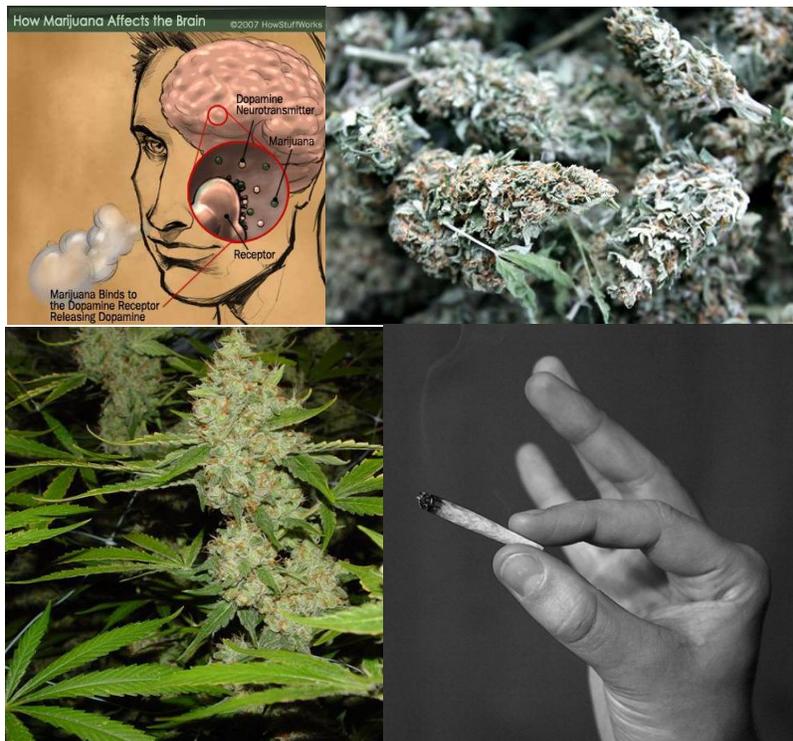


Research Package #1

(High School – Canadian National Style)

(Canadian National Style is a type of debate inspired by the style of debate used at the World Schools Debating Championships. National Style is Worlds Style with two person teams instead of the usual three. Each of the speakers is given one constructive speech, and each team is given a reply speech delivered as the last two speeches of the debate.

The team that is in favor of the motion is called the Proposition, and the team against the resolution is the Opposition. All of the constructive speeches are given equal amounts of time. The reply speech is given by the first speaker on each of the respective teams. All debates in Canadian National Style are values debates. All motions are prefaced with the words “This House” referring to a generic government institution (not necessarily Canada). All debaters can address the speaker (Mr./Mrs. Speaker), the chair (Mr/Madam Chair) or the audience Ladies and Gentlemen.)



“THW Decriminalize Marijuana.”

Fall Workshop Topic (Sept./Oct.) 2010-2011



Code of Conduct

Preamble: Coaches need to familiarize themselves with this code as well as the rules in the POLICY AND RULES MANUAL and formally inform their debaters, parents, and supporters about these ethics and rules prior to competition each school year.

1. PARTICIPANTS:

GENERAL

- a. Participants shall be courteous and friendly to other competitors, judges, organizers and guests.
- b. Participants shall use language conducive to proper public speaking decorum. **Profanity is unacceptable.**
- c. In the event of a complaint, all participants must bring the issue to their coaches only, who will then approach the tournament organizer on their behalf. Complaints must be lodged immediately following a round of debate or speech.
- d. Participants shall not argue with the judge or their opponents about the conduct or the result of the speech or debate. Participants shall not dispute the result of a debate or speech round in the presence of the judge(s).
- e. The Association does not approve of the use of any illicit drugs or the consumption of alcohol at Association sponsored events

DEBATE

- a. Debaters shall not seek to influence the judge by means other than evidence and argumentation during the debate.
- b. Debaters shall not listen to teams debating that they might meet on the same topic at a later time and thereby gain a competitive advantage. Coaches may, however, observe their own teams.
- c. Use of audio or visual equipment for the purpose of recording a debate may be done with the prior consent of both teams, their parents, and the organizer of the event.
- d. A team shall not seek or provide second-hand information regarding the cases of potential opponents.
- e. Debaters shall not breach normal courtesy by interruption, heckling, grimacing or whispering loudly while an opponent is speaking. Heckling, in an appropriate manner, in the case of Parliamentary style debating is acceptable.
- f. Debaters shall not, either by word or action, seek to belittle their opponents. Debates must be a clash of issues and not personalities.
- g. Competing teams must not collude to affect the debate in any way.
- h. Debaters must respect the personal physical space of an opponent. (Do not invade an opponent's space.)
- i. In an Impromptu style debate, debaters must define definitions in the spirit of debate. In other words, they must be defined fairly and allow for debate on both sides of the resolution.
- j. Students may not use computers, palm pads, cell phones, or any communication technology during a round of debate. Debaters must be able to compete on their own merit and the strength of their research done prior to the event.
- k. A debater shall not pass notes/cards to his/her partner when one of them has the floor, either from the constructive speech or the cross-examination. Debaters are judged on individual skills.

Any conduct not in accordance with these codes will be grounds for disqualification in a tournament, and may include banning participants from future ADSA activities. Matters may be referred back to school based administrators.

2. COACHES:

- a. According to the School Act, as well as School Liability, a Teacher Representative/Coach must be present at all ADSA events that their students participate in.
- b. In the spirit of cooperation, coaches shall actively encourage the sharing of resource materials available from public libraries and other public resource centers between teams within their own school.
- c. Coaches must demonstrate qualities of courtesy and good sportsmanship. These are evidenced by proper acceptance of officials' judgement, positive encouragement of student performance and polite interaction with tournament organizers in the event of a complaint.
- d. Coaches will support the volunteer efforts of fellow coaches and judges, and will encourage their debaters to do so as well.
- e. The Coach/Teacher, as a representative of the school, is responsible for the conduct of all personnel composing the school's team (participants, spectators from their school, and parents of your students). Coaches/Teachers shall make an attempt to control any negative situations, before it becomes an issue for the tournament organizer.
- f. When organizing tournaments, organizers should make an effort to ensure that students from the same school can avoid debating each other when possible and that all debate teams from a school will have a fairly even split of Proposition and Opposition debates. Coaches should try to assign a bye to the school with the most teams at a tournament.
- g. Coaches will not scout out teams.

Any conduct not in accordance with these codes shall be grounds for the ADSA to notify the School's Administration. If behavior does not change, the ADSA will hold the right to ban coaches/teachers from attending future ADSA activities.

3. PARENTS AND SPECTATORS:

- a. Parents and spectators, both student and adult, will demonstrate courtesy and good sportsmanship by positive encouragement (before and after a debate) for their team/children.
- b. Parents and spectators will demonstrate respect towards opponents, coaches, judges and tournament organizers.
- c. In the event of a complaint, parents and spectators are only permitted to approach their team/child's coach, who will then approach the tournament organizer (in that order). Parents, spectators and coaches will not approach opposing teams, coaches or judges after a debate has been completed.
- d. Parents will encourage their child to follow the rules of debate.
- e. Parents will not scout out teams.
- f. Parents and spectators will act in a supportive manner towards all volunteer personnel, who help in the development of all participants' skills, and encourage the promotion and growth of the ADSA.

Any conduct that is not in accordance with this code, shall be as grounds for ejection from a tournament, and may include suspension of future participation in ADSA tournaments or interaction with the ADSA volunteers and participants.

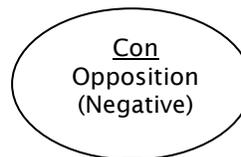
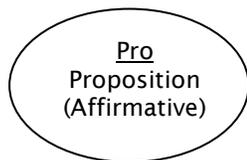
What is a debate?

Debate is an organized way to discuss and come to a conclusion about an issue. The issue is stated at the beginning and is sometimes called a proposition or resolution. For example – **THBT terrorism can be justified**. All of the discussion must relate to it. In a debate, one person speaks at a time and the other participants listen.

The idea behind debate is that there are two sides to every issue. In a debate, the two sides are known as the Affirmative or Proposition and the Negative or Opposition. The two sides of the debate have different jobs arising from their position with respect to the resolution, issue, or topic.

The Proposition (Affirmative) supports the Resolution.

The Opposition (Negative) opposes or clashes with the Proposition (Affirmative).



To win a debate, you must do two things:

1. Give good reasons why your side of the topic is *true*, and
2. Show why your opponent's reasons are *wrong* (rebuttal).

