

## Pedagogical possibilities for argumentative agency in academic debate.

by Gordon R. Mitchell

**Argumentation skills are often touted as archetypal tools of democratic empowerment, yet theorization of ways to use such tools in activist projects outside of tournament contest rounds is rare. As a result, the emancipatory telos anchoring academic policy debate tends to gallop ahead of practical efforts to build empowerment through the debate medium. This essay explores the promises and pitfalls of primary research, public debate, debate outreach, and public advocacy as specific modes of debate activism designed to cultivate argumentative agency and bring argumentation skills to bear in wider spheres of public deliberation beyond the academy.**

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Our principle is the power of individuals to participate with others in shaping their world through the human capacity of language;

Our commitment to argument expresses our faith in reason-giving as a key to that power; Our commitment to advocacy expresses our faith in oral expression as a means to empower people in situations of their lives;

Our research studies the place of argument and advocacy in these situations of empowerment;

Our teaching seeks to expand students' appreciation for the place of argument and advocacy in shaping their world, and to prepare students through classrooms, forums, and competition for participation in their world through the power of expression; and

Our public involvement seeks to empower through argument and advocacy.

- American Forensic Association Credo

The lofty goals enumerated in the American Forensic Association's Credo have long served as beacons that steer pedagogical practice in argumentation and debate. The Credo's expression of faith in "reason giving," "oral expression" and critical thinking as formulas for student "empowerment" is reflected in the many textbooks that have been written to guide the academic study of argumentation. "The relevance of skill in argumentation seems self-evident to anyone living in a democratic society," write George W. Ziegelmüller and Jack Kay in *Argumentation: Inquiry and Advocacy*; "The notion of full and free public debate on the vital issues facing society is deeply rooted in the documents and ideas comprising the American conscience" (1997, p. 6). Making a similar point in the introduction to their textbook *Argumentation and Critical Decision Making*, Richard D. Rieke and Malcolm O. Sillars suggest that "the ability to participate effectively in reasoned discourse leading to critical decision making is required in virtually every aspect of life in a democracy"

(1997, p. xvii). "We need debate not only in the legislature and the courtroom but in every other area of society as well," echoes Austin J. Freeley in *Argumentation and Debate*, "since most of our rights are directly dependent on debate" (1996, p. 5).

For those schooled in the tradition of argumentation and debate, faith in the tensile strength of critical thinking and oral expression as pillars of democratic decision-making is almost second nature, a natural outgrowth of disciplinary training. This faith, inscribed in the American Forensic Association's Credo, reproduced in scores of argumentation textbooks, and rehearsed over and over again in introductory argumentation courses, grounds the act of argumentation pedagogy in a progressive political vision that swells the enthusiasm of teachers and students alike, while ostensibly locating the study of argumentation in a zone of relevance that lends a distinctive sense of meaning and significance to academic work in this area.

Demographic surveys of debaters suggest that indeed, the practice of debate has significant value for participants. Some studies confirm debate's potential as a tool to develop critical thinking and communication skills. For example, Semlak and Shields find that "students with debate experience were significantly better at employing the three communication skills (analysis, delivery, and organization) utilized in this study than students without the experience" (1977, p. 194). In a similar vein, Colbert and Biggers write that "the conclusion seems fairly simple, debate training is an excellent way of improving many communication skills" (1985, p. 237). Finally, Keefe, Harte and Norton provide strong corroboration for these observations with their assessment that "many researchers over the past four decades have come to the same general conclusions. Critical thinking ability is significantly improved by courses in argumentation and debate and by debate experience" (1982, pp. 33-34; see also Snider 1993).

Other studies document the professional success of debaters after graduation. For example, 15% of persons in Keele and Matlon's survey of former debaters went on to become "top-ranking executives" (Keele and Matlon 1984). This finding is consistent with the results of Center's

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survey, which suggests that participation in forensics is an employee attribute desired strongly by businesses, especially law firms (Center 1982, p. 5). While these survey data bode well for debate students preparing to test the waters of the corporate job market, such data shed little light on the degree to which argumentation skills learned in debate actually translate into practical tools of democratic empowerment. Regardless of whether or not survey data is ever generated to definitively answer this question, it is likely that faith in debate as an inherently democratic craft will persist.

Committed to affirming and stoking the progressive energies produced by this faith in argumentation, but also interested in problematizing the assumptions that undergird prevailing approaches to argumentation pedagogy for heuristic purposes, in this essay I make a double gesture. On the one hand, I underscore the importance of grounding the practice of academic argumentation to notions of democratic empowerment. On the other hand, I challenge the notion that such a grounding maneuver can be accomplished with faith alone. Moving beyond the characterization of argumentative acumen as a skill to be acquired exclusively through classroom or tournament training, I propose a notion of argumentative agency that brings questions of purpose to the center of pedagogical practice: For what purpose are argumentation skills used? Where can they be employed most powerfully (for better or worse)? What can be learned from efforts to bring argumentation skills to bear in concrete rhetorical situations outside of tournament contest rounds? In a three part discussion, I advance an analysis that contextualizes these questions and proposes reflective ideas that invite response in the ongoing conversation about the meaning and purpose of contemporary academic debate. After sketching the characteristics of some commonly advanced views on the nature of the connection between argumentation pedagogy and democratic empowerment (in part one), I explain how argumentative agency can serve as a conceptual bridge linking academic practice to empowerment (in part two), and then discuss specific strategies for making the pursuit of argumentative agency a guiding principle for work within academic settings (in part three).

### LIMITS OF PURELY PREPARATORY PEDAGOGY

In the process of explaining their teaching approach, argumentation scholars sometimes invoke a bifurcation that separates academic study of argumentation from applied practice in public argument. This explanation typically begins with an elucidation of the democratic and emancipatory potential of debate as a process of decisionmaking, and then proceeds to an explanation of

academic study as an essential preparatory step on the way to achievement of such emancipatory potential. This route of explanation is consistent with the American Forensic Association Credo, which declares that the purpose of forensic education is to "prepare students through classrooms, forums, and competition for participation in their world through the power of expression" (qtd. in Freeley 1996, p. 122). Writing from this posture to defend the value of National Debate Tournament (NDT) policy competition, Edward Panetta posits that NDT debate "will prepare students to be societal leaders ..." (1990, p. 76, emphasis added). Similarly, Austin Freeley suggests that academic debate "provides preparation for effective participation in a democratic society" and "offers preparation for leadership" (1997, p. 21, emphasis added).

