**Debate should function as a constructive dialogue about the resolution – the affirmative doesn’t have to defend fiat or exclude their experiences, but they must provide a defense of the resolution as the starting point for their 1AC.**

The resolution equally divides ground to make dialogue possible. This allows for development of ideas, without excluding non-traditional perspectives. By ignoring the resolution the aff leaves the negative unheard, which is anti-educational and exclusive.

Galloway, 07 – Ryan, Assistant Professor and Director of Debate at Samford University (“DINNER AND CONVERSATION AT THE ARGUMENTATIVE TABLE: RECONCEPTUALIZING DEBATE AS AN ARGUMENTATIVE DIALOGUE,” Contemporary Argumentation and Debate, vol. 28, 2007, Ebsco)Red

This journal previously (2004) addressed issues regarding the growing divide in policy debate. However, the role of the debate resolution in the clash of civilizations was largely ignored. Here, I defend the notion that activist approaches of critical debaters can best flourish if grounded in topical advocacy defined in terms of the resolution. This approach encourages the pedagogical benefits of debates about discourse and representations while preserving the educational advantages of switch-side debate. Debaters’ increased reliance on speech act and performativity theory in debates generates a need to step back and re-conceptualize the false dilemma of the “policy only” or “kritik only” perspective. Policy debate’s theoretical foundations should find root in an overarching theory of debate that incorporates both policy and critical exchanges. Here, I will seek to conceptualize debate as a dialogue, following the theoretical foundations of Mikhail Bakhtin (1990) and Star Muir (1993) that connects the benefits of dialogical modes of argument to competitive debate. Ideally, the resolution should function to negotiate traditional and activist approaches. Taking the resolution as an invitation to a dialogue about a particular set of ideas would preserve the affirmative team’s obligation to uphold the debate resolution. At the same time, this approach licenses debaters to argue both discursive and performative advantages. While this view is broader than many policy teams would like, and certainly more limited than many critical teams would prefer, this approach captures the advantages of both modes of debate while maintaining the stable axis point of argumentation for a full clash of ideas around these values. Here, I begin with an introduction to the dialogic model, which I will relate to the history of switch-side debate and the current controversy. Then, I will defend my conception of debate as a dialogical exchange. Finally, I will answer potential criticisms to the debate as a dialogue construct. Setting the Argumentative Table: Conceptualizing Debate as a Dialogue Conceiving debate as a dialogue exposes a means of bridging the divide between the policy community and the kritik community. Here I will distinguish between formal argument and dialogue. While formal argument centers on the demands of informal and formal logic as a mechanism of mediation, dialogue tends to focus on the relational aspects of an interaction. As such, it emphasizes the give-and-take process of negotiation. Consequently, dialogue emphasizes outcomes related to agreement or consensus rather than propositional correctness (Mendelson & Lindeman, 2000). As dialogue, the affirmative case constitutes a discursive act that anticipates a discursive response. The consequent interplay does not seek to establish a propositional truth, but seeks to initiate an in-depth dialogue between the debate participants. Such an approach would have little use for rigid rules of logic or argument, such as stock issues or fallacy theory, except to the point where the participants agreed that these were functional approaches. Instead, a dialogic approach encourages evaluations of affirmative cases relative to their performative benefits, or whether or not the case is a valuable speech act. The move away from formal logic structure toward a dialogical conversation model allows for a broader perspective regarding the ontological status of debate. At the same time, a dialogical approach challenges the ways that many teams argue speech act and performance theory in debates. Because there are a range of ways that performative oriented teams argue their cases, there is little consensus regarding the status of topicality. While some take topicality as a central challenge to creating performance-based debates, many argue that topicality is wholly irrelevant to the debate, contending that the requirement that a critical affirmative be topical silences creativity and oppositional approaches. However, if we move beyond viewing debate as an ontologically independent monologue—but as an invitation to dialogue, our attention must move from the ontology of the affirmative case to a consideration of the case in light of exigent opposition (Farrell, 1985). Thus, the initial speech act of the affirmative team sets the stage for an emergent response. While most responses deal directly with the affirmative case, Farrell notes that they may also deal with metacommunication regarding