The Alberta Debate and Speech Association is an organization that encourages debate. We have established a set of rules to ensure that these debates are fair for all competitors. ADSA has been in existence since 1974.

In Senior High, the notion of policy or value debates don't exist anymore. It is just debate, with a model if the resolution lends itself to it.

THE PROPOSITION

The Proposition speaks first in any debate because the Proposition is suggesting a change. Without this change there would be nothing to talk about. The job of the Proposition in any debate is to persuade the judges that the present system, or status quo, should be **significantly** changed. In order to accomplish this, there are a number of steps that the Proposition team must go through.

- 1) Define the resolution (Make sure everyone is clear upon what the Proposition is debating).
- 2) Present a Model (if needed)
- 3) Present arguments in favor of the resolution.
- 4) Refute Opposition attacks on the Proposition case. (Show why the Opposition is wrong and the Opposition is correct).

Owing to time restrictions, the Proposition duties are normally divided up between the first and second Proposition speakers. In National Style it is custom for the first proposition speaker to present two arguments followed by the second speaker who presents the final argument.

AN EXAMPLE OF A PROPOSITION STATEMENT

Criminalized Marijuana is the Most Dangerous Marijuana

"Despite decades of governments imposing more laws and harsher punishments on the possession, trafficking and use of marijuana, its popularity and use has risen significantly in Canadian society. Though marijuana use is not something that that we encourage Canadians to participate in, we believe that the worst effects of its use are directly affected by its criminal status. Drug dealers and growers are often violent and dangerous criminals. Most marijuana users would otherwise not come into contact with these criminals if they could grow a small amount of their own marijuana for personal use."

THE OPPOSITION

The job of the Opposition is to be disagreeable! Whatever the Proposition believes, generally, the Opposition counters. The more you disagree, the better! The Opposition has to convince the judges not to accept the Proposition resolution.

The Proposition wants to convince the judges that their proposal should be adopted.
The Opposition wants to convince you that the Proposition proposal should not be accepted for one or more reasons.

The steps that the Opposition should use are:

- 1) Either agree with the Proposition definition or propose a definition of your own.
- 2) Rebut the Proposition arguments in favor of the resolution.
- 3) Attack the Proposition Model and sometimes propose a counter model
- 4) Present reasons (arguments) to oppose the resolution.
- 5) Refute Proposition attacks on the Opposition case (show why the Proposition is wrong and Opposition is right).

Owing to time restrictions, the Opposition duties are divided between the first and second opposition speakers.

In National Style it is the custom for the First Opposition Speaker to present two arguments and the second opposition speaker to present the final argument.

AN EXAMPLE OF AN OPPOSITION STATEMENT

Marijuana does not just affect the users

"The proposition wants you to believe that the only people marijuana use hurts are its users. That is simply not true. Smoking marijuana can be ten times as hard on a person's lungs than a cigarette, it's effects impair brain function and concentration. The result of this is that Canadian society must bear a greater burden on the health care system, and deal with inefficient and unmotivated workers in their workplaces. Not only do we have a right to protect people from harming themselves, but we have a duty to protect Canadians society in general from the detrimental effects of marijuana use."

Before the debate begins, members of both teams should clearly write the Resolution on the board at the front of the room and indicate their full names and team codes/numbers, to allow the judges to enter this information on their ballots.

THW legalize the sale of human organs

Team # 422 (Bears)

1st Proposition – John Smith

2nd Proposition – James Wright

Team 410 (Moose)

1st Opposition – Henry Dixon

2nd Opposition – Shirley Mace

What are the formats and times of Canadian National Style Debate?

Senior High Canadian National Style (2 Person Teams)

| | Sr. High Beginner | Sr. High Open |
|---|----------------------|------------------|
| 1 st Proposition Constructive | 6 min | 8 min |
| 1 st Opposition Constructive | 6 min | 8 min |
| 2 nd Proposition Constructive | 6 min | 8 min |
| 2 nd Opposition Constructive | 6 min | 8 min |
| Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition | 4 min | 4 min |
| Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition | 4 min | 4 min |

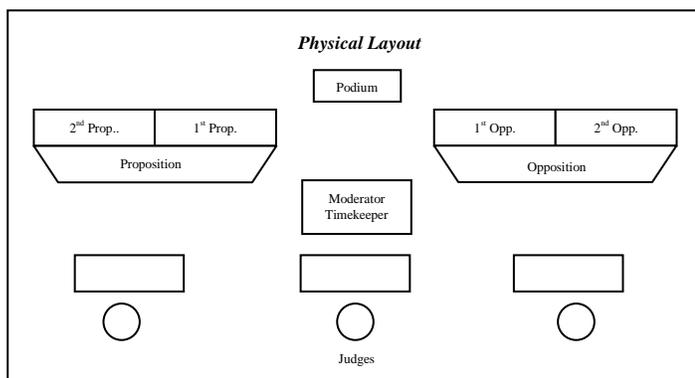
Bilingual Senior High Canadian National Style (2 Person Teams)

| | Sr. High Beginner | Sr. High Open |
|---|----------------------|------------------|
| 1 st Proposition Constructive in French (Definitions in both languages) | 6 min | 8 min |
| 1 st Opposition Constructive in French | 6 min | 8 min |
| 2 nd Proposition Constructive in French | 6 min | 8 min |
| 2 nd Opposition Constructive in French | 6 min | 8 min |
| Reply Speech by 1 st Opposition in English | 4 min | 4 min |
| Reply Speech by 1 st Proposition in English | 4 min | 4 min |

Special notes:

- The first speaker is the Reply speaker, and this never changes.
- Speakers must never interact with their partner while speaking (including passing of notes)
- During the debate, heckling, pulling faces and the like are never tolerated.

What is the Physical Layout of a debate?



The Proposition and Opposition teams always face the audience from the front of the room. Proposition on the left and Opposition on the right from the point of view of judges. Both teams should be seated in clear view of the "chair/timer".

The chair/timer introduces the debaters before they speak and is in charge of ensuring that the debaters know how much time they have left in their speeches. This is indicated either on numbered cards or through standard hand signals.

The debate is 'controlled' by the 'chair' (also referred to as a 'chairperson'). Debaters should always start their speeches by acknowledging both the chair and the audience. A male chair is usually referred to as "Mr. Chairman"; a female chair as "Madame Chair". A common way of starting a debating speech is therefore, "Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen", or "Madame Chair, ladies and gentlemen".



The timekeeper indicates the number of minutes left in a speech by holding up the appropriate number of fingers. The last 10 seconds are counted down on the timekeeper's fingers, in the same way the minutes were counted. After the full time of the speech is completed, the debater still has a 15 second grace period to finish his remarks. This is period is counted down with the timekeeper's arms (imagine the second hands ticking down on a clock). The debater must have finished his speech by the end of the grace period. If he has not, the chair can ask him to sit down.



4 minutes



30 seconds



15 seconds grace

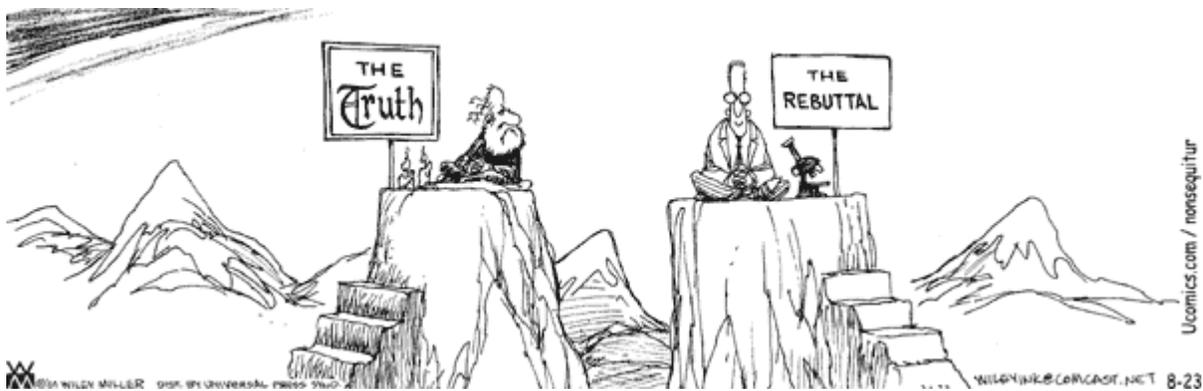
It is important not to be too prescriptive about timing. Ultimately, the best timing depends on the context. Sometimes, for example, a debater will find it important to spend more time than usual on rebuttal; on other occasions, will need to spend more time explaining the arguments clearly. The most important requirement of internal timing is simply that the debater spends about 30 seconds on their conclusion, and a few minutes on the rebuttal. As a general rule, each speaker in the debate will spend more time on rebuttal – so the second Opposition, for example, will generally rebut for longer than the second Proposition, who will rebut for longer than the first Opposition.