What are the entailments of such a preparatory framework for argumentation pedagogy, and how do such entailments manifest themselves in teaching practice? On the surface, the rhetoric of preparation seems innocuous and consistent with other unremarkable idioms employed to describe education (college prep courses and prep school spring to mind). However, by framing argumentation pedagogy as preparation for student empowerment, educators may actually constrain the emancipatory potential of the debate enterprise. In this vein, approaches that are purely oriented toward preparation place students and teachers squarely in the proverbial pedagogical bullpen, a peripheral space marked off from the field of social action. In what follows, I pursue this tentative hypothesis by interrogating the framework of preparatory pedagogy on three levels, considering how it can position sites of academic inquiry vis-a-vis broader public spheres of deliberation, how it can flatten and defer consideration of complex issues of argumentative engagement and how it can invite unwitting co-option of argumentative skills.

As two prominent teachers of argumentation point out, "Many scholars and educators term academic debate a laboratory for testing and developing approaches to argumentation" (Hill and Leeman 1997, p. 6). This explanation of academic debate squares with descriptions of the study of argumentation that highlight debate training as preparation for citizenship. As a safe space that permits the controlled "testing" of approaches to argumentation, the academic laboratory, on this account, constitutes a training ground for "future" citizens and leaders to hone their critical thinking and advocacy skills.

While an isolated academic space that affords students an opportunity to learn in a protected environment has significant pedagogical value (see e.g. Coverstone 1995, p. 8-9), the notion of the academic debate tournament as a sterile laboratory carries with it some disturbing

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implications, when the metaphor is extended to its limit. To the extent that the academic space begins to take on characteristics of a laboratory, the barriers demarcating such a space from other spheres of deliberation beyond the school grow taller and less permeable. When such barriers reach insurmountable dimensions, argumentation in the academic setting unfolds on a purely simulated plane, with students practicing critical thinking and advocacy skills in strictly hypothetical thought-spaces. Although they may research and track public argument as it unfolds outside the confines of the laboratory for research purposes, in this approach, students witness argumentation beyond the walls of the academy as spectators, with little or no apparent recourse to directly participate or alter the course of events (see Mitchell 1995; 1998).

The sense of detachment associated with the spectator posture is highlighted during episodes of alienation in which debaters cheer news of human suffering or misfortune. Instead of focusing on the visceral negative responses to news accounts of human death and misery, debaters overcome with the competitive zeal of contest round competition show a tendency to concentrate on the meanings that such evidence might hold for the strength of their academic debate arguments. For example, news reports of mass starvation might tidy up the "uniqueness of a disadvantage" or bolster the "inherency of an affirmative case" (in the technical parlance of debate-speak). Murchland categorizes cultivation of this "spectator" mentality as one of the most politically debilitating failures of contemporary education: "Educational institutions have failed even more grievously to provide the kind of civic forums we need. In fact, one could easily conclude that the principle purposes of our schools is to deprive successor generations of their civic voice, to turn them into mute and uncomprehending spectators in the drama of political life" (1991, p. 8).

Complete reliance on the laboratory metaphor to guide pedagogical practice can result in the unfortunate foreclosure of crucial learning opportunities. These opportunities, which will be discussed in more detail in the later sections of this piece, center around the process of argumentative engagement with wider public spheres of deliberation. In the strictly preparatory model of argument pedagogy, such direct engagement is an activity that is appropriately pursued following the completion of academic debate training (see e.g. Coverstone 1995, p. 8). Preparatory study of argumentation, undertaken in the confines of the academic laboratory, is conducted on the plane of simulation and is designed to pave the way for eventual application of critical thinking and oral advocacy skills in "real-world" contexts.

Such a preparatory pedagogy has a tendency to defer reflection and theorization on the political dynamics of academic debate itself. For example, many textbooks introduce students to the importance of argumentation as the basis for citizenship in the opening chapter, move on to discussion of specific skills in the intervening chapters, and never return to the obvious broader question of how specific skills can be utilized to support efforts of participatory citizenship and democratic empowerment. Insofar as the argumentation curriculum does not forthrightly thematize the connection between skill-based learning and democratic empowerment, the prospect that students will fully develop strong senses of transformative political agency grows increasingly remote.

The undercultivation of student agency in the academic field of argumentation is a particularly pressing problem, since social theorists such as Foucault, Habermas and Touraine have proposed that information and communication have emerged as significant media of domination and exploitation in contemporary society. These scholars argue, in different ways, that new and particularly insidious means of social control have developed in recent times. These methods of control are insidious in the sense that they suffuse apparently open public spheres and structure opportunities for dialogue in subtle and often nefarious ways. Who has authority to speak in public forums? How does socioeconomic status determine access to information and close off spaces for public deliberation? Who determines what issues are placed on the agenda for public discussion? It is impossible to seriously consider these questions and still hew closely to the idea that a single, monolithic, essentialized "public sphere" even exists. Instead, multiple public spheres exist in diverse cultural and political milieux, and communicative practices work to transform and reweave continuously the normative fabric that holds them together. Some public spaces are vibrant and full of emancipatory potential, while others are colonized by restrictive institutional logics. Argumentation skills can be practiced in both contexts, but how can the utilization of such skills transform positively the nature of the public spaces where dialogue takes place?

For students and teachers of argumentation, the heightened salience of this question should signal the danger that critical thinking and oral advocacy skills alone may not be sufficient for citizens to assert their voices in public deliberation. Institutional interests bent on shutting down dialogue and discussion may recruit new graduates skilled in argumentation and deploy them in information campaigns designed to neutralize public competence and short-circuit democratic decision-making (one variant of Habermas' "colonization of the lifeworld" thesis; see Habermas 1981, p. 376-373). Habermas sees the

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emergent capacity of capitalist institutions to sustain themselves by manufacturing legitimacy through strategic communication as a development that profoundly transforms the Marxist political dynamic.

By colonizing terms and spaces of public dialogue with instrumental, strategically-motivated reasoning, institutions are said by Habermas to have engineered a "refeudalization" of the public sphere. In this distorted space for public discussion, corporations and the state forge a monopoly on argumentation and subvert critical deliberation by members of an enlightened, debating public. This colonization thesis supplements the traditional Marxist problematic of class exploitation by highlighting a new axis of domination, the way in which capitalist systems rely upon the strategic management of discourse as a mode of legitimation and exploitation. Indeed, the implicit bridge that connects argumentation skills to democratic empowerment in many argumentation textbooks crosses perilous waters, since institutions facing "legitimation crises" (see Habermas 1975) rely increasingly on recruitment and deployment of argumentative talent to manufacture public loyalty.

