, 17 November 2005.

An important concern emerges when Mitchell describes reflexive fiat as a contest strategy capable of “eschewing the power to directly control external actors” (1998b, p. 20). Describing debates about what our government should do as attempts to control outside actors is debilitating and disempowering. Control of the US government is exactly what an active, participatory citizenry is supposed to be all about. After all, if democracy means anything, it means that citizens not only have the right, they also bear the obligation to discuss and debate what the government should be doing. Absent that discussion and debate, much of the motivation for personal political activism is also lost. Those who have co-opted Mitchell’s argument for individual advocacy often quickly respond that nothing we do in a debate round can actually change government policy, and unfortunately, an entire generation of debaters has now swallowed this assertion as an article of faith. The best most will muster is, “Of course not, but you don’t either!” The assertion that nothing we do in debate has any impact on government policy is one that carries the potential to undermine Mitchell’s entire project. If there is nothing we can do in a debate round to change government policy, then we are left with precious little in the way of pro-social options for addressing problems we face. At best, we can pursue some Pilot-like hand washing that can purify us as individuals through quixotic activism but offer little to society as a whole. It is very important to note that Mitchell (1998b) tries carefully to limit and bound his notion of reflexive fiat by maintaining that because it “views fiat as a concrete course of action, it is bounded by the limits of pragmatism” (p. 20). Pursued properly, the debates that Mitchell would like to see are those in which the relative efficacy of concrete political strategies for pro-social change is debated. In a few noteworthy examples, this approach has been employed successfully, and I must say that I have thoroughly enjoyed judging and coaching those debates. The students in my program have learned to stretch their understanding of their role in the political process because of the experience. Therefore, those who say I am opposed to Mitchell’s goals here should take care at such a blanket assertion. However, contest debate teaches students to combine personal experience with the language of political power. Powerful personal narratives unconnected to political power are regularly co-opted by those who do learn the language of power. One need look no further than the annual state of the Union Address where personal story after personal story is used to support the political agenda of those in power. The so-called role-playing that public policy contest debates encourage promotes active learning of the vocabulary and levers of power in America. Imagining the ability to use our own arguments to influence government action is one of the great virtues of academic debate. Gerald Graff (2003) analyzed the decline of argumentation in academic discourse and found a source of student antipathy to public argument in an interesting place. I’m up against…their aversion to the role of public spokesperson that formal writing presupposes. It’s as if such students can’t imagine any rewards for being a public actor or even imagining themselves in such a role. This lack of interest in the public sphere may in turn reflect a loss of confidence in the possibility that the arguments we make in public will have an effect on the world. Today’s students’ lack of faith in the power of persuasion reflects the waning of the ideal of civic participation that led educators for centuries to place rhetorical and argumentative training at the center of the school and college curriculum. (Graff, 2003, p. 57) The power to imagine public advocacy that actually makes a difference is one of the great virtues of the traditional notion of fiat that critics deride as mere simulation. Simulation of success in the public realm is far more empowering to students than completely abandoning all notions of personal power in the face of governmental hegemony by teaching students that “nothing they can do in a contest debate can ever make any difference in public policy.” Contest debating is well suited to rewarding public activism if it stops accepting as an article of faith that personal agency is somehow undermined by the so-called role playing in debate. Debate is role-playing whether we imagine government action or imagine individual action. Imagining myself starting a socialist revolution in America is no less of a fantasy than imagining myself making a difference on Capitol Hill. Furthermore, both fantasies influenced my personal and political development virtually ensuring a life of active, pro-social, political participation. Neither fantasy reduced the likelihood that I would spend my life trying to make the difference I imagined. One fantasy actually does make a greater difference: the one that speaks the language of political power. The other fantasy ~~disables~~ [prevents] action by making one a laughingstock to those who wield the language of power. Fantasy motivates and role-playing trains through visualization. Until we can imagine it, we cannot really do it. Role-playing without question teaches students to be comfortable with the language of power, and that language paves the way for genuine and effective political activism. Debates over the relative efficacy of political strategies for pro-social change must confront governmental power at some point. There is a fallacy in arguing that movements represent a better political strategy than voting and person-to-person advocacy. Sure, a full-scale movement would be better than the limited voice I have as a participating citizen going from door to door in a campaign, but so would full-scale government action. Unfortunately, the gap between my individual decision to pursue movement politics and the emergence of a full-scale movement is at least as great as the gap between my vote and democratic change. They both represent utopian fiat. Invocation of Mitchell to support utopian movement fiat is simply not supported by his work, and too often, such invocation discourages the concrete actions he argues for in favor of the personal rejectionism that under girds the political cynicism that is a fundamental cause of voter and participatory abstention