AN ANALYSIS OF CEDA JUDGING PHILOSOPHIES - PART II: ACCEPTING CERTAIN TACTICS AND ARGUMENTS WITH RESERVATIONS[1]

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The purpose of this paper is to analyze those comments within 1987-88 CEDA National Tournament judging philosophies which isolate reservations or limitations on specific arguments, tactics, or practices used in CEDA debate. The reservations or qualifications placed on such strategies serve to define the extent to which the arguments, tactics or practices are viewed as legitimate among CEDA critics. As a result, the analysis will suggest a general consensus among the CEDA community which defines the characteristics of "winning" arguments, tactics, and practices. A complete discussion of the background, justification, and methodology employed in this survey way be found in Part I of this analysis in the 1989 CEDA Yearbook.

Topicality was the first variable analyzed. Each judge was if they felt they were liberal or conservative on this issue. Some judges who seemingly would not vote for topicality said they were liberal, while others said they were conservative. In other words, how a given critic operationalized these terms differed greatly. Consequently, the content of the philosophy statements was coded to reflect those judges who generally accepted topicality arguments (those who were willing to vote for it); generally rejected topicality arguments (those who were unwilling to vote for it); and those who accepted topicality with reservations (those that fell some where in the middle).

Those critics who accept topicality with reservations (41.8%), isolated three simple requirements necessary for an "effective" topicality position. The first requirement is that if topicality is run in a round, it should be well developed. Negative teams who insist on running topicality will be in a superior position if they offer a clear, well developed approach. Topicality arguments that emphasize the relationship between the standards and the violations are considered superior to topicality arguments that are simply `tossed-out'.

The second reservation applies to abusive affirmatives. Judges are willing to drop an affirmative team who's case is not germane to the resolution. They prefer that an affirmative team's case be central to the topic rather than portray some esoteric interpretation which is counter-productive to clash. Several critics proclaimed an unwillingness to even consider topicality unless the affirmative case is "blatantly untopical", "unfairly limits the topic", or "bastardizes the meaning of the resolution."

The third reservation concerns those negative teams who may also abuse the intent of topicality argumentation. One judge explained "In my analysis, topicality is a much abused concept. I tend not to vote on it in all but the most extreme cases. I abhor negative teams which run it on every case without exception."

The proper application seems to be related to the specific case selected by the affirmative. Judges seem to consistently prefer case specific or novel approaches to topicality over the generic arguments that have been run ad nauseam. In summary, the typical perception of topicality may be stated as follows: "I am tired of negative arguments on this issue which do not need to be made. If an affirmative is running a stock case, then the negative should have a very good reason for arguing topicality."

For those judges who are willing to listen to topicality, the next question becomes what standards are to be used in determining the validity of the violations. Those judges favoring the best definition standard (35.6%) indicate that they prefer the best definition standard over mere reasonability,and that the test of the resolution centers on the use of the best definition emerging from a reasonable standard.

Thirty-four and a half (34.5) per cent of the judges submitting philosophy statements used the most reasonable definition offered in the round to evaluate topicality.One critic proclaimed "I tend to resolve topicality disputes by viewing reasonable definitions as satisfactory until given good reasons to believe otherwise." As far as topicality is concerned, if the affirmative is reasonably topical, many judges would rather hear the negative address the case directly.

The remaining 30.0 percent of judges believe that the appropriate standards for topicality are debatable. Topicality becomes a voting issue by whatever definitional standard the debaters in the round persuade them is best. A subset of judges are willing to let the debaters determine the definitional standards as long as their effect is to provide each team with approximately equal ground.

Debate theory arguments and evidence. The next issue examined was a judge's willingness to accept debate theory arguments. Numerous reservations were listed as requirements that would have to be fulfilled before a judge would be willing to listen to debate theory arguments. Judges seem willing to listen to and vote for such arguments if: 1) they are not lectured on how to vote, given specific circumstances; 2) the arguments suggest that the spread, speed, multiple thoughtless/mindless VO's etc. are illegitimate; 3) theory arguments are not used for strategic purposes created just to waste an opponent's time; 4) they are well developed, logical, supported by good evidence, and applied to the specific round; and 5) the team running them understands the context and implications of the theory.