### ARGUMENTATIVE AGENCY

In basic terms the notion of argumentative agency involves the capacity to contextualize and employ the skills and strategies of argumentative discourse in fields of social action, especially wider spheres of public deliberation. Pursuit of argumentative agency charges academic work with democratic energy by linking teachers and students with civic organizations, social movements, citizens and other actors engaged in live public controversies beyond the schoolyard walls. As a bridging concept, argumentative agency links decontextualized argumentation skills such as research, listening, analysis, refutation and presentation, to the broader political telos of democratic empowerment. Argumentative agency fills gaps left in purely simulation-based models of argumentation by focusing pedagogical energies on strategies for utilizing argumentation as a driver of progressive social change. Moving beyond an exclusively skill-oriented curriculum, teachers and students pursuing argumentative agency seek to put argumentative tools to the test by employing them in situations beyond the space of the classroom. This approach draws from the work of Kincheloe (1991), who suggests that through "critical constructivist action research," students and teachers cultivate their own senses of agency and work to transform the world around them.

The sense of argumentative agency produced through action research is different in kind from those skills that are honed through academic simulation exercises such as

policy debate tournaments. Encounters with broader public spheres beyond the realm of the academy can deliver unique pedagogical possibilities and opportunities. By anchoring their work in public spaces, students and teachers can use their talents to change the trajectory of events, while events are still unfolding. These experiences have the potential to trigger significant shifts in political awareness on the part of participants. Academic debaters nourished on an exclusive diet of competitive contest round experience often come to see politics like a picturesque landscape whirring by through the window of a speeding train. They study this political landscape in great detail, rarely (if ever) entertaining the idea of stopping the train and exiting to alter the course of unfolding events. The resulting spectator mentality deflects attention away from roads that could carry their arguments to wider spheres of public argumentation. However, on the occasions when students and teachers set aside this spectator mentality by directly engaging broader public audiences, key aspects of the political landscape change, because the point of reference for experiencing the landscape shifts fundamentally.

In the Truman Show, the lead character is born into a "hyperreal" (see Baudrillard 1983) life of pure simulation, where thousands of tiny hidden cameras record his every move for a world-wide, live television audience. Truman can only break through the illusion that his life is a staged event by realizing eventually that he has the power to change the set, and thereby disrupt the carefully scripted storyline of the "show." Likewise, academic debaters possess considerable latent agency to change the set that serves as the backdrop for their discussions in policy debate tournaments. They can accomplish this by turning their attention beyond a narrow exclusive focus on competitive success in tournament contest rounds and toward possible roles they might play in broader fields of social action. The resulting shift in perspective changes fundamentally the dynamics of academic debate by foregrounding the central purpose of the activity: to serve as a medium of democratic empowerment.

The notion of argumentative agency is not only important for the task of lending weight to projects in debate oriented toward the telos of democratic empowerment. The pursuit of action research carries intrinsic transformative benefits in the form of concrete political change. Building on Felski's argument that "it is not tenable to assume that hermetically sealed forums for discussion and debate can function as truly oppositional spaces of discourse" (1989, p. 171), Giroux points to Foucault and Gramsci as scholars who have made engagement with broader public spheres a matter of academic responsibility.

Academics can no longer retreat into their careers,

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classrooms, or symposiums as if they were the only public spheres available for engaging the power of ideas and the relations of power. Foucault's (1977) notion of the specific intellectual taking up struggles connected to particular issues and contexts must be combined with Gramsci's (1971) notion of the engaged intellectual who connects his or her work to broader social concerns that deeply affect how people live, work, and survive (Giroux 1991, p. 57; see also Giroux 1988, p. 35).

Within the limited horizon of zero-sum competition in the contest round framework for academic debate, questions of purpose, strategy, and practice tend to collapse into formulaic axioms for competitive success under the crushing weight of tournament pressure. The purpose of debate becomes unrelenting pursuit of victory at a zero-sum game. Strategies are developed to gain competitive edges that translate into contest round success. Debate practice involves debaters "spewing" a highly technical, specialized discourse at expert judges trained to understand enough of the speeches to render decisions. Even in "kritik rounds," where the political status and meaning of the participants' own discourse is up for grabs, (see Shanahan 1993) the contest round framework tends to freeze the discussion into bipolar, zero-sum terms that highlight competitive payoffs at the expense of opportunities for co-operative "rethinking."

When the cultivation of argumentative agency is pursued as a central pedagogical goal in academic debate, questions of purpose, strategy, and practice take on much broader meanings. The purpose of participating in debate gets extended beyond just winning contest rounds (although that purpose does not need to be abandoned completely), as debaters intervene in public affairs directly to affect social change, and in the process, bolster their own senses of political agency. In this approach, debate strategy begins to bear a resemblance to social movement strategizing, with questions of timing, coalition-building, and publicity taking on increasing importance. Finally, debate practice itself becomes dynamic as debaters invent new forms of argumentative expression tailored specifically to support particular projects of political intervention into fields of social action.

### CLEARING SPACES FOR ARGUMENTATIVE AGENCY

Up to this point, I have been describing argumentative agency in general terms, striving to locate the notion in a wider frame of reference. In this final section, I distill more specific ideas that serve as provisional answers to the questions that initially drove the study: How can argumentation skills be used? Where can they be most powerfully employed? What can be learned from efforts to apply argumentation skills in concrete rhetorical

situations? Ultimately, the dimensions and dynamics of argumentative agency are properties that emerge organically out of situated pedagogical milieux. The idiosyncratic interests and talents of particular students and teachers shape the manner in which skills of argumentation receive expression as tools of democratic empowerment. Attempting to theorize the proper, precise nature of these expressions would inappropriately pre-empt creative efforts to invent modes of action tailored to fit local situations. A more heuristically valuable theoretical task would involve an exploration of historical attempts to pursue argumentative agency in debate practice. In what follows, I weave description of this (albeit limited) recent history into discussions of the promises and pitfalls involved in the practical pursuit of argumentative agency. This discussion will move through four stages, with each stage highlighting a particular type of argumentation pedagogy: primary research, public debate, public advocacy, and debate outreach.