Just as important as 'internal timing' is what is sometimes called 'external timing' – the amount of time that you speak for. The principal here is simple: *a debater should use all of the allotted time, but not much more!*

A speaker who speaks for less than his time is making a significant strategic mistake – he or she is missing important persuasion time. That being said, it is important not to go over time, either. Judges will generally allow a speaker about 15 seconds overtime before they start deducting marks. Speaking overtime is completely unwarranted – not only will Judges deduct marks; they will/should stop listening to what the debater is saying!

There is no single way to ensure effective timing. Some speakers wear stopwatches and check the time of their speech; most simply develop a good sense of how long an argument should take. Either way, they need to be aware of time as their speech progresses. When the one-minute (remaining) card is shown, the debater needs to finish the point that they are on and start summarizing. When the stop card is shown, the speaker needs to finish whatever they are on and sit down!

To determine the winning team and evaluate the individual speakers, an odd number of judges must be present. Having an odd number of judges is necessary to eliminate the possibility of a tie being awarded. The judges work individually in scoring the debate; they may not confer with each other or with anyone else in the room until they have completed their ballots.



Canadian National Style Debate Flow Sheet

High School – Canadian National Style

The Task of the Proposition Team

- The Proposition will argue **for the resolution**
- Members of the Proposition team will provide contentions and arguments and evidence in support of the resolution
- If the Proposition Team's Position is, on balance, more credible than the Opposition, then the Proposition wins the debate

The Task of the Opposition Team

- The task of the Opposition is to argue **against the resolution**
- Members of the Opposition team will provide contentions and arguments and evidence in opposition to the Proposition and in support of the Opposition position
- If, on balance, the Opposition Team's Position is more credible than the Proposition, then the Opposition team wins the debate.

| 1st Proposition (Sr. Beg – 6 min, Sr. Open – 8 min) | 1st Opposition (Sr. Beg – 6 min, Sr. Open – 8 min) | 2nd Proposition (Sr. Beg – 6 min, Sr. Open – 8 min) | 2nd Opposition (Sr. Beg – 6 min, Sr. Open – 8 min) | Opposition Reply Speech (1 st Opposition) (4 min) | Proposition Reply Speech (1 st Proposition) (4 min) |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|
| Introduction | Introduction | Introduction | Introduction | <p>Both reply speeches summarize their position and point out the basic flaws of the opposition.</p> <p>No new arguments can be introduced although new evidence (examples, logic etc.) is allowed.</p> <p>Explain why your team should win and the other team should lose.</p> <p>Remind the judges of your arguments.</p> <p>Tell the judges why they should believe your arguments even after the other team's attack.</p> <p>Explain why the judges should not listen to the other team.</p> <p>Review critical evidence.</p> | |
| Definitions | If necessary, challenge definitions | Show unity with Caseline | Show unity with Caseline | | |
| Theme/Case line | Theme/Case line | Clash with Opposition arguments | Clash with Proposition arguments | | |
| Model (If Needed) | Clash with Proposition arguments | Additional arguments to support resolution | Further arguments against resolution | | |
| Arguments in support of resolution | If necessary- counter model, otherwise arguments against Proposition | Conclusion | Conclusion | | |
| Conclusion | Conclusion | | | | |

Style Information

The first and last minutes of all constructive speeches (all but reply) are protected, meaning Points of Information are not permitted.

Points of Information are not permitted in the reply speeches

1st Proposition Constructive Speech

1st Proposition Constructive Speech (Sr. Beg - 6 min.) (Sr. Open - 8 min.)

1. Introduction
2. Definitions
3. Model (If used)
4. Theme/Case line
5. Proposition Arguments
6. Conclusion



The First Proposition Speaker commands a most important role in the debate. He/she presents and clarifies the resolution for debate and is the first person to speak in favour of accepting the terms of the resolution and as such sets the initial tone and direction of the debate. The First Proposition constructive speech is the only speech that is prepared in its entirety prior to the debate.

In the first proposition speech over eighty - five percent of the speech should be reserved for the constructive matter. The first proposition usually develops two constructive points in their speech giving each point equal time. For example in an eight minute speech:

- The first minute would contain the introduction and definitions
- The next three minutes would present the first constructive argument
- The following three minutes would present the second constructive argument
- Last thirty seconds would summarize and conclude the arguments.

This speech has six main components:

1. Introduction

A formal introduction is required for the First Proposition speaker. This means more than merely saying, "Good evening", or "Madame Chair, ladies and gentlemen..." - it means that they need to actually introduce the debate *as a whole*. In essence, a formal introduction involves 'taking the audience by the hand', and introducing to them the overall *issue* of the debate. This does not mean giving an intricate factual or historical background to the issue; the goal is simply to provide a conversational and 'big picture' introduction to the debate. This however does not mean you need to welcome each person in the room individually to the debate. An introduction such as "Good evening, Mr. Chairperson, Ms. Timekeeper, Judges, Audience, Ladies and gentlemen and of course my most worthy opponents" is not necessary and wastes valuable time.

Formal introductions will rarely win you a debate - no judge is likely to say, "Despite everything that followed, this debate was really won by the First Proposition's formal introduction!" However, the formal introduction *is* a vital opportunity for you, as first Proposition, to introduce the topic and issue as you see it.

The important point is that a formal introduction is more than a mere greeting - it is an introduction to the issue and, if you choose, a characterization of that issue from your team's point of view. In essence, it is a roadmap telling the judges what the team will do. This is sometimes called "the split."

The following is an example:

"Good Morning, ladies and gentlemen. I rise today to talk about a hugely contentious issue. The topic for debate is BIRT we should decriminalize marijuana in Canada. It is an issue that is gaining publicity in Canada as Europe moves towards decriminalization, but the United States gets more and more militant in its war on drugs. As the first speaker, I will define terms, present our model, present a theme, and then offer two arguments in favor of the resolution. My partner will present a further argument in favor on the resolution to complete our case.

2. Definitions

It is impossible to debate without first understanding what the topic means. Therefore, both teams need to decide what they think the topic means *for the purposes of the debate*. This is known as 'the definition.'

Debaters cannot define the topic however they like. Rather the definition must be reasonable - the test for a reasonable definition is HOW WOULD THE ORDINARY PERSON ON THE STREET DEFINE THIS TOPIC.

Not many debating topics involve complicated words. Therefore, the purpose of the definition is *not* to tell your audience, judge and opposition what a word means *in general*. Instead, the purpose of the definitions is to explain what a word means *for this debate*.

In *all* cases, the Proposition Team must present a definition of the topic; a clear statement of what the team understands the topic to mean. The First Proposition speaker presents this definition early in his or her speech. Essentially, by defining the topic, the First Proposition speaker is saying, "We think that this is what the topic means for the purposes of our debate. We think that *both* teams should debate on the basis of this meaning."

In some circumstances, the Opposition Team may disagree with the Proposition Team's definition. In that case, the Opposition Team is essentially saying, "No - we disagree with your suggested interpretation of the topic. We think that *both* teams should be debating on the basis of another meaning - the meaning given by our definition." Therefore, before every debate, *both teams* need to prepare a definition of the topic. Above all, both teams should try to be as clear and as simple as possible when defining the topic. Definitions should embody the standard meanings of the terms of the resolution in contemporary public discourse. Creative, novel or whimsical definitions are not appropriate. (This is sometimes referred to as "**squirreling**" definitions). Choose straightforward terminology. Be specific and give details so all parties understand the topic being debated.

There are a number of ways in which the terms can be defined. Debaters can define the topic as a whole or define individual terms. By defining terms in the topic it does not mean not every single word. There is nothing wrong with defining individual words. However, you should *choose* the terms and words to define; don't just define every word for the sake of it. Defining many words (such as 'a' or 'the') is both confusing and a waste of time.

From a judge's point of view, the worst debates are when the two sides are talking about completely different things. So make it clear for judges and on both teams by defining the terms of the resolution fairly!

For this first example debate the resolution might be defined as a whole as:

Decriminalization of marijuana in Canada will mean that in our country possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use will not be charged as a criminal offence. Rather, it will be regulated administratively, as a by-law much like speeding. There can be a ticketing system for using it in public or causing a disturbance. Growing or trafficking large amounts will still be a Criminal offence.

