

HARANGUE

Round 3
Publication



Debaters
Association of Victoria

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HOW TO EXPAND YOUR LOGIC

So, you've got a brilliant argument, but it takes less than 15 seconds to explain. Don't worry, that's fantastic! It shows that you understand your argument very well, and that you are able to present it in a concise way. It's a great skill to have, especially when you want to rebut a point of your opposition with some of your speeches material. But for your actual argument, you need to have more material, more analysis, more logic to it, rather than just fill time by including more analogies, statistics or quotes.

Ask these essential questions

WHY? HOW? WHO? WHEN? WHAT?

When writing your speech, keep these 5 questions in mind. Every time you make a statement, you should ask yourself this question afterwards. Because while what you say may be completely true, unless you spend a lot of effort trying to prove why it is important/true, it's harder for your adjudicator to give the argument credit, as it is less persuasive.

For example, let's take an argument from the D grade debate: "That we should ban all forms of gambling". The argument; "*It is immoral for the government to be making money off people who are addicted to gambling*" may be true, quite emotive, and an average reasonable person would agree with this statement, but to transform this statement into a more powerful argument, all you need to do is constantly ask those 5 questions above!

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VICTORIAN STATE TEAM ANNOUNCED

Congratulations to those selected to be in the 2012 Victorian State Team. They are ...

- Tyrone Connell - Scotch College
- Michael (Mian) Wang - Camberwell Grammar School
- Ronald Zhang - Scotch College
- Annie Williamson - Wesley College
- John Hajek - St. Kevin's College
- Chris Skliros - St. Kevin's College

We wish them and their coaches (Chris Bisset, Steph D'Souza and Kelly Butler) all the best for the National Competition in Hobart in August.

ROUND 2 QUIZ RESULTS

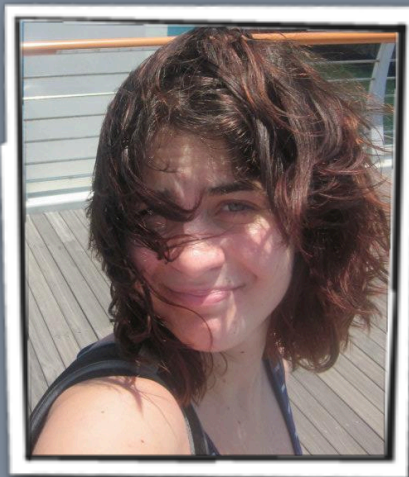
Unfortunately, no submissions were received for the Round 2 quiz, so there was no winner.

MATTER MATTERS

In each edition of **HARANGUE**, we will have an adjudicator write in about a specific matter area to help you make new and interesting arguments within debates.

This week we have **Yhana Lucas**, writing in about another first principles argument: *Liberty*

Yhana is a third year Science (Bachelor of Engineering Systems) student at Melbourne University.



HANDY HINT

When presenting Liberty arguments, the analysis may be very simple, but it is still important that you present it, as your adjudicator can't fill out the analysis for you.

LIBERTY:

More first principles

Back in the first issue of **Harangue**, the lovely Ming Kang explained how to use the "Role of Government" argument. It's one of those arguments we like to call *first principles*, because it is applicable to many topics, and should usually be your first speakers first point.

In a debate on particular topics, like banning something or business/government policy that would affect people's lives, one side will be arguing for more government restrictions/control, and the other side for against government restrictions/control.

What is it?

Liberty is the freedom to do what you want and make your own choices. Many people will agree that having some liberty is a good thing, because it allows an individual to make a choice that's most appealing to them.

For hopefully obvious reasons though, liberty, being a right enshrined in many documents and laws, isn't absolute. The question you need to ask in the debate is, "when/where are these restrictions appropriate?"

What's appropriate?

Restrictions normally apply when some harm exists. For example, we don't allow people to drink and drive because it significantly increases the risk of traffic accidents. So we remove some peoples choice (liberty) to drink and drive, in order to protect others when there is significant risk. We don't however, remove their liberty (choices) when there is very little risk (for example, listening to music while driving and becoming distracted). It's up to you to argue *why* that level of risk is great or small, and *how* important that activity is. Ask yourself questions like

- *Is it necessary?*
- *Does it bring people happiness (and if so, whom)?*
- *Can people exercise this choice rationally?*
- *Is the government in a better position to weigh up the harms and benefits, or don't*

they know about peoples individual circumstances?