### Primary research

Possibilities for argumentative agency are obscured when debate scholarship is approached from a purely spectator-oriented perspective, an activity to be conducted on the sidelines of "actual" public policy discussion. Insofar as the act of research is configured as a one-way transaction in which debaters gather and assimilate information passively through impersonal channels, this spectator orientation gains currency and becomes an acquired habit. Within this pedagogical horizon, possible options for action that move beyond traditional library research and contest round advocacy become more difficult to visualize. However, when debaters reconfigure themselves as producers of knowledge, rather than passive consumers of it, it becomes easier to cultivate senses of personal agency. One very basic way that academic debaters can reverse this equation is by turning more to primary research as a tool of debate preparation.

Primary research involves debaters generating evidence "from scratch," by contacting sources directly and engaging them in conversation. If the resulting dialogue is illuminating, and the conversation partner(s) agree, the transcripts of such conversations can be published, and subsequently quoted as evidence in contest rounds. For example, Loyola (LA) debater Madison Laird once authored a high school debate handbook that contained traditional and expected evidence on the 1987/88 high school topic, but also included transcripts of interviews conducted by Laird with Loyola University political science professors. Laird produced extremely powerful, legitimately published evidence by qualified sources merely by asking provocative questions to such sources and then distributing the document throughout the debate

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community. The resulting exchange yielded an illuminating stream of newly-generated knowledge, especially since Laird pitched questions to the professors in a manner that highlighted anticipated stasis points of contest round debate. Interlocutors engaged by students in this manner have responded enthusiastically and reciprocated by asking questions about the nature of the debate activity itself as well as the specific features of projects pursued by argumentation scholars.

An additional example of action research occurred when Samford's debate team engaged government officials and humanitarian workers in a remarkable e-mail dialogue concerning an issue prominent in debates on the 1997-1998 intercollegiate policy debate topic regarding U.S. security assistance to Southeast Asia. Specifically, Samford's Leonard Neighbors asked about whether or not the United States should disclose the maps of bombing runs on Laos conducted during the Vietnam war. For intercollegiate debate participants, this was an especially pertinent question given that many teams were running affirmative cases that dealt with the issue of demining / removing unexploded ordinance from Laos. The dialogue resulting from Neighbors' queries provided a fascinating and fresh perspective on the demining discussion, and many of the email messages were quoted in contest rounds as legitimate evidence following Doyle Srader's publication of the material on his website (see Srader 1998).

Primary research is commonplace in most academic circles; sources often contact each other directly and then reference these conversations in public texts, and multitudes of published interviews can be found in scholarly books and journals. While primary research has not taken root as a widespread practice in academic debate, some fear that if primary research gains in popularity, authors, experts, and other published writers will be deluged by a torrent of annoying correspondence from insolent academic debaters. Apart from the fact that this concern reflects a fundamentally low opinion of high school debaters' senses of civic responsibility, this scenario would be most likely to occur if debaters pursued primary research projects from an exclusively competitive perspective, asking questions purely to elicit answers that might contain valuable contest round evidence. However, if debaters grasp that primary research methodology carries with it the political responsibilities of public engagement, it will be easier for them to see that primary research projects not only generate evidence for academic debates; such projects also feed new information and ideas into discussions taking place in wider public spheres of deliberation.

Public debate

Once students begin to conceive of research areas as fields of action, it becomes easier to invent strategies for intervention. One such strategy involves the extension and adaptation of the debate process beyond the immediate peer audience. For example, familiarity with debate affords students the expertise and wherewithal to organize, execute and amplify public debates. By creating forums where salient and pressing contemporary issues can be debated and discussed in a robust, wide-open fashion, students can lend vibrancy to the public sphere. Public debates represent sites of social learning where the spirit of civic engagement can flourish, ideas can be shared, and the momentum of social movements can be stoked. Unlike top-down communication engineered by mass media news outlets and public opinion polling, the interaction that occurs in public debates is a unique form of dialectical communication. Dynamic, back-and-forth exchange among audience and advocates pushes issues beyond shallow lines of sound-byte development. The drama of debate draws in interested audiences, creating the possibility that dialogue will spill outward beyond the immediate debate venue and into communities, schools, universities and other civic groups. It is through this process that the fabrics of multiple public spheres are spun and woven together to form the variegated patterns of "social knowledge," or shared understandings and expectations that "govern subsequent discourse" (see Farrell 1976; Goodnight 1992).

An excellent public debate driven by an academic debate team occurred in 1994, when Cyrus Kiani and Paul Skiermont debated the contentious local issue of where to build a bridge over the Ohio River in the Louisville, KY community. Kiani, Skiermont, and the University of Kentucky coaching staff researched the issue, prepared arguments, and presented an informative and well-received public debate on September 30, 1994 (see Walfoort 1994). Following the debate, Kiani and Skiermont were deluged with questions about the UK debate society; citizens, politicians and public interest activists expressed amazement that such a university organization existed, and urged the team to continue their involvement in community issues.

Because formats for public debates are flexible, students and teachers can tailor formats and topics creatively to fit local needs, as well as experiment with new forms of debating. A March 19, 1997 debate on the topic of police brutality held at the University of Pittsburgh demonstrated the dynamism of a format that mixes student debaters with high-profile advocates in front of a general public audience. In this public debate, teachers and students entered an intense controversy ignited by the death of Jonny Gammage, a 31-year old Black man killed by white police officers in a predominantly white suburb of

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Pittsburgh after a questionable traffic stop in 1995. After being pushed to the ground and having a night stick held against the back of his neck for over two minutes, Gammage died of asphyxiation. This case galvanized a groundswell of protest in the city against police brutality, and a citizen group pushed for the establishment of an independent review board to field citizen complaints about police behavior. This proposal touched off a heated controversy regarding the appropriateness and effectiveness of such a board for dealing with the problem of police brutality in Pittsburgh. At an organizational meeting early in 1997, University of Pittsburgh debaters met and selected this topic to debate.