Or term by term:

Decriminalize - reduce sanctions for simple possession a from criminal code offence to administrative by-law regulation
Marijuana- Cannabis and its derivatives
Canada - The country of Canada

Hint for the Opposition: *If the definition is defined in a way that is not fair this must be contested in the first speech.* The ADSA constitution states:

- a) The Proposition must reasonably define the essential terms of the resolution.
- b) The Opposition should take issue with the definitions only if it feels those provided by the Proposition are patently unreasonable. If this happens, the judge shall accept the definition that is best supported through evidence and argument throughout the debate. Definitional debates are a drag for everyone.
- c) The Opposition should not first accept and then later object to the definitions. Failure to challenge a definition is understood to be acceptance of it.

The Opposition may challenge the definitions offered by the Proposition only at the beginning of the First Opposition speech and on the grounds that the definition does not meet the requirements set out in the previous rule. The judges must decide at the start of the debate whether such a challenge is warranted. If the Opposition does not challenge the definition offered by the Proposition at the beginning of the First Opposition speech, it will be assumed to have accepted them.

PLEASE AVOID CHALLENGING THE DEFINITIONS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. DEFINITIONAL CHALLENGES RUIN DEBATES.

3. The Model

After presenting the definitions in some debates it is necessary for further clarification about the nature of the topic. If a model is going to be presented in the debate it must also be done in the first speech. A model is much like a plan in a policy debate however it is much less specific. The model helps to answer the five W's of the debate. Who is implementing this resolution, what is going to happen, when is it going to take place, how is it going to take place, and why this specific course of action.

An example of a Model for the resolution This House Would Subsidize Hybrid Cars:

The Government of Canada will provide a direct tax credit to individual and corporations that have purchased hybrid cars for 15% of their value. Thus decreasing the cost of a hybrid car when compared to their non-hybrid counterparts.

The Proposition's model must be completely presented during the First Proposition speech. When proposing a counter model, the Opposition must describe the entire counter model in the First Opposition speech.

4. The Theme/Case line

The practice of using a theme/caseline is becoming popular in many provinces. Experience shows us that the most successful arguments are those that can be expressed with a simple and unifying idea. It is important to give your audience many *individual* reasons (arguments) that support your side of the topic. However, if possible, it is also very helpful to show your audience, the judges and the opposition the 'big picture' to the case. This is the purpose of a 'theme' (also known as a 'caseline').

A theme is a single, concise sentence that explains the main idea behind the case. Ideally, a theme will explain two things:

- **WHY** the debater say the topic is (or is not) true, and
- **HOW** this comes about

For example, consider the topic "BIRT Globalization is doing more harm than good". A theme for the Proposition Team might be, "Globalization's emphasis on economic competition advantages a few developed nations at the expense of the majority of the world's population." Assuming that it reflects the Proposition Team's arguments, this is an effective theme (whether or not, of course, it is actually true). Specifically,

- It explains **WHY** the topic is said to be true: the Proposition Team opposes globalization because it "advantages a few developed nations at the expense of the majority of the world's population", and
- It explains **HOW** this comes about: through "globalization's emphasis on economic competition."

The simple approach to formulating a theme, therefore, is to ask, "Why is it true to say that our side of the topic is correct?" In this case, it should be asked, "Why is it true to say that globalization is doing more harm than good?" An effective theme would answer this question.

A CASELINE ALMOST ALWAYS IS WORDED AS A "BECAUSE" STATEMENT. As an example in this first debate, the theme/case line could be:

Personal use of Marijuana must be decriminalized in Canada BECAUSE we are wasting a vast amount of resources on something that is not very harmful, and is widely accepted by the public as inoffensive to the public good and generally harmless.

How often should the theme be used?

Debaters are often told that a theme should be used so often that the audience can remember it when they leave the debate. Some believe that the theme should be stated at the beginning of the first speaker's arguments, and at the conclusion of every point. Some particularly unimaginative debaters also use it as a standard introduction and conclusion, often in the same speech!

However, this approach is a particularly unsophisticated way of debating. As will be explained later, it is important at the end of each argument to explain very clearly how that argument supports the main *idea* of the team case. It is true that the theme should embody this main idea. However, repeating the theme after every argument becomes monotonous, and usually distracts debaters from actually explaining how their argument supports the main idea of their case.

Therefore, the simple rule for using themes is this: *The theme should be stated at least once in every speaker's speech. Every speaker should return repeatedly to the idea that underpins his or her team's case, but there is no need for a speaker to repeat the theme after it is initially stated.*

How should the theme be presented?

The theme is first presented by the first speaker of the team, early in his/her speech. There are a number of ways that the theme can be introduced. Some of these are:

- "Our theme for this debate is ..."
- "Our central thematic argument will be ..."
- "The crux of our case is this: ..."
- "Tonight, our team will show you that ..."
- "The fundamental reason that we support [or oppose] tonight's topic is ..."

5. The arguments in support of the resolution

Like many words used in debating, the word 'argument' has many meanings. For debate purposes, an argument is *a distinct point supporting your side of the topic*. For example, if the topic is "BIRT Schools give too much homework", then the essence of an argument for the Proposition might be, 'Students have so much homework to do that they do not have enough time for sport or other activities.' This is not necessarily the *main* point for the Proposition team, and it is hardly the *central* point (that is, the theme). However, it is *a* point nonetheless so, for debate purposes, it is an 'argument'.

Therefore, in the simplest sense, we can consider a debating case to comprise different arguments, brought together by the case approach.

When presenting arguments, or any other important point in a debate, the debater should go through 4 steps:

1. State their point.
2. Explain their point.
3. Provide evidence in support of their point (give an example).
4. Explain how that evidence proves their point (tie it back to their theme).

How many arguments does a debate need?

There is no set rule about how many arguments a debater needs in their case. Naturally, the ideal number of arguments will depend upon the context of the debate – for example, the grade, the length of speeches and the complexity of the topic itself. However, we can spot some important guidelines.

The first and second speakers almost always need at least two arguments. Four or more arguments for either the first or the second speaker will almost certainly become unwieldy – the speaker will probably spend so much time setting up and tying-back those arguments that there will be little time for the essence of each argument itself!

In National Style it is important that arguments are given equal weight within the speech. Meaning that the time given to developing and presenting each of the contentions should be relatively equal. Thus in an 8 minutes speech, leaving two minutes for the definitions and introductions and conclusions, each argument should be about three minutes in duration.

The arguments need to be divided between the first and second speakers, so that each speaker knows what he or she has to present. This process is known as the ‘split’. Therefore, *as a general principle*, the first and second speaker should each have two arguments. This means that, as a team, they should prepare three or four arguments. Here are some suggestions for the first topic. Do not use all these arguments. Pick the ones you can support well, or present some of the views of the side of the debate that is presenting.

Arguments in Favour of the Proposition Caseline

- Democracy is supposed to be a government by the people, for the people. The law makers are not supposed to dictate moral rights and wrongs, or impose “protective” restrictions on its citizens; those are signs of authoritarian government. Laws are to be representative of the collective will of the society which is bound by them. The majority of Canadians think that the laws against personal use of marijuana are too harsh. A democratic society should reflect that sentiment.
- Personal moderate use of marijuana does not have an effect on broader society. Laws should only prohibit activities which harm others in society. Citizens should have freedom to choose their own activity unless it causes harm to others.
- Many people who are convicted of simple possession of marijuana have their lives changed for the worse because of the heavy consequences of a criminal record. It bars their entry into successful career paths and can prevent them from becoming a beneficial contributor to society.
- Some people go to jail for possession of marijuana for personal use. This is often the case if they are convicted more than once. Jail is a place where criminals interact and make contacts. Often people return from jail more likely to re-offend and/or commit more serious crimes than before. By maintaining the status quo, we are essentially creating criminals out of people who would otherwise be un-harmful contributing members of society.
- By de-criminalizing marijuana, people who use it will grow small amounts in their own homes for personal use. This illuminates the need for grow operations and drug dealers (of marijuana). This means that users will no longer have a reason to come into contact with crime or criminals.
- Marijuana is shown to be less harmful to society than both alcohol and smoking. It is not logical to punish a less harmful alternative to recreational substances which are harmful, yet regulated in our society.
- Only a very small number of users of marijuana become addicted to it. A far smaller percent than those addicted to alcohol or cigarettes. It is also shown not to be a gateway drug, and would be less so if people did not have to interact with drug dealers to get it.
- A great amount of resources are spent of enforcing the laws against marijuana in Canada. Since grown operations and marijuana dealers would be obsolete, drug enforcement could focus time and resources on hard, addictive, and dangerous drugs. The country would save resources, and have safer streets.