The issue of accepting or rejecting debate theory arguments is related to accepting or rejecting debate theory evidence. Some

[1]An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 1988 Speech Communication Association Convention.

judges (35.8%) will consider evidence on debate theory as long as certain reservations are fulfilled. One reservation is that the evidence must apply to CEDA debate. Few judges are persuaded by theory evidence that was written for NDT debate and then applied to CEDA without some articulated justification for doing so.

There seems to be a subtle reservation that the debaters should be able to explain the evidence within the context of a round. While debaters may certainly quote debate theorists in support of arguments, many judges expect them to explain the argument rather than let the evidence or the tag constitute the entire claim.

Counterwarrants and counter intuitive arguments. Many judges commented on the legitimacy of certain types of negative arguments such as counterwarrants. The majority of respondents (58.1%) feel that counterwarrants are acceptable if certain reservations are met. Many judges feel that before a specific disadvantage to the resolution is offered, the theoretical legitimacy of the counterwarrant should be justified. They will consider counterwarrants, but a debater should not take that for granted, because they will also listen to anti-counter warrant arguments.

A second reservation mandates that a counterwarrants use be justified by the negative against a particular case. They should not be run because the negative wants to ignore case or case specific disadvantages. Counterwarrants appear to be justified when appropriate. One judge expects a negative to provide a rationale for the strategy and to argue standards for a decision.

The next justification for counterwarrants is when they are used to clash with affirmative examples that are hasty generalizations. The notion of legitimately using counterwarrants as a response to hasty generalizations is well supported among respondents. "Counterwarrants may certainly be an appropriate way to test the probable truth of the resolution especially if the affirmative case area is particularly narrow in scope." Of course, some judges maintain that two wrongs don't make a right. Simply because the affirmative offers a narrow interpretation to support the resolution, that does not legitimize negative counterwarrants.

Major requirements aside, some judges impose different 'minor' requirements on counterwarrants before accepting them on the flow. These requirements include: 1) counterwarrants should not be throw-away arguments that are not well defended; 2) they should enhance and not diminish the quality of arguments; 3) counterwarrants should not be used as a substitute for direct negative clash; and 4) they should not promote superficial analysis.

Approximately one-half (45.7%) of the judges indicated that they would accept or listen to counter intuitive arguments if certain standards were met. The most typical standard imposed is a requirement that the argument meet additional burdens of proof, evidence and logic to overcome presumptive biases against them:

> I should warn students to be careful about counter intuitive arguments -- I regard them as bearing an enormous burden of proof and I am likely to allow the opponent to blip them off the flow. This unusual burden is not likely to be met by cards cut from second-rate articles in third-rate publications.

The burden of proof that counter intuitive arguments face is related to several factors. One factor concerns the nature of causation. As one judge explained, "counter intuitive arguments are quite acceptable as I find them to considerably enhance the debate round. However, links must be strong and well established before I will completely accept them."

A second burden these arguments face pertains to evidence standards. Several judges will not vote for arguments which are counter intuitive unless exceptional evidence is presented establishing their validity. Once these causal and evidentiary burdens are met, a judge may still have concerns about accepting counter intuitives. They may vote against them on very simple issues such as uniqueness or a failure to establish a clear threshold. Opponents may run very intuitive arguments and convince a judge that a debaters 20 cards are wrong. Finally, one critic indicated that "I do not mind counter intuitive arguments per se. But I do not buy into the argument that weak links plus big impacts means the VO wins because of risk analysis."

Style, delivery and speed. One popular aspect of the activity concerns the delivery and stylistic devices of CEDA debaters. Almost 3 of every 4 judges indicated that a debater's delivery should be understandable. They tend to be impressed by articulate, personable and persuasive debaters because they feel style and delivery are an important part of what is being taught. More specifically, they expect a persuasive, intelligible style of delivery. There is little appreciation for being screamed at. Delivery must be coherent; if it cannot be understood it will not be flowed.

Many judges feel that debaters would be understandable if they used effective public speaking skills. In terms of style, debaters should be able to communicate. This does not mean that speed should be abandoned, only that it should not supersede articulation, clarity, explanation and structure. Other public speaking skill addressed by various judges include: effective voice and facial expressions, body control, use of eye contact, and professional dress; an inflection here or there, a strategic pause, good articulation and enunciation, wit and humor all seem to have support among the community.

Even though most judges support and appreciate a round that is understand-able, others (26.2%) view content as a more important variable. "While I consider such debate skills as analysis, refutation and delivery important variables in the total process, the issues in the debate will get my primary consideration." Furthermore, delivery and style considerations, are not in themselves voting issues. A team with polished speaking skills and poor arguments will not beat a team with weak speaking skills and

good arguments.