To research the topic, some students canvassed the library for materials, while others contacted social movements, government offices, and citizens involved in the controversy for their viewpoints on the debate. After approximately two weeks of research, students met to begin drafting individual speeches. Incorporating the evidence they had gathered, students worked on crafting arguments and polishing their delivery skills. At the next session one week later, an initial practice debate was held where students further worked on their speaking and began mastering the concepts of refutation and cross examination in the public format. After a series of further practice sessions, an initial public debate was conducted, where the students debated with each other for an audience made up of university students and faculty. Following this first public debate, members of the team then solicited outside advocates to join in debating the same topic in a more ambitious event pitched to wider audiences including members of the general public and the media. The debate coaching staff secured commitments of participation from two members of city council, the president of the local police union, and a representative of a local citizen action group. For this second public debate, a three-on-three format was used, where one student was placed as an advocate on each side of the resolution, with three other students assembled as a panel of questioners.

Local media outlets lent momentum to the public debate by devoting significant coverage to the event. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette provided space to advertise the debate two weeks prior to the event, and then devoted a full page of coverage to the debate in the Sunday paper following the debate. In Pittsburgh newsweekly published a partial transcript of the debate, and the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review ran a story on the debate the day after it occurred. Reporters from two local television stations also attended the debate, with WPXI-TV running the debate as the lead story on their 11 p.m. newscast.

As a cultivation site for argumentative agency, this public

debate provided a forum for students to confront "real world" public advocates in a debate about a pressing and salient local topic. This provided an occasion for students to hone their public advocacy skills in a meaningful political context. It should be pointed out that not all students participating in the debate were of the same political persuasion or even favored establishment of the citizen police review board. There was one student debating each side of the question (joining two other outside advocates for each side), and the three person panel of student questioners featured representation along a broad spectrum of political views. By asking questions directly to prominent figures in the local dispute regarding the establishment of a citizen review board to monitor police behavior, Pittsburgh debaters injected novel arguments and perspectives into the public dialogue and provided a forum for supporters and opponents of the board to "meet face-to-face in a structured setting, instead of jawing at one another in the media and courts and public rallies" (Muschick 1997; see also Happe 1997; Mitchell 1997). Similar public debates have been staged regularly by prominent academic debate teams such as Bates College, Claremont McKenna College, the University of Iowa, and the University of Vermont.

Many actors outside the debate community find the debate process very attractive, and this makes it easier to organize and promote public debates. But the political effects of debate are not automatically emancipatory or progressive. The debater's instinct, culled from the democratic faith inscribed in argumentation texts, is that more discussion always good. This is a tidy principle, but when it comes to on-the-ground social change, it depends on type of discussion that debate enables. Institutions often use debate as a legitimating tool. They can point to their participation in debates as evidence demonstrating their "commitment to the community," i.e. proof of their democratic pedigree. If one's goal is to use debate as a tool to challenge corrupt or regressive institutions, the possibility exists that such efforts can end up making the institutions stronger and less responsive to public concerns.

One way around this pitfall is to embrace the notion that an essential part of the debate process involves citizens empowering themselves to invent, clarify, and amplify their viewpoints in public forums. For example, in evaluating a recent EPA grant proposal for a series of national public debates on the topic of environmental justice in brownfields redevelopment policy, Charles Lee of the United Church of Christ endorsed the idea of public debates on the grounds that such debates can generate "social capital" for previously excluded stakeholders to assert their voices in policy discussions. "The production of social capital, a form of which is the ability to conduct

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public discourse," Lee explained, "is critical to solving complex problems and achieving healthy and sustainable communities" (1996).

In order to maximize the potential of the debate medium as a generator of citizen empowerment, however, debate resources need to be put toward projects such as citizen advocacy training and community action research that are designed to build community capacity for public discussion. Public debate organizing is partly a logistical endeavor, involving such tasks as securing debate venues, interacting with media, and planning on-site set management. While these efforts can yield new spaces for public discussion, if academically sterile, irrelevant, or one-sided discussion dominates such spaces, prevailing patterns of alienating public discourse will be mirrored and reproduced in such events. Such an unfortunate outcome would only galvanize the locks barring traditionally excluded segments of the population from public discussion. Thus, it is imperative that "[m]embers of impacted and disadvantaged communities must be part of the interactive process of planning and developing this concept [of public debate]," (Lee 1996). What does "interaction" mean in this context? On a basic level, an interactive planning process would seem to require shared decision-making power regarding determination of formats, dates, venues, and topics of public debates, with each stakeholder having a say in negotiating these matters. But on a more fundamental level, interaction must occur that enables academic debaters to learn from people living in impacted communities; "[T]here is also the need for students and universities to learn from and be trained by community residents regarding the history, aspiration, concerns, assets, wisdom, culture, knowledge, genius, and vision resident in that community" (Lee 1996). Ultimately, the power of public debate as a medium of democratic empowerment for disadvantaged and impacted communities may depend on the extent to which academic scholars and debaters push for "a deeper examination of the word 'interactive'" (Lee 1996) when it comes time to forge partnerships between academic institutions and community groups.

### Debate outreach

The transformative dimension of debate pedagogy can be pursued in outreach efforts designed to share debate with traditionally underserved student populations and communities. With recognition of the emancipatory potential of critical thinking and oral advocacy skills in hand, students and teachers trained in argumentation are today transforming debate practice into a tool of empowerment by collaborating with students who are systematically denied opportunities for engaging in exciting, rewarding and powerful intellectual activities in

their schools. Debate outreach efforts carry political significance because they counter unequal treatment in the educational system, a major root of inequality in our society. Schools are places where prevailing patterns of discrimination are locked into place frequently by unfair public tax systems and short-sighted curricular approaches that slight "at risk" or "underachieving" students by "tracking" them into less rigorous classes based on unfair or arbitrary means of "evaluation," such as standardized test scores (see Giroux 1988; Kozol 1991; Wade 1997). Debate is an activity thick with motivation and laden with drama, meaning, and purpose. Because debate is at once inviting and challenging, it is an activity that has a unique appeal to students who have been alienated by the bland pedagogical fare served up in the frequently routinized and programmed classroom discussions of the present age.

Given the declining conditions of large urban school systems in the United States, funding for extracurricular activities in public high schools is more often than not nonexistent. The cost of providing debate programs is often prohibitive for financially strained inner city high schools. Because the preparation and delivery of debate arguments provides students with the opportunity to think critically, develop their academic research skills, improve their communication abilities, solve problems creatively, and increase their self-confidence, support for this activity is a crucial empowerment tool for youth (Breger 1998, p. 11; see also Wade 1998, p. 80).