6. A conclusion

No matter how hard they have concentrated, and how carefully they have listened, audiences and judges can still be swayed by an effective appeal to emotion or a punchy summary of a main idea. This is the role of an effective conclusion of a good debater– to succinctly and powerfully remind the audience of the central point of the debate and that their team has successfully defended that argument.

It is useful to try to find something – a quote, an idea, a triplet, or any other kind of punchy line that sum up the sides approach.

1st Opposition Constructive Speech

1st Opposition Constructive Speech (Sr. Beg - 6 min.) (Sr. Open - 8 min.)

1. Introduction
2. Counter Model (if necessary)
3. Outline "the split"
4. If necessary, attack definitions
5. Opposition team's theme/caseline
6. Clash with Proposition arguments
7. Explain arguments for opposing resolution
8. Conclusion



It is usually the role of the first Opposition speaker to oppose the Proposition philosophy and, in turn, the resolution. In particular, the First Opposition attacks the points made by the First Proposition. In National Style the internal timing for the 1st Opposition Constructive Speech, is seventy five percent of the speech should be reserved for the constructive matter. The first proposition usually develops two constructive points in their speech, giving each equal time. For example in an eight minute speech:

- The first two minutes would be used for refutation and rebuilding
- The next three minutes would be used for the first constructive argument
- The next two minutes and thirty seconds would be used for the second constructive argument
- Last thirty seconds would be used for a short summary and conclusion

1. Introduction

How does the First Opposition actually start his/her speech? The answer is simply by acknowledging the chair of the debate and the audience, and not wasting time doing it! For example, start with something such as, "Good evening Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen ...", or "Madame Chair, ladies and gentlemen ...", then proceed straight into the speech.

2. Outline of "the split"

Before the rebuttal the debater needs to set up the team's approach. The first speaker of each team must carefully move through every part of the 'foundation' of his or her team's case. Just like First Proposition did, First Opposition must also present the "big" picture. Here's what First Opposition might say in this debate:

"The Opposition Team is going to oppose this resolution. We believe that marijuana is harmful to the whole of Canadian society and is best deterred as a criminal offence. As the first speaker, I will outline our theme/caseline and present two arguments to oppose this resolution. My partner will present a further argument for opposing as well as indicating other avenues that are available."

3. Definitions

If the Proposition has failed to define any key terms of the resolution, First Opposition may offer definitions. If the Proposition definitions are absolutely illogical or unreasonable, First Opposition must contest them immediately by providing compelling reasons for their rejection. (Check the rules on this point). Otherwise, it is assumed that the team's team is in complete agreement with the terms as defined

4. Opposition team's theme/caseline

Just as First Proposition did, First Opposition would present the Opposition theme/caseline. In this debate, the Opposition theme might be:

Decriminalizing marijuana is as dangerous as removing posted speed signs. Just because many people disobey the law, does not make it less dangerous, or less important to deter with enforcement and punishment.

5. Rebuttal (clash with Proposition arguments)

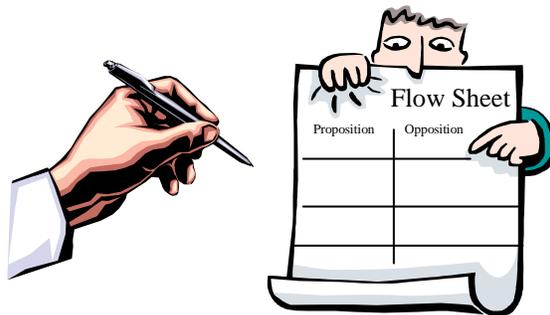
In the rebuttal the debaters must now attack the opponents' arguments. The goal of a debate is to convince the audience that the side of the topic a debater is defending is true. Therefore, a good debater should refute the opposition's case - by rebutting any notion, assertion, argument, example, statistic or anything else whose demise will contribute to the successful collapse of the opposition's case.

How can a debater keep track of all the points made by the opponent?

During a debate, it is important to take notes: as a debater one will need to clash with each point the other side makes as it is impossible to remember everything that is said in a debate unless notes are taken. Debater can use whatever note-taking method works best for them, but many debaters find it helpful to keep a flow sheet with the Proposition on one side and the Opposition on the other. One should write down each point the other side makes, as well as their responses to it. Also a debater should make notes of evidence that supports their own arguments. Debaters can use this sheet for during the refutation part of the speech. Clash, done well, does not just involve taking issue with the logic of the opposition argument. It incorporates evidence that a side has held in waiting for just such an occasion.

Creating a flow sheet:

- 1) Make notes on the key points of the opposition's speech on a piece of paper.
- 2) Leave room on the paper to jot down arguments used in response.
- 3) Make a note of evidence that supports argument that are used.
- 4) This page can be used for the refutation part of the speech.



The Flow Sheet

A Flow Sheet is kind of like a cheap video tape recorder... it allows one to record what the other debater said and to let you think about what an appropriate response should be.

| THEM | US |
|------|----|
| | |

- A Flow Sheet allows debaters to respond to all the points the opponent makes. This is important because judges also keep Flow Sheets. Forgetting, or omitting a point can be the downfall in a close debate and thus the reason for concise note taking.
- Flow Sheets also provide you with a sort of tape recording of the debate.
- You cannot possibly remember everything in the right order and in enough detail without a Flow sheet (**order your opponents' ideas into a structure that better highlights the strengths of your case points**).
- Wouldn't you rather give a speech from a Flow sheet than off the top of your head?

What things should the rebuttal concentrate on?

The first issue is the rebuttal of the opposition's theme. A debater should attack the important ideas and assumptions underlying the opposition's case, *and refer to the opposition's theme while doing this*. The second issue is rebuttal of substantiation (examples and statistics). If the opposition's case is well supported by certain examples or statistics, one needs to rebut them effectively. *If one does rebut examples and statistics, the debater needs to constantly consider and discuss their relevance and context in the debate*. In simple terms, it can be very effective to rebut an example or statistic *if* the debater shows how the opposition's case was reliant upon that material.

6. Counter Model (if one is used)

The COUNTER MODEL involves the Opposition agreeing with the resolution, and then presenting a plan that is *significantly different* from the Proposition's plan. Debaters must remember that it must be substantially different, or it will sound like the model is agreeing with the Proposition, which one must not do on any account if the debater wishes to keep their dignity as an Opposition team member! If one runs this strategy, make sure to explain clearly to

the judges what you are doing. Be sure that the counter model is within the resolution and therefore this strategy is only used when it is conducive to do so.

There are problems with the counter model strategy. In agreeing with the resolution the Opposition Team gives away half of the debate, leaving an uphill fight. This strategy is not recommended unless the debaters consider their counter overpowering.

If a counter model is presented, it must be done entirely by the 1st Opposition speaker.

7. Arguments against the resolution

First Opposition must now present arguments to oppose the resolution. Because the debater was rebutting First Proposition's arguments', First Opposition will only have time to present two (2) arguments to oppose the resolution. Just like First Proposition, when presenting the arguments, the debater should follow the four steps as outlined:

- 1) State the point.
- 2) Explain the point.
- 3) Provide evidence in support of the point (Give an example).
- 4) Explain how that evidence proves the point (Tie it back to the theme).

Below are some suggested arguments against the resolution. Do not use all these arguments. Only pick the ones that the side can support well, or present their own.

Arguments in Favour of the Opposition Caseline

- Decriminalization of marijuana suggests that it is not a harmful substance, which is misleading. Use of marijuana impairs brain function. It greatly reduces concentration so can affect a people's ability to study or work effectively. It has also been related to long term de-motivation and low energy. People can become addicted to marijuana, and it can lead to less productive citizens who become a burden on the state.
- Just like cigarettes, smoking marijuana is very damaging to lungs. Some studies have shown marijuana smoke to be even more harmful than cigarettes. This can lead to deadly diseases such as lung cancer. Health care costs to the whole community are a concern with lung cancer rates already enormously high.
- Decriminalizing marijuana will make it more accessible, more affordable, and acceptable. This could lead to increased use and social pressure for people to engage in its use.
- There is a lack of medical studies on the potential health dangers that can be caused by marijuana. De-criminalizing a substance for which the possible negative health effects are not known is would be irresponsible on the part of the government.
- Our relationship with the United States of America would be strained if we made our laws less rigid on marijuana use. It may make travelling and trading with the US more difficult which closely affects many Canadians leisure and business.
- Active decriminalization of marijuana makes a public statement that our society no longer views this drug use as undesirable. This is akin to endorsing its use. There are many harmful activities that individuals in our society choose to participate in. Just because some of them are legal does not make it reasonable or "fair" to endorse more harmful behaviours.
- Marijuana use for teenagers has been demonstrated to be linked to long term drug and alcohol use. Teens that use this drug are more likely to engage in other drugs and abuse alcohol in their adult years. Removing the barrier of criminalization can lead some young people who would otherwise not engage in this activity to try it, which could lead them to abuse alcohol and drugs in the long run.
- Marijuana can be a "gateway" drug. Since its effects are not as harmful as some more addictive and dangerous drugs, its use can desensitize people to narcotics which may reduce barriers to more harmful drugs.
- Decriminalization of marijuana may make it more likely for people to use it on the job. Because it impairs concentration and brain function, it could cause serious dangers to society. Plane and train crashes have been attributed to its use, and well as motor vehicle accidents.
- Deterrence is one of the main goals of the enforcement of the Criminal code in Canada. If we want to deter Canadians from using recreational drugs, keeping their use criminalized is the best approach.