Whenever you are proposing in a debate for something to be done, for example; legalising or banning an activity, you need to decide exactly *how* it's going work. These *how* details are called a "model", and can be anywhere between 'hard' and 'soft'.

The Goldilocks Conundrum

When you are working out your model, there are different positions you can take. A 'hard' model is one that is radical, controversial and affects the lives lots of people. An example would be "*Legalising euthanasia for anyone!*". A hard model is good because your case is consistent, as you're not making any exceptions to your broad principle that liberty is good.

A 'soft' model is one that has lots of rules and exceptions. For example: "*Legalising euthanasia only for those dying of the most excruciating illnesses, and they must pass 2 psychological tests, and they must be within a month of their death before it can be carried out.*" It may help cut out some of your oppositions possible arguments, but it also hurts your strongest principle material. By putting in exceptions and rules, as a team, you implicitly acknowledge that there are many harms to liberty and/or that some decisions people choose aren't the best. This often directly feeds into your oppositions rhetoric and arguments, that someone else (like the government) knows best.

So which do I choose?

While both extremes can be tempting, it's best to take the middle ground or try taking a slightly harder line, so that you don't damage your own material. Put in exceptions that would prevent the worst scenarios from happening (for example, people with easily curable depression accessing euthanasia), but be prepared to defend the minor harms and demonstrate why the majority will make the right choices and be better off.

Remember, many DAV topics involve liberty arguments; from school uniforms, to seat belts, to government education campaigns. Best of luck!

Yhana Lucas

INNER THOUGHTS OF AN ADJUDICATOR

Harangue had a Q & A session to one of the DAV's newest adjudicators, *Fergus Peace*, and asked him for his perspective on adjudicating a debate.

Q1: What do you think makes the difference between an average speech, and a strong speech?

Impressive manner is always an easy way to distinguish between a strong speech and standard speech. Good manner requires more than just eye contact. The speaker needs a 'presence'; they need to be convinced of what they're saying and have confidence within themselves and their arguments.

Q2: How do you think speakers can improve their 'logic' of their arguments?

Don't provide more evidence! One or two examples are fine, but often 'less is more' when it comes to giving examples. Instead, I like speakers who give an example and then go onto to explain in a couple of more sentences *why* something is relevant, but more importantly, *how* it proves your side of the topic.

Q3: What is the one thing you believe students could most improve upon?

Arguments that are really not thought out and just offer an *opinion*, not a *reason* for why something ought to be. For example, arguments like "*Australian TV content is really expensive, therefore if we get rid of government quotas on TV content, we can spend more money on hospitals and education*".

First of all, it's wrong because the TV stations which will be making the saving in this situation wouldn't be spending their money on hospitals and education, they'd be using it to improve their business, or more likely, giving it back to shareholders.

Secondly, even if it was the government who was saving money, saying the money could be "better spent" is not that persuasive. Instead, reasons why that money is being wasted or ineffective is better. Leave the role of allocating more money to health and education to the Treasurer.

Q4: How important is a well structured speech to you? To be honest, I'm not overly worried about the exact kind of structure you use, such as whether you give your split before your rebuttal or vice versa, as long as it follows the basic structure of *introduction - rebuttal - separated arguments - conclusion*. Don't over structure by having 15 micro points, but neither under structure by just having one long narrative. Arguments should be split up and given roughly equal time.



Q5: As a debater, it's always interesting wondering what the adjudicator is writing down. What are some of the most important things you write down during the debate?

While I write down as much as I possibly can, there are some things that are more important than others.

Titles or headings of your points are the most important. Clear signposting which says "*Now my first point will be [title of argument]*" makes it easy to understand and that's what I write down. So I recommend for teams to clearly title their arguments, and signpost when moving from one argument to another, so adjudicators can get those headings down, as they're really helpful when it comes to looking at your teams entire case.

Speaking at a natural speaking rate is also helpful. A debaters who speaks really fast may be able to get out more material, but it has less impact that someone who says less, but gives me time to write it down and sink it. Pauses also help with this.

Fergus was a debater on the Victorian State Team in 2010 and was awarded a Swannie that same year. Unfortunately, he is about to leave us for Oxford to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics. Harangue wishes him all the best.