One of the most divisive characteristics of CEDA debate concerns a judges willingness to tolerate a rapid rate of delivery. Those judges who seemed to be somewhat willing to listen to a fast round listed four reservations that would have to be met to justify a rapid delivery. First, a rapid rate of delivery is allowed as long as the speech is comprehensible. Speed of delivery becomes a problem when it becomes incomprehensible. Vast amounts of evidence is considered useless if they cannot understand it. In the practical real-world sense, persuasion, not speed, is valued. One critic wrote:

> In terms of delivery, I really enjoy debates I can understand. Yes, I can flow, and do. Rate of delivery is a hinderance when the speaker is inarticulate, when the speaker doesn't know how to use a high rate of delivery, or when the speaker is simply trying to win the round by number and not quality of arguments.

A rapid rate of delivery is seen as legitimate as long as the quality of argumentation remains high. Even for those judges who can follow a fairly fast paced debate, the quantity of argumentation does not make up for quality of argumentation. Other critics argued:

> As far as style is concerned, I prefer to hear a relaxed moderately paced debate. Speed is okay if it is called for.I do not like teams that fly through their case and finish in four minutes, or read eleven VO's, nine of which are dropped. If you have good arguments that you mean to carry through the round then speed is acceptable.

A third condition that must be met allows a speedy debate, but cautions against abusing this privilege, with abuses usually punished through lower speaker points. A debater who spreads well, does it so that it is comprehensible. Judges may listen to incomprehensible babble, but the debaters must be prepared to lose speaker points.

The fourth and final condition justifies a fast round as long as speed is not used as a weapon. "Speed should not be used as a weapon. If I can't understand what is being said, how can I give a fair evaluation." A high rate of delivery is justified only if the arguments are worth it. Speed for the sake of speed is undesirable.

Evidence quality. Evidence is critical in CEDA debate. More than any other variable, judges commented on the use, abuse, nature and quality of evidence. Most judges (43.6%) expect and appreciate high quality research and evidence. Evidence is of critical importance since it determines, to a great extent, the validity of the argumentative positions taken by the debaters. There is little reason to accept the assertions of the students involved unless they can be supported by relevant facts and opinions. Furthermore, many judges indicated that evidence can definitely add to the strength of an argument.

Several judges, in an attempt to banish misleading or mislabeled cards,or cards that are consistently overclaimed, impose extremely high standards on evidence. These standards may include clarity, accuracy, and applicability to a specific argument. In other words, "the use of good evidence is a primary consideration in the pursuit of excellence in debate." Poor evidence can be beat if the credibility of the evidence is questioned and adequately challenged. Poor evidence generally utilizes the splatter technique - throw out countless pieces of evidence and hope something sticks.

Good evidence means more that just having a more recent publication than ones opponent. Source qualifications, the explanatory power of the evidence, the debater's handling of the context of the evidence, and the level of bias in the evidence are all elements to be considered.

Of course, evidence is not limited to research cards. Many judges (39.9%)are willing to accept logic, analysis, or reasoning as a means of supporting one's claims. "Please remember that proof comes in many different forms; you do not need a card for everything and those cards will do you no good without some analysis and reasoning." Evidence is necessary for support, however, good clear analysis is just as good as evidence. Of course, the evidence should include the analysis of the author and not just his/her conclusions.

Additional proofs of a claim can rely on both reasonable analogies and past experiences. Hypothetical opinions can often be subject to verification through past history. In the final analysis, many judges will allow good logic to defeat mediocre evidence. This does not mean that a team only needs to get up and point out that the evidence isn't that great. A valid and sound argument should be formed as to why the evidence shouldn't be accepted.

In terms of evidence quality, one last issue needs to be mentioned. Several judges (16.4%) indicated that the role of evidence is to help support arguments, not to become arguments in and of themselves. In other words,good evidence is used to support arguments, not as a conclusion of an argument.

Weighing evidence. After reviewing the demands imposed for quality evidence it seems reasonable to review the standards judges may use to weigh evidence. Numerous tests of evidence were discussed by different judges These tests include quality of the source, specificity of the evidence, and recency of the evidence; the probative value of the evidence; and direct relevance to the claim advanced. Conflicting evidence may be weighed according to semantic force, source qualification's, empiricism and correctness of an advocate's claim, its potential for bias", and finally, evidence may be weighed in terms of the qualitative criteria found in any argumentation text.