the process of negotiation. In this way, we may conceptualize the affirmative’s goal in creating a “germ of a response” (Bakhtin, 1990) whose completeness bears on the possibility of all subsequent utterances. Conceived as a dialogue, the affirmative speech act anticipates the negative response. A failure to adequately encourage, or anticipate a response deprives the negative speech act and the emergent dialogue of the capacity for a complete inquiry. Such violations short circuit the dialogue and undermine the potential for an emerging dialogue to gain significance (either within the debate community or as translated to forums outside of the activity). Here, the dialogical model performs as a fairness model, contending that the affirmative speech act, be it policy oriented, critical, or performative in nature, must adhere to normative restrictions to achieve its maximum competitive and ontological potential. This is not new. The notion of affirmative restrictions harkens back to the old controversies over switch-side debate, when proponents argued that debaters be required to argue against their own personal convictions in favor of topics they personally opposed, while opponents contended that debaters should never betray their personal convictions. Darin Hicks and Ronald Greene (2000) call this stance “rhetoric of commitment.” Initially, formats that require debaters to speak against their own personal convictions were considered unethical by opponents of switch-side debate. Defenders countered with an Aristotlean ethic that asked debaters to learn their positions from all sides. Current controversies replay elements of debates regarding switching sides. The primary addition to the discussion regards the role of speech acts and performance. Affirmative teams often defend their advocacy in the context of a larger critical project, often claiming that the benefits of their project supersede localized fairness norms so that topicality and other procedurals are outweighed. This approach powerfully challenges requirements that affirmatives be topical. Defending Debate as a Dialogue After having examined the current state of debate and the impetus for a change to a dialogical model, this section will defend three benefits to re-conceptualizing debate in a dialogic manner. First, unfettered affirmative options deny argumentative space to negative teams who become unable to meaningfully present a counter speech act to the affirmative speech act. Second, by placing a single immutable claim at the center of all debates on both sides of the topic as part of a greater project, debaters deny themselves, their opponents, and the judges the benefits of understanding the unique dynamics of contingent claims. Third, maintaining stable advocacy through both sides and on all topics, regardless of the resolution, prevents students from seriously engaging their perspective from any other position. This essay argues that re-conceptualizing fairness norms like topicality into a dialogue model will help to void these problems while licensing critical styles and modes of argumentation. Setting a Table: Fairness Norms as a Pre-Requisite for Argumentation Debate as a dialogue sets an argumentative table, where all parties receive a relatively fair opportunity to voice their position. Anything that fails to allow participants to have their position articulated denies one side of the argumentative table a fair hearing. The affirmative side is set by the topic and fairness requirements. While affirmative teams have recently resisted affirming the topic, in fact, the topic selection process is rigorous, taking the relative ground of each topic as its central point of departure. Setting the affirmative reciprocally sets the negative. The negative crafts approaches to the topic consistent with affirmative demands. The negative crafts disadvantages, counter-plans, and critical arguments premised on the arguments that the topic allows for the affirmative team. According to fairness norms, each side sits at a relatively balanced argumentative table. When one side takes more than its share, competitive equity suffers. However, it also undermines the respect due to the other involved in the dialogue. When one side excludes the other, it fundamentally denies the personhood of the other participant (Ehninger, 1970, p. 110). A pedagogy of debate as dialogue takes this respect as a fundamental component. A desire to be fair is a fundamental condition of a dialogue that takes the form of a demand for equality of voice. Far from being a banal request for links to a disadvantage, fairness is a demand for respect, a demand to be heard, a demand that a voice backed by literally months upon months of preparation, research, and critical thinking not be silenced. Affirmative cases that suspend basic fairness norms operate to exclude particular negative strategies. Unprepared, one side comes to the argumentative table unable to meaningfully participate in a dialogue. They are unable to “understand what ‘went on…’” and are left to the whims of time and power (Farrell, 1985, p. 114). Hugh Duncan furthers this line of reasoning: Opponents not only tolerate but honor and respect each other because in