Urban Debate Leagues (UDLs) in Atlanta, Birmingham, Chicago, Detroit, Louisville, New York, and Tuscaloosa currently provide opportunities of this sort to students attending traditionally underserved and marginalized public schools. Recently, the Open Society Institute (billionaire George Soros' philanthropic foundation) has emerged as a generous benefactor of such leagues and is working to expand and deepen the growing network of inner-city debate programs in the United States. "Encouraging dialogue between students and teachers from inner-city schools and those from outside the inner-city can result in profound learning," an Open Society Institute (OSI) informational flier explains; "When those who rarely have opportunity to interact come together on the common ground of a debate tournament, education becomes the bridge across the chasms of difference. As one inner-city Atlanta student noted: 'When we are working together on an argument, I see our similarities more than our differences'" (Open Society Institute 1997, p. 2).

Recently published literature suggests that the UDL initiatives are meeting with great success in stimulating new debate circuits and bringing debaters from diverse backgrounds together in a variety of pedagogical milieus (see e.g. Barber 1998; Breger 1998; Lynn 1998). The



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newest UDLs in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Tuscaloosa have largely replicated the "Atlanta model" of UDL organization, which prioritizes policy debate tournament competition as the primary pedagogical tool for redressing educational inequities. There is no denying that contest round competition is a powerful motivating force that draws in novices and pushes advanced debaters to dizzying heights of professional and academic excellence, so there is every reason to expect that these new urban debate leagues will succeed in swelling the ranks of powerful high school debaters from the nation's metropolitan areas.

With the competitive engines of the new Soros-sponsored UDL circuits in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Tuscaloosa now firing alongside the original Atlanta, Chicago and Detroit tournament leagues, it is difficult to question the early success of the partnership forged between the Soros Foundation and members of the academic debate community. However, it is important to contextualize these early successes by putting the advantages and drawbacks of a strictly competitive pedagogy in wider political perspective. As earlier portions of this article discussed, when weaned on an exclusive diet of tournament contest round competition, debaters tend to develop a spectator mentality regarding political affairs. From this vantage point, the political landscape resembles a whirl witnessed through the windows of a speeding train. There is a risk that UDL debaters brought up through such a pedagogical program will be steered away from opportunities to develop and apply their argumentative skills in organic projects of democratic empowerment that are focused on pressing local issues in their communities.

Fortunately, Soros' Open Society Institute is out in front of the academic debate community on this point. The Soros grant guidelines for the high school debate program contain descriptions of grantmaking criteria for high school debate projects, and one such criterion favors funding for "noncompetitive debate initiatives which exist as an offshoot of the competitive component and employ topics of relevance to students" (Open Society Institute 1998, p. 1). To date, none of the Soros-funded UDLs have developed significant "noncompetitive debate initiatives," although there are dynamic pedagogical possibilities in this regard. For example, noncompetitive debate initiatives could involve entire communities in public discussions, debates, and action research projects pitched to address pressing topics of local concern. Because such projects would be unhinged from the restrictive grid of power that undergirds zero-sum contest round debate competition, parents, younger children, and other citizens could participate as actors, not just audience spectators. Novel forms of argument couched in multiple aesthetic registers would become fair game. "Why are you debating?" might supplant "What's your affirmative case?" as the most

common question shared among participants in debate events.

### Public Advocacy

It is possible to go beyond thinking of debate as a remedial tool to redress educational inequities and to start seeing debate as a political activity that has the potential to empower students and teachers to change the underlying conditions that cause inequities among schools and communities in the first place. In this task, the public advocacy skills learned by debaters can be extremely efficacious. The ability to present ideas forcefully and persuasively in public is powerful tool, one that becomes even more dynamic when coupled with the research and critical thinking acumen that comes with intensive debate preparation. A crucial element of this transformative pedagogy is public advocacy, making debate practice directly relevant to actors who are studied during research, and making the topics researched relevant to the lives of students and teachers.

On this point, Jurgen Habermas has served as an impressive exemplar, giving concrete expression to his theories of discourse ethics and communicative action in numerous direct interventions into the German public sphere (see Habermas 1994; 1997; Holub 1991). These interventions have taken the form of newspaper articles, speeches and public appearances on such topics as the historical interpretation of National Socialism, the process of German reunification, treatment of immigrant populations in Germany, and the political role of the student movement.

Habermas presented his most comprehensive comments on this latter issue at a June, 1968 meeting of the Union of German Students. At this meeting, he suggested that students have the capacity to roll back "colonization of the lifeworld" and protect the public sphere by promoting wide-open public discussing of pressing political issues. By doing this, Habermas suggested that the students could directly complicate institutional moves to cover for legitimation deficits by fencing off public scrutiny and tamping down critical protest.

The student movement is of central importance, according to Habermas, because it calls into question the legitimacy of capitalist society at its weakest points. It unmasks the ideological obfuscations, critiques the attempts at diversion and opens discussion on fundamental issues of economics and politics. It does not accept the pretext that only experts can decide on matters of economic and political concern. Instead it removes the aura of expertise from state decision-making and subjects policy in general to public discussion (Holub 1991, p. 88).

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Motivated by the publication of Habermas' doctoral dissertation, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, German students arranged mass protests in early 1968 against the Springer publishing house, producer of the *Bildzeitung*, a mass circulation newspaper trading in sensationalism and hard-line conservatism. At Habermas's urging, the students were energized to initiate this resistance, choosing to target Springer based on the Frankfurt school's sustained critique of the mass media as arch-enemy of unfettered public argumentation. As Holub describes, "[a] press such as Springer's has the double function of excluding the public from real issue-oriented discussions and of mobilizing the public against those who, like the protesters, try to engender public debate" (1991, p. 88). This anti-Springer campaign is one example of student movement mobilization undertaken in name of Habermas' suggested project of "repoliticizing," or re-activating public spheres of deliberation (see Habermas 1970).

Alain Touraine, a sociologist who has worked closely with the student movements in France and Chile, argues that the unique cultural position students inhabit affords them uncanny political maneuverability: "Students can now play an important role because the sharp rise in their numbers and the increased duration of studies have resulted in the constitution of student collectivities with their own space, capable of opposing the resistance of their own culture and of their personal concerns to the space of the large organizations that seek to impose themselves even more directly upon them" (1988, p. 120).

The skills honed during preparation for and participation in academic debate can be utilized as powerful tools in this regard. Using sophisticated research, critical thinking, and concise argument presentation, argumentation scholars can become formidable actors in the public realm, advocating on behalf of a particular issue, agenda, or viewpoint. For competitive academic debaters, this sort of advocacy can become an important extension of a long research project culminating in a strong personal judgment regarding a given policy issue and a concrete plan to intervene politically in pursuit of those beliefs.