8. Conclusion

Just as we suggested for First Proposition, here too, an effective conclusion needs to remind the judges/audience of your central point.

2nd Proposition Constructive Speech

2nd Proposition Constructive Speech (Sr. Beg – 6 min.) (Sr. Open – 8 min.)

1. Introduction
2. Clash with points made by Opposition
3. Outline team's case approach
4. Further Proposition Arguments
5. Conclusion



The Second Proposition speech is the first opportunity the Proposition Team has to directly clash with the arguments of the Opposition's case. It is also the Proposition's last chance to present new contentions that support the resolution and their proposal. In National Style the internal timing for the eight (8) minute Second Proposition Constructive Speech is four (4) minutes for construction and four (4) minutes for refutation. For example in an eight minute speech:

- The first thirty seconds would be used for the introduction
- The next three minutes for refutation of the opposition and rebuilding
- The next four minutes for construction of a single new argument
- The final thirty seconds for the conclusion

1. Introduction

Acknowledge the chair and the audience and then immediately begin the rebuttal.

2. Rebuttal (Clash with Opponent's arguments)

- Use a flow chart to keep track of everything that the First Opposition speaker said
- Now directly address each of the specific challenges that he/she issued. Challenge the arguments that he/she gave. Show why Second Proposition considers his/her reasoning or evidence to be wrong. One way or another, Second Proposition should deal with every argument, example and significant idea that the opposition raised.
- Is it possible to rebut the rebuttal? What happens if the opposition rebuts one of the proposition's arguments? Should they rebut their rebuttal? The answer is – yes, every time. One should not spend too much time doing this, but it must be done.

3. Outline team's case approach

As a second speaker, they will not have to set up a case. However, it is nice to give a sense of 'case unity' – to show the audience and judges how the team's arguments fit together. Therefore, as a second speaker, it helps to provide a brief link to their case as a whole before commencing into the individual arguments. Usually, this means stating your team's theme and briefly recounting your first speaker's arguments, before moving on to outline your own. For example, you could say:

Our first speaker presented to you much compelling evidence about how harmful marijuana use is for the individual and how decriminalization would encourage more individual use. It is my duty to present one further argument in favor of our theme, why decriminalization affects all of society, and how decriminalization can harm us all.

4. Further Proposition Arguments

Second Proposition must now continue to present arguments to support the resolution. Because he/she was rebutting Second Opposition's arguments, Second Proposition will only have time to present 1 more argument. Just like First Proposition, when presenting the arguments, he/she should go through four (4) steps:

- 1) State the point.
- 2) Explain the point.
- 3) Provide evidence in support of the point (Give an example).
- 4) Explain how that evidence proves the point (Tie it back to the sides theme).

5. Conclusion

As with the other two (2) speakers, here too an effective conclusion needs to remind the judges/audience of the central point of the argument.

2nd Opposition Constructive Speech

2nd Opposition Constructive Speech (Sr. Beg - 6 min.) (Sr. Open - 8 min.)

1. Introduction
2. Continue attack on Proposition
3. Outline team's case approach
4. Further arguments against resolution
5. Conclusion



This final constructive speech of the debate gives the Second Opposition speaker an opportunity not only to criticize the Proposition plan, but also to present the final contentions that complete the Opposition case. The usual split between for the Second Opposition speech is six (6) minutes for refutation and two (2) minutes for construction. It is good practice in a debate to only introduce a single argument in the second speech. For example in an eight minute speech:

- The first thirty seconds is used for an introduction
- The next four minutes would be used for refutation
- The next three minutes would be used for the last constructive point
- The final thirty seconds to conclude the opposition side of the debate

1. Introduction

Acknowledge the chair and audience and then straight into rebuttal.

2. Rebuttal (Clash with opponent's arguments)

The key to the Opposition strategy is refutation. This involves using flow sheets as was described previously. Keep track of everything that the Second Proposition has said and then specifically challenging everything he/she has stated.

The role of the Opposition is to defeat the Proposition by persuading the judges that the Proposition's proposal should not be accepted. One way this can be accomplished is by attacking the Proposition arguments and/or the model.

- Attack the Proposition plan as unworkable, undesirable, and/or unnecessary.
- Refute the Proposition case as a whole. Defend and strengthen Opposition arguments, including those presented earlier by First Opposition. Try to refine and solidify your best points without sounding repetitive.

3. Outline team's case approach

Just as with the Second Proposition, the debater will not have to set up a case. However, it is nice to give a sense of 'case unity' - to show the audience and judges how the team's arguments fit together. Therefore, as a second speaker, it helps to provide a brief link to the case as a whole before you commence the individual arguments.

Usually, this means stating the team's theme and briefly recounting the first speaker's arguments, before moving on to outline the team's own.

4. Further arguments

Second Opposition must now present one more reason to oppose the resolution. Because he/she was rebutting Second Proposition's arguments, Second Opposition will only have time to present one more argument. Just like the other speakers, when presenting the argument, he/she should go through 4 steps:

- 1) State the point.
- 2) Explain the point.
- 3) Provide evidence in support of the point (Give an example).
- 4) Explain how that evidence proves the point (Tie it back to the theme).

5. Conclusion

Here too, as with the other three speakers, an effective conclusion reminds the judges/audience of the team's central point.

Reply Speeches

Reply Speech by 1st Opposition
(4 min)



Reply Speech by 1st Proposition
(4 min)



Followed by

Reply speeches are given by the first speaker on each team. Reply speeches occur in reverse order – the Opposition reply before the Proposition. The Opposition Team therefore has two consecutive speeches: the Second Opposition speech, followed by the Opposition reply speech.

Reply speeches are not 'more of the same' – they are not merely a continuation of the second speeches. The aim of reply speeches is to give each team a brief opportunity to consolidate its ideas and review the debate, in order to present the debate in the most favourable light for each side.

The reply speeches should be different from the other four speeches in the debate. By the time the reply speeches arrive, the debate is essentially concluded. The goal of the reply speech, therefore, is not so much to win the *argument* as it is to step back and explain how your team won the *debate*. The debaters can emphasize the reasons that their team won, and can constructively criticize their opponents' approach, explaining why they lost.

The simplest approach is to spend approximately half of the reply speech discussing the opposition's case, and approximately half discussing their own. Of course, this does not mean giving an even-handed appraisal of the cases – naturally, the speaker will analytically criticize their opposition's case as they summarize it, and emphasize the strengths of their own case. Ideally, when summarizing the case, one will show how it answered the questions or problems posed by their opponents.

Look for *specific* reasons that the opposition may have lost the debate. For example, they opposition may have established criteria that it has failed to meet, or promised to support a model that has not been mentioned since the first speaker. Similarly, the opposition may have forgotten to rebut one of Proposition's arguments – debaters should keep track of this, because it can be a significant point in their favour.

Point of Information

Points of Information are an intrinsic and important part of National Style Debate. A Point of Information (POI) is defined by a competing debater standing up during unprotected time and requesting either verbally or silently to speak. They can do this by standing up and saying "On that Point" or "Point of Information". The speaker can accept or deny the point, verbally or with a hand motion. If accepted the debater has the opportunity to make a short verbal interjection into the speech. It can be in the form of a question, or simply information. The purpose of a Point of Information is to a) attach your opposition's points directly or b) advance your constructive matter. If the speaker declines the POI a debater must sit down immediately.

The speaker may do one of several things when a POI is given in their constructive speech:

- reject the point briefly, perhaps by saying something like "no thank you" or "not at this time". The debater who stood on the point will sit down. It is also acceptable for a debater to politely wave down the speaker without verbally rejecting it and disrupting his/her speech.
- accept the point and allow the point of information to be asked, and then proceed to address the point. A speaker may address the point briefly and move on, choose to merge an answer into what they were going to say, or state that they will deal with this later on (in which case they need to be sure they do so)
- or say something like "just a second", or "when I finish this point", and then yield the floor when they have finished their sentence or thought.