HOW TO EXPAND YOUR LOGIC (CONTINUED)

Here is a small example of how constantly asking yourself questions to statements you make, helps develop your arguments.

The argument: "*It is immoral for the government to be making money off people who are addicted*" **(Q: How are people addicted? WHO are these people?)**

"*These vulnerable gambling addicts are average citizens, caught up in the dangerous belief that by gambling more and more, and going into debt, they will make their money back*" **(Q: So WHAT is the government's role in this?)**

"*The government has a duty to protect every citizen from harms they can not prevent themselves*" **(Q: WHY does the government have this duty?)**

This is because friends and family can not always be relied upon to help people overcome a personal crises. **(Q: WHY?)**

Especially as there are gambling addicts who don't family or friends with the time and capacity to help them overcome their addiction. **(Q: So HOW is the government acting immorally then?)**

"*The government, by not banning gambling and instead, taxing it heavily and making lots of revenue, is implicitly exploiting these citizens by taking their money and not providing enough the necessary help for people to overcome their addiction.*" **(Q: WHAT if the government just provided more services?)**

"*The government just can't spend more money on services to help addicts.* **(Q: WHY?)**

Because when the government continues to make revenue from gambling, it constantly has an incentive to allow some people to gamble to unhealthy levels, or allow gambling industries to have lax laws, so the government makes more revenue" **(Q: But WHY is this immoral?)**

"*Since we told that the governments main responsibility is to protect those who are vulnerable, allowing gambling and the associated revenue to flow to the government would be a severe breach of the governments duty to protecting its people*"

And there you go, a powerful statement just made into a more powerful argument!

ROUND 2 WRAP UP

A brief wrap up of the Round 2 debates from one of our senior adjudicators, Jacqui Duong



A GRADE

That the government has failed Indigenous Australians

This empirical debate required teams to establish a test for the criteria they believed constituted a 'failure' and then argue whether or not the government was meeting that test.

It however was not accurate to define 'failed' to mean actions only committed in the past, as some analysis for how the government currently engages with Indigenous issues showed a greater depth of knowledge

While many teams successfully linked government responsibility with outcomes on various matters (such as life expectancy, education, healthcare, etc), teams that simply listed what was going right/wrong in Indigenous communities had a harder time showing why those outcomes did or did not result in government 'failure'.

B GRADE

That we should require all schools to accept at least 25 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The clash of this debate was largely about *whether to mix students from different economic backgrounds or whether to increase funding in disadvantaged schools.*

In most debates, teams were able to provide analysis about the harms and benefits of having a 25% quota (better educational outcomes and work opportunities or difficulty in merging because of culture and academic ability).

Better teams gave principled argumentation, such as why the government should have a responsibility to implement this policy or why private schools should have the ability to select their own students without a government imposed quota.

C GRADE

That police should only break up violent protests

While this debate occurred in the context of the #Occupy movement, teams which found other examples of non violent protests did better by being able to argue from a more diverse standpoint, and analyses the benefits/harms of non violent protests on different groups.

While many Affirmative teams were strong in being able to point out the benefits and rights of a protest, stronger teams weighted up the rights of protestors with the harms that the Negative team raised.

Negative teams were typically quite strong in this round by outlining the possible scenarios were a non violent protest could cause a detrimental harm to society, or even better, different stakeholders (ie businesses) within society.

D GRADE

That we should ban all forms of gambling

This debate largely was a clash around the issue(s) of whether *gambling is inherently harmful to the player(s) and community or whether there is a more acceptable solution to problem gambling than a ban.*

While affirmative teams were able to outline in excellent detail the harms of gambling, especially to families/friends/the community, strong teams went further and demonstrated why a ban, not any other solution, proposed by the negative team would be better.

Negative teams were able to point out how gambling was a valid choice, but better teams were able to demonstrate how different solutions to solving problem gambling would be better than an outright ban.

Jacqui Duong

IN THE NEXT EDITION OF HARANGUE

- More MATTER MATTERS
- We find out why 75 is the average speaker score
- Round 3 wrap up
- And more!!!

MANY THANKS TO THE CONTRIBUTORS

- Jacqui Duong
- Yhana Lucas
- Fergus Peace

Want to submit something?

All submissions can be sent to the DAV publications officer at publications@dav.com.au

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