For example, on the 1992~93 intercollegiate policy debate topic dealing with U.S. development assistance policy, the University of Texas team ran an extraordinarily successful affirmative case that called for the United States to terminate its support for the Flood Action Plan, a disaster-management program proposed to equip the people of Bangladesh to deal with the consequences of flooding. During the course of their research, Texas debaters developed close working links with the International Rivers Network, a Berkeley-based social movement devoted to stopping the Flood Action Plan.

These links not only created a fruitful research channel of primary information to the Texas team; they helped Texas debaters organize sympathetic members of the debate community to support efforts by the International Rivers Network to block the Flood Action Plan.

The University of Texas team capped off an extraordinary year of contest round success arguing for a ban on the Flood Action Plan with an activist project in which team members supplemented contest round advocacy with other modes of political organizing. Specifically, Texas debaters circulated a petition calling for suspension of the Flood Action Plan, organized channels of debater input to "pressure points" such as the World Bank and U.S. Congress, and solicited capital donations for the International Rivers Network. In a letter circulated publicly to multiple audiences inside and outside the debate community, Texas assistant coach Ryan Goodman linked the arguments of the debate community to wider public audiences by explaining the enormous competitive success of the ban Flood Action Plan affirmative on the intercollegiate tournament circuit. The debate activity, Goodman wrote, "brings a unique aspect to the marketplace of ideas. Ideas most often gain success not through politics, the persons who support them, or through forcing out other voices through sheer economic power, but rather on their own merit" (1993). To emphasize the point that this competitive success should be treated as an important factor in public policy-making, Goodman compared the level of rigor and intensity of debate research and preparation over the course of a year to the work involved in completion of masters' thesis.

A recent article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* estimated that the level and extent of research required of the average college debater for each topic is equivalent to the amount of research required for a Master's Thesis. If you multiplied the number of active college debaters (approximately 1,000) by that many research hours the mass work effort spent on exploring, comprehending, and formulating positions around relevant public policy issues is obviously astounding (Goodman 1993).

An additional example of a public advocacy project undertaken by debaters took place under the 1995-96 college debate topic calling for increased U.S. security assistance to the Middle East. At the National Debate Tournament in 1996, a University of Pittsburgh team advocated a plan mandating that unrecognized Arab villages in Israel receive municipal services such as electricity, sewage treatment and water. After the plan was defended successfully in contest round competition, interested coaches and debaters joined together to organize activities on the final day of the tournament. These activities included circulation of informational

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material regarding the plight of unrecognized Arab villages in Israel, video displays of the conditions in unrecognized Arab villages such as Ein Hud, and compilation of 65 signatures supporting a petition which stated the following: "Noting that many Arab villages in Israel currently do not receive basic municipal services such as sewage treatment, electricity, and water, we call on the government of Israel to recognize such villages and provide these essential services." Following the conclusion of the tournament, this petition was forwarded to Association of Forty, the Arab Association for Human Rights, and the Galilee Society, social movements mobilizing for Arab village recognition in Israel.

A more recent example of public advocacy work in debate took place at the National High School Institute, a summer debate workshop hosted by Northwestern University in 1998. At this workshop, a group of high school students researched an affirmative case calling for an end to the U.S. ballistic missile defense (BMD) program. Following up on a week of intensive traditional debate research that yielded a highly successful affirmative case, the students generated a short text designed as a vehicle to take the arguments of the affirmative to wider public audiences. This text was published as an online E-print on the noted Federation of American Scientists website (see Cherub Study Group 1998). In this process of translating debate arguments into a public text, care was taken to shear prose of unnecessary debate jargon, metaphors were employed liberally to render the arguments in more accessible terms, and references to popular culture were included as devices to ground the ban-BMD argument in everyday knowledge.

Some may express reservations about the prospect of debaters settling on particular viewpoints and defending them in public, given that the tradition of switch-side policy debating has tended to tie effective critical thinking with the notion of suspended judgment. However, it is possible to maintain a critical posture, even while taking an active, interventionist stance vis-a-vis political affairs. "Generally speaking, action researchers see the process of gaining knowledge and changing society as interlinked, even inseparable," explains Martin; "Intervention to change society produces understanding - including new perspectives of fundamental theoretical significance - which in turn can be used to develop more effective intervention" (p. 264; see also Sholle 1994). "Research and activism should operate in tandem," Milan Rai writes in a discussion on Noam Chomsky; "you need to interact with others in order to develop ideas" (Rai 1995, p. 59).

A critical and transformative method of action research requires constant reflection to ensure that all aspects of the research enterprise (e.g. purpose, normative

assumptions, methodological tools, and tentative conclusions) are problematized and revised throughout the endeavor as part of an ongoing learning process. The notions of constant change and unlearning on the part of the researcher and continuous rearticulation of knowledge (understanding) throughout the research act draw from the field of critical (transformative) pedagogy and cultural studies. As Kincheloe explains, "[t]he critical core of critical action research involves its participatory and communally discursive structure and the cycle of action and reflection it initiates" (1993, p. 183). Woolgar has characterized the synergistic interplay among dimensions of inquiry as the "dynamic of iterative reconceptualization," a process whereby "practitioners from time to time recognize the defects of their position as an occasion for revising its basic assumptions" (1991, p. 382). According to Woolgar, what sets this dynamic in motion is the practitioner's embrace of "reflexivity"; i.e. affirmative problematization of scholars' own conceptions of themselves as critical agents in light of continually shifting theoretical assumptions.

Reflexivity, Woolgar explains, "asks us to problematize the assumption that the analyst (author, self) stand in a disengaged relationship to the world (subjects, objects, scientists, things)" (Woolgar, p. 383). This posture shares much in common with certain research orientations in critical ethnography. Such orientations hold that "work must find ways of communicating that do not simply reaffirm old 'ways of seeing'; it must challenge the very foundations of our experience of ourselves yet be understandable and sensible." This involves commitment "to study the character and bases of one's own work practices and their relation to the knowledge such practices produce" (Simon and Dippe 1986, p. 200). In the context of rhetorical theory, Left has located a similar dialectic at work in the synergistic interplay between the "productionist" and "interpretive" impulses of classical rhetorical theory (see Leff 1996, p. 89-100). From a science studies angle, Woolgar argues that the potential reflexive benefits of action research are strong warrants for its embrace and pursuit as a scholarly method of research.