doing so they enhance their own chances of thinking better and reaching sound decisions. Opposition is necessary because it sharpens thought in action. We assume that argument, discussion, and talk, among free an informed people who subordinate themselves to rules of discussion, are the best ways to decisions of any kind, because it is only through such discussion that we reach agreement which binds us to a common cause…If we are to be equal…relationships among equals must find expression in many formal and informal institutions (Duncan, 1993, p. 196-197). Debate compensates for the exigencies of the world by offering a framework that maintains equality for the sake of the conversation (Farrell, 1985, p. 114). For example, an affirmative case on the 2007-2008 college topic might defend neither state nor international action in the Middle East, and yet claim to be germane to the topic in some way. The case essentially denies the arguments that state action is oppressive or that actions in the international arena are philosophically or pragmatically suspect. Instead of allowing for the dialogue to be modified by the interchange of the affirmative case and the negative response, the affirmative subverts any meaningful role to the negative team, preventing them from offering effective “counter-word” and undermining the value of a meaningful exchange of speech acts. Germaneness and other substitutes for topical action do not accrue the dialogical benefits of topical advocacy. A Siren’s Call: Falsely Presuming Epistemic Benefits In addition to the basic equity norm, dismissing the idea that debaters defend the affirmative side of the topic encourages advocates to falsely value affirmative speech acts in the absence of a negative response. There may be several detrimental consequences that go unrealized in a debate where the affirmative case and plan are not topical. Without ground, debaters may fall prey to a siren’s call, a belief that certain critical ideals and concepts are axiological, existing beyond doubt without scrutiny. Bakhtin contends that in dialogical exchanges “the greater the number and weight” of counter-words, the deeper and more substantial our understanding will be (Bakhtin, 1990). The matching of the word to the counter-word should be embraced by proponents of critical activism in the activity, because these dialogical exchanges allow for improvements and modifications in critical arguments. Muir argues that “debate puts students into greater contact with the real world by forcing them to read a great deal of information” (1993, p. 285). He continues, “[t]he constant consumption of material…is significantly constitutive. The information grounds the issues under discussion, and the process shapes the relationship of the citizen to the public arena” (p. 285). Through the process of comprehensive understanding, debate serves both as a laboratory and a constitutive arena. Ideas find and lose adherents. Ideas that were once considered beneficial are modified, changed, researched again, and sometimes discarded altogether. A central argument for open deliberation is that it encourages a superior consensus to situations where one side is silenced. Christopher Peters contends, “The theory holds that antithesis ultimately produces a better consensus, that the clash of differing, even opposing interests and ideas in the process of decision making…creates decisions that are better for having been subjected to this trial by fire” (1997, p. 336). The combination of a competitive format and the necessity to take points of view that one does not already agree with combines to create a unique educational experience for all participants. Those that eschew the value of such experience by an axiological position short-circuit the benefits of the educational exchange for themselves, their opponents, as well as the judges and observers of such debates. The Devil’s Advocate: Advancing Activism by Learning Potential Weaknesses Willingness to argue against what one believes helps the advocate understand the strengths and weaknesses of their own position. It opens the potential for a new synthesis of material that is superior to the first (Dybvig & Iverson, 2000). Serving as a devil’s advocate encourages an appreciation for middle ground and nuance (Dell, 1958). Failure to see both sides can lead to high levels of ego involvement and dogmatism (Hicks & Greene, 2000). Survey data confirms these conclusions. Star Muir found that debaters become more tolerant after learning to debate both sides of an issue (Muir, 1993). Such tolerance is predictable since debate is firmly grounded in respect for the other through the creation of a fair dialogue. Ironically, opponents of a debate as dialogue risk falling prey to dogmatism and the requisite failure to respect potential middle grounds. Perceiving the world through the lens of contingency and probability can be beneficial to real-world activism when its goal is creating consensus out of competing interests. The anti-oppression messages of critical teams would benefit from a thorough investigation of such claims, and not merely an untested axiological assumption.

**Voting issue to preserve the pedagogical value of debate**