The most common test of evidence employed was the credibility of the author. The importance of this test can be dramatized by one judge's explanation:

> When evidence is testimonial, the utility of the evidence is a function of the credibility of the source. If the source and date of the testimony is well known, source citation is unnecessary. On the other hand, evidence introduced with `Smith in 86' establishes little reason to adhere to the claim advanced.

A second method (34.2%) used to evaluate conflicting evidence allows the debaters to determine the most appropriate standard. Many judges prefer that the debaters weigh conflicting evidence and tell them why one source is better than the another. At the very least the debaters should offer a rationale why their evidence is superior. The final means of weighing conflicting evidence (14.5%) is to simply not evaluate the cards. Conflicting evidence is neutralized and does not enter into the decision making criteria of several judges.

Reading evidence. A significant percentage (65.8%) of the judges said they were somewhat willing to read evidence after the round. Further examination of the statements reveals a series of different reasons for calling for a teams evidence. One reason is to determine if the evidence was misrepresented or misanalyzed. The only time some judges will call for evidence is if one team argues the card is out of context or does not say what the teams claims it says.

A second reason judges may call for evidence may be to clarify their understanding of what the evidence said. Common statements along these lines include "I will usually read evidence only if I feel that it is my listening that is at fault for not understanding its impact." "I seldom read evidence after a round unless I was inattentive when it was presented." Another reason for calling for cards is to evaluate an evidence challenge. Numerous judges will read evidence after the round if there is an evidence challenge.

The final reason some judges call for evidence is simply because the card in question is important to their decision making. They will look at all the evidence that they are asked to vote on; have a question concerning its content; or if they feel it's important in the round. They will call for evidence after a round if an issue is very important and they are unsure of what the evidence said.

It should be noted that few judges will call for cards that they do not understand because of a lack of speaking clarity. "I do not read evidence as a shortcut for debaters, i.e., `call for the card after the round, it's really good'."

Source citations. The final evidence-type variable analyzed a judge's desire to hear full source citations on each piece of evidence. Most judges (47.7 %) indicated that, generally, debaters do not need to read full evidence citations. Of course, one judges definition of what constitutes a full cite may differ from another's. Generally, judges feel that a full cite includes author, publication, date, and page number.

Although teams don't have to read full cites, certain

requirements may still be imposed. For example, some judges do not require complete cites, but they are bothered by cites which give them too little information to weigh the importance of the evidence. Teams may not need to read complete cites in rounds, however, some judge feel that the debaters should be familiar with them, and the general context of the article.

Although most judges don't require full source cites, they do expect full cites to be available and complete - especially if the evidence is in question. Some judges (37.1%) indicated that debaters should read full source cites. Merely stating `Smith says' and then reading a quotation is pointless. One critic stated "I firmly believe the full citations should be read in the round. If I were adopting a policy, I would not do it on the basis of `Smith in 81'." Several judges implied that full source cites include, not only bibliographic information, but source qualifications

> Since credibility serves as the warrant for [many] arguments, I expect debaters who introduce sources to qualify them (which may be accomplished by brief sign, e.g. professional position -- `Professor of Government at Harvard,' editorial reputation of the publisher -- `Washington Post,' or the circumstances of the testimony -- `before the House Ways and Means Committee'.") Qualified sources may be impeached, but the burden of proof rests with the plaintiff.

Other judges (15.3%) indicated that full cites should be read the first time an author or article in introduced into the round. Evidence should be fully cited and qualified initially. After its initial introduction, abbreviated references may be used.

CONCLUSION

Although a true consensus may never exist, for the vast majority of judges at the 1987 and 1988 national tournaments, a winning argument was one that was 1) properly and logically developed and explained; 2) supported by sound analytical evidence and/or reasoning; 3) clashes with or is directly applied to the opposition; and 4) delivered in a persuasive, comprehensible manner. Viewed in a holistic sense, the comments offered in this paper attempt to define the characteristics of a good argument or strategy. It should be noted that no single type of argument or strategy possess universal support within the community. Furthermore, few judges definitively outlaw certain types of arguments of strategies. A balance must be achieved. Debaters who understand the reservations and limitations judges place on topicality, debate theory arguments and evidence, counterwarrants and counter intuitive arguments, evidence, and style and delivery will surely benefit in the long run.