... [T]he prospect of engaging with [policy-makers and other interested audiences beyond the academy] seems too good an opportunity to miss. The attempt to forge and manage relationships with potential audiences provides a welcome experimental probe. For it provides the chance of acquiring first-hand experience of attempts to change people's minds. So we should welcome opportunities to become involved in this kind of exercise. Not because this will legitimate our own enterprise; it may or may not. But because it will provide excellent materials for further thinking through the consequences of presuming to know something for a particular audience outside [our own fields] (Woolgar 1991, p. 386).

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Woolgar's commentary highlights the fact that a strong sense of reflexivity can be achieved only when scholars embrace epistemological humility and curiosity (see Freire 1985, p. 173; Freire and Macedo, p. 380), leaving their academic *raison d'être* open to question and engaging in a perennial pursuit of different ways of knowing. In the context of argumentative agency, such a posture might be supported through intermittent and alternating episodes of public advocacy and academic study, where students draw upon the synergistic interplay between the two spaces of investigation to calibrate their evolving political opinions and interventions.

Such a posture addresses Coverstone's concerns that debater-driven public advocacy projects would take on the character of "mass actions" designed to "homogenize the individual members of the debate community" (1995, p. 9). By assuming a reflexive stance that relentlessly destabilizes and interrogates the assumptions undergirding particular public advocacy projects, debaters can add a crucial element of reflection to their practice. Such reflection can highlight the potential dangers of political engagement and generate strategies to negotiate these pitfalls through shared discussion. Coverstone's fear that the radical heterogeneity of political opinions found in the debate community "means that mass political action is doomed to fail" (1995, p. 9) is accurate as a diagnosis of the utopian prospects for a monolithic and ideologically consistent social movement to spring forth from the ranks of activist debate participants. However, Coverstone overlooks the emancipatory potential of smaller groups within the debate community to organize with like-minded colleagues. While the radical heterogeneity of political orientation in the debate community likely blocks the formation of a homogenous mass political movement, the same diversity also has the potential to support a panoply of ideologically diverse (and even contradictory) micro-movements. Although participants in these smaller movements may be advocating different causes and pursuing distinct strategies of intervention, the common thread linking their projects together is a quest to develop argumentation skills as tools to impact events unfolding in fields of social action.

### CONCLUSION

The continuing desertification of the public sphere is a phenomenon that serves as an urgent invitation for argumentation scholars to develop remedial responses. As the Credo of the American Forensic Association trumpets, members of the forensics community in this nation are well positioned to make such responses, given the community's commitment to debate and argumentation as tools of democratic empowerment. In this essay, I have argued that faith alone is insufficient to bring about the

translation of argumentation skills into tools of democratic empowerment. Instead, such a successful translation requires affirmative efforts to clear spaces that free scholars to exercise and develop senses of argumentative agency. With greater room to maneuver for inventing strategies for action, taking risks, making mistakes and affecting change, scholars can begin to envision how to do things with arguments not only in the cozy confines of contest round competition, but in the world beyond as well.

Evolution of the idea of argumentative agency, in both theory and practice, is driven by the idiosyncratic and often eccentric personal sentiments and political allegiances held by students and teachers of argumentation. Those interested in seeing debate skills become tools for democratic empowerment have the ability to cultivate argumentative agency in their respective pedagogical and political milieux. This might involve supporting and encouraging efforts of students to engage in primary research, organize and perform public debates, undertake public advocacy projects, and/or share the energy of debate with traditionally underserved and excluded student populations through outreach efforts. Much has already been done in this regard, but there are also many new challenges on the horizon. Methodologies and philosophies of primary debate research are in need of ongoing refinement; research and reflection on innovative public debate formats are necessary to extend the democratic potential of such events; emaciated public spheres everywhere are waiting for spirited public advocacy projects to energize forums for citizen discussion, and new strategies for debate outreach are essential to stoke the momentum already building in urban debate leagues across the nation.

The title of Howard Zinn's excellent book, *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train* (1994) contains a poignant axiom for those who might question pursuit of argumentative agency in academic debate on the grounds that it makes debate "too political." Debate has always been a political activity, and no amount of academic insulation will ever be able to shield it completely from the political currents that swirl outside the august halls of contest round competition. On a most basic level, academic debate is intertwined politically with the Ford Motor Company, Phillips 66 Petroleum, and the Sorts Foundation, three major corporate benefactors that support the activity. To the extent that these organizations parlay their institutional affiliations with debate into public relations windfalls (see e.g. Barber 1998), the labor of academic debaters becomes political by virtue of the use-value it generates for corporate sponsors. At the same time that an academic debater participating in a Kansas City contest round might be advocating vociferously for a hypothetical plan that reins in profligate burning of fossil

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fuels, a Phillips 66 company executive in New York might be generating additional sales for the oil industry by using the company's support for education and debate to close real business deals with fence-sitting investors.

Those still skeptical about the applicability of Zinn's "moving train" axiom to debate might want to consider finally the remarkable activities of the Enron Corporation. As a major oil and gas company, Enron, Inc. had a vested interest in influencing the content of academic debates on the 1997-98 high school topic. Since that year's topic called for affirmatives to strengthen environmental protection, Enron executives knew that many high school debaters would be researching and debating global warming, a political and scientific controversy that carries enormous economic significance for Enron. Acting to protect this interest, the company dispatched two executives on a remarkable barnstorming tour of high school debate workshops in the summer of 1997. Lugging with them armloads of free evidence, the Enron executives made their way to at least four summer workshops, where they presented an extensive slide show that debunked the theory of global warming and touted the environmental benefits of oil and gas exploration. To return once again to Zinn's terminology, the debate train is already being pulled fast by powerful political engines. The pressing question of the day should be "Where do we want to go?" not "How can we stay neutral?"

At a recent dinner held in his honor, Brent Farrand (Debate Coach of Newark High School of Science) gave a brilliant and moving speech that touched on many of the themes discussed in this essay. Looking back on his own career, Farrand offer a poignant charge for the future. "Perhaps the time has come for each of us to consider choosing a road that travels to other places than just between practice rounds and tournament sites," Farrand reflected; "Through some admittedly dark times when each of us felt like voices in the wilderness, we cradled, protected, refined and polished this gem of education. It is time now to carry it out into the world and share it" (Farrand 1997).

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