It is expected that each debater will accept at least two POI's during his/her remarks. Each debater on the opposing team should offer, at least, two POI's to each of the debaters delivering a speech. Adjudicators are instructed to penalize teams if the lower limits are not attained.

Decision

In most tournaments, once the judges have completed their ballots, the chair/timer will announce the winning team. Every debate has a result – one team wins and one team loses. There cannot be a draw. Judges are not allowed to make random or arbitrary decisions – they must follow clear guidelines about what is, and is not, good debating. Of course, debaters and audience members will often disagree with a judge’s decision, and sometimes judges disagree with each other. However, this is part of the challenge of debating which is to debate well enough that you can persuade *any* judge that you deserve to win the debate.

In some tournaments, the Chair/timer may be asked not to announce the decision so that debaters cannot predict who the finalists will be. Individual ratings are not revealed.

Judges’ Reponses

After the judges have submitted their ballots, they are sometimes invited to share their thoughts on the debate. The constructive comments received there, based on “Principles of Debate” outlined in the “ADSA Guide to Judging Debate,” are a real asset to debaters, contributing greatly to the refinement of their skills. **Debaters or anyone in their party (except coaches on rare occasions only), cannot respond to, or question the judges either during or after the debate. Judges’ decisions are final.**

Format of Debate and Constitution

Format:

- [National Debate Format Rules](#) (PDF)
- [National Debate Format Ballot Legal Size](#) (PDF)
- [National Debate Format Script](#) (PDF)
- [National Debate Format Scoring](#) (PDF)
- [National Debate Format Categories](#) (PDF)

Constitution:

- [National Championships By-Laws](#)

RESEARCH

This Research booklet is not complete. It is only an overview of information and good debaters will use this booklet as a basis for their thinking and move on to other ideas and research. As well, the best foundation for any research into a topic begins with some basic reading on the ideas. Follow this with an interview with someone who is knowledgeable, can suggest ideas and can direct you to other ideas and research. Although you cannot quote this person unless he/she is published in print or on video, a human being can always explain issues better than an article.

Real World Ramifications of Cannabis Legalization and Decriminalization

http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=8110

Criminal Marijuana Prohibition Is A Failure

By any objective standard, marijuana prohibition is an abject failure.

Nationwide, U.S. law enforcement have arrested over 20 million American citizens for marijuana offenses since 1965, yet today marijuana is more prevalent than ever before, adolescents have easier access to marijuana than ever before, the drug is on average more potent than ever before, and there is more violence associated with the illegal marijuana trade than ever before.

Over 100 million Americans nationally have used marijuana despite prohibition, and one in ten – according to current government survey data – use it regularly. The criminal prohibition of marijuana has not dissuaded anyone from using marijuana or reduced its availability; however, the strict enforcement of this policy has adversely impacted the lives and careers of millions of people who simply elected to use a substance to relax that is objectively safer than alcohol.

The Case For Legalization/Regulation

Regulation = Controls

- Controls regarding who can legally produce marijuana
- Controls regarding who can legally distribute marijuana
- Controls regarding who can legally consume marijuana
- Controls regarding where adults can legally use marijuana and under what circumstances is such use legally permitted

Prohibition = the absence of controls – This absence of control jeopardizes rather than promotes public safety

- Prohibition abdicates the control of marijuana production and distribution to criminal entrepreneurs, such as drug cartels, street gangs, drug dealers who push additional illegal substances
- Prohibition provides young people with easier access to marijuana than alcohol (CASA, 2009)
- Prohibition promotes the use of marijuana in inappropriate settings, such as in automobiles, in public parks, or in public restrooms.
- Prohibition promotes disrespect for the law, and reinforces ethnic and generation divides between the public and law enforcement. (For example, according to a recent NORML [report](#), an estimated 75 percent of all marijuana arrestees are under age 30; further, African Americans account for only 12 percent of marijuana users but comprise 23 percent of all possession arrests)

Marijuana Legalization And Its Impact On Use

Real-world examples of marijuana regulation:

The Netherlands (30+ year history)

- Retail sale of limited quantities of marijuana (5 grams or less) is allowed in licensed retail outlets for patrons age 18 or over
- Ministry of Health also licenses production and distribution of marijuana for qualified patrons
 - "These data are consistent with reports showing that adult cannabis use is no higher in the Netherlands than in the United States and inconsistent with the demand theory that strict laws and enforcement prevent adolescent cannabis use." (*International Journal of Drug Policy*, 2010)
 - Our findings suggest that the Dutch system of regulated sales has achieved a substantial separation of markets. ... As expected, most Amsterdam respondents obtained their cannabis in licensed coffee shops, and 85% reported that they could not purchase other illicit drugs at their source for cannabis. San Francisco respondents were three times more likely to report being able to purchase other illicit drugs from their cannabis sources." (*International Journal of Drug Policy*, 2009)
 - "Proponents of criminalization attribute their preferred drug-control regime a special power to affect user behavior. Our findings cast doubt on such attributions. Despite widespread lawful availability of cannabis in Amsterdam, there were no differences between the 2 cities (Amsterdam and San Francisco) in age at onset of use, age at first regular use, or age at the start of maximum use. ... Our findings do not support claims that criminalization reduces cannabis use and that decriminalization increases cannabis use" (*American Journal of Public Health*, 2004)
 - "The Dutch experience ... provides a moderate empirical case that removal of criminal prohibitions on cannabis possession will not increase the prevalence of marijuana or any other drug." (*British Journal of Psychiatry*, 2001)

Canada, Germany, Israel (3-10 year history)

- Federal health department oversees the licensed production and distribution of marijuana to qualified patrons
- No evidence this limited regulatory model has led to an increase in general marijuana use or attitudes among the public
 - "The data provide no evidence that strict cannabis laws in the United States provide protective effects compared to the similarly restrictive but less vigorously enforced laws in place in Canada, and the regulated access approach in the Netherlands." (*International Journal of Drug Policy*, 2010)

California, Colorado, New Mexico (1 year to 10+ year history)

- County/city licensing of outlets overseeing distribution of marijuana to qualified patrons
 - "Our results indicate that the introduction of medical cannabis laws was not associated with an increase in cannabis use among either arrestees or emergency department patients in cities and metropolitan areas located in four states in the USA (California, Colorado, Oregon, and Washington). ... Consistent with other studies of the liberalization of cannabis laws, medical cannabis laws do not appear to increase use of the drug." (*International Journal of Drug Policy*, 2007)

Marijuana Decriminalization And Its Impact On Use

Real-world examples of marijuana decriminalization (removing the threat of arrest for the personal possession or cultivation of marijuana, but maintaining prohibitions on commercial cultivation and retail sale):

Europe (Spain, Italy, Portugal, Luxemburg, etc.)

- "Following decriminalization, Portugal had the lowest rate of lifetime marijuana use in people over 15 in the E.U. ... The U.S. has long championed a hard-line drug policy, supporting only international agreements that enforce drug prohibition and imposing on its citizens some of the world's harshest

penalties for drug possession and sales. Yet American has the highest rates of cocaine and marijuana use in the world, and while most of the E.U. (including Holland) has more liberal drug laws than the U.S., it also has less drug use." (Time.com, 2009)

- "Globally, drug use is not distributed evenly, and is simply not related to drug policy. ... The U.S. ... stands out with higher levels of use of alcohol, cocaine, and cannabis, despite punitive illegal drug policies. ... The Netherlands, with a less criminally punitive approach to cannabis use than the U.S., has experienced lower levels of use, particularly among younger adults. Clearly, by itself, a punitive policy towards possession and use accounts for limited variation in national rates of illegal drug use." (*PLOS Medicine*, 2008)
- "This paper has shown that ... decriminalization does not result in lower prices and higher consumption rates, nor in more severe patterns of cannabis use, ... and that criminalization may reduce the legitimacy of the judicial system." (*Current Opinion in Psychiatry*, 2008)
- "While the Dutch case and other analogies have flaws, they appear to converge in suggesting that reductions in criminal penalties have limited effects on drug use, at least for marijuana." (*Science*, 1997)

Australia (20+ year history)

- "There is no evidence to date that the (expiation/decriminalization) system ... has increased levels of regular cannabis use or rates of experimentation among young adults. These results are broadly in accord with our earlier analysis of trends in cannabis use in Australia. ... They are also consistent with the results of similar analysis in the United States and the Netherlands." (Australian Government Publishing Service, 1999)

Great Britain (2004-2008)

- "Cannabis use among young people has fallen significantly since its controversial reclassification in 2004, according to the latest British Crime Survey figures published today. The Home Office figures showed the proportion of 16 to 24-year-olds who had used cannabis in the past year fell from 25% when the change in the law was introduced to 21% in 2006/07" (*The Guardian*, 2007)

United States

- Decriminalization (12 states, 30+ year history)
 - "In sum, there is little evidence that decriminalization of marijuana use necessarily leads to a substantial increase in use" (U.S. National Academy of Science, 1999)
 - "The available evidence indicates that the decriminalization of marijuana possession had little or no impact on rates of use. Although rates of marijuana use increased in those U.S. states [that] reduced maximum penalties for possession to a fine, the prevalence of use increased at similar or higher rates in those states [that] retained more severe penalties. There were also no discernible impacts on the health care systems. On the other hand, the so-called 'decriminalization' measures did result in substantial savings in the criminal justice system." (*Journal of Public Health*, 1989)
 - "Overall, the preponderance of the evidence which we have gathered and examined points to the conclusion that decriminalization has had virtually no effect either on the marijuana use or on related attitudes and beliefs about marijuana use among American young people. The data show no evidence of any increase, relative to the control states, in the proportion of the age group who ever tried marijuana. In fact, both groups of experimental states showed a small, cumulative net decline in annual prevalence after decriminalization" (U.S. Institute for Social Research, 1981)
- Medicalization (13 states, 2-13 year history)
 - "More than a decade after the passage of the nation's first state medical marijuana law, California's Prop. 215, a considerable body of data shows that no state with a medical marijuana law has experienced an increase in youth marijuana use since its law's enactment. All states have reported overall decreases – exceeding 50% in some age groups – strongly suggesting

that the enactment of state medical marijuana laws does not increase marijuana use" (MPP, 2005, 2008)

- LLEP/Deprioritization (various municipalities nationwide including Seattle, WA; Denver, CO; Oakland, CA; Missoula, MT; Columbia, MO, etc.)
 - "Many states and localities have either decriminalized marijuana or deprioritized the enforcement of marijuana laws. There is no evidence that the decriminalization of marijuana by certain states or the deprioritization of marijuana enforcement in Seattle and other municipalities caused an increase in marijuana use or related problems. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of numerous studies indicating that the increasing enforcement of marijuana laws has little impact on marijuana use rates and that the decriminalization of marijuana in U.S. states and elsewhere did not increase marijuana use" (Beckett/ACLU, 2009)

Conclusions

- *Strict government legalization/regulation of marijuana is unlikely to increase the public's use of marijuana or significantly influence attitudes.*
- *Decriminalization is unlikely to increase the public's use of marijuana or significantly influence attitudes.*
- *Free market legalization of marijuana without strict government restrictions on commercialization and marketing is likely to increase marijuana use among the public; however, given that the United States already has the highest per capita marijuana use rates in the world, this increase is likely to be marginal relative to other nation's experiences.*

Decriminalization Vs. Legalization

(<http://www.forces.gc.ca/health-sante/ps/hpp-pps/aap-sdp/ddec-eng.asp>)

Decriminalization means that some things about marijuana use would be made legal, while other activities would stay illegal. For example, it would be legal to possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use, but trafficking and production would stay illegal and punishable by criminal prosecution. Possession of larger amounts of marijuana (all for personal use, however, not for sale) would be punished with tickets and fines, similar to a speeding ticket.

Legalization, on the other hand, would be a total removal of all restrictions outlawing the use, possession, production and sale of marijuana. This does not mean, however, that marijuana would be unregulated, but rather that it would be given the same status as tobacco and alcohol. This means that the government could tax the production, distribution, and sale of marijuana. It also means that it could regulate the production and supply of marijuana, as well as set age limits for its use and purchase.

Use and the Current Law in Canada – From Bill C-15

(http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Sites/LOP/LegislativeSummaries/Bills_ls.asp?lang=E&ls=c15&source=library_prb&Parl=40&Ses=2#ccanada)

Drug Use in Canada

The Canadian Addiction Survey (CAS) was a collaborative initiative sponsored by Health Canada, the Canadian Executive Council on Addictions – which includes the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, among others – as well as a number of provinces. Published in November 2004, it was the first national general population survey specifically dedicated to alcohol and other drug use in Canada since the 1994 study – Canada's Alcohol and Other Drugs Survey. The Canadian Addiction Survey questioned almost 14,000 Canadians aged 15 and over on a variety of topics related to drug use. The survey focused on the impact that alcohol and drug use has on physical, mental and social well-being. It also questioned Canadians about their attitudes toward measures to control drug use, and on their beliefs about the availability of drugs and the risks associated with their use.

The results of the CAS showed an increase in the self-reported rates of use of illicit drugs such as cannabis over the decade from 1994 to 2004. Overall, 44.5% of Canadians reported using cannabis at least once in their lifetime, and 14.1% reported using cannabis in the previous year, nearly double the rate reported in 1994 (7.4%). Cannabis use, however, was generally infrequent, with 45.7% of previous-year users reporting use two or fewer times during the previous three months. In addition, most users did not report experiencing serious harm due to their cannabis use. The authors of the CAS did note that an area worth investigating further was the use of cannabis by youth. The peak rate of use was among 18- and 19-year-olds (47.2% for previous-year use) and then began a downward trend. Cannabis use also varied by marital status, educational level, and income. Finally, there were significant provincial differences in cannabis use, yet little is known about the nature and underlying determinants of these differences.

Excluding cannabis, the most commonly reported drugs used during one's lifetime were hallucinogens, used by 11.4%, cocaine (10.6%), speed (6.4%), and ecstasy (4.1%). The lifetime use of inhalants, heroin, steroids and drugs by injection was about 1% or less. Although approximately one in six Canadians had used an illicit drug other than cannabis in his or her lifetime, few had used these drugs during the year preceding the survey. Rates of drug use during the previous 12 months were generally 1% or less, with the exception of cocaine use (1.9%). For the general population of Canadians, the use of illicit drugs was usually limited to cannabis only. About 28.7% of Canadians reported using only cannabis during their lifetime, and 11.5% used only cannabis during the previous year. Still, approximately 2.6% of cannabis users used drugs other than cannabis in the year preceding the survey. Once again, caveats concerning the data need to be raised, including the substantial variation in drug use according to province, varying from 8.3% to 23% for lifetime use of an illicit drug excluding cannabis.

Although comparisons are difficult when factors such as methodologies, the questions asked and the sample group vary, drug use rates across surveys suggest that the prevalence of use has risen over time. This is particularly true for cannabis, for which the rates of use, both past-year and lifetime, essentially doubled from 1989 to 2004. The data indicate that the number of Canadians reporting use of an injectable drug at some point in their life increased from 1.7 million in 1994 to a little more than 4.1 million in 2004. Of those, 7.7% (132,000) reported previous-year use of a drug by injection in 1994 compared with 6.5% (269,000) in 2004. Most Canadians, though, who had used an illicit drug in their lifetime reported that they no longer continued use. In addition, the authors of the CAS noted that the higher rates of use of most illicit drugs did not seem to translate into higher rates of reported harms.

Since the publication of the CAS, some regions of Canada have reported on drug use rates. Yukon and the Northwest Territories, which were excluded from the CAS, have each reported on surveys of their populations. The Yukon Addictions Survey, released in June 2005, reported that illicit drug use in Yukon was generally similar to the rest of Canada except for cannabis use. Twenty-one percent of Yukoners over the age of 15 reported using cannabis in the previous 12 months, compared to 14% of Canadians overall. During the previous 12 months, the rates of illicit drug use by Yukoners were 3% for cocaine, 1% for hallucinogenic drugs and 1% for ecstasy. The Northwest Territories reported a similar level of past-year cannabis use (20.7%). An estimated 2.7% of residents of the Northwest Territories 15 years of age and older reported using at least one of the following five drugs in the year preceding the survey: cocaine, hallucinogens, speed, ecstasy, or heroin.

In 2007, l'Institut de la statistique du Québec released a study indicating that drug use among secondary school students had declined. The study indicated that in 2006, 30.2% of adolescents had consumed an illicit substance at least once in the previous year, while in 2000 the figure was 42.9%. Furthermore, the average age at which students started to experiment with drugs increased to 13.2 years from approximately 13 years of age in 2004.

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse published *The Costs of Substance Abuse in Canada 2002*. This study estimated the impact in terms of death, illness and economic costs caused in whole or in part by the abuse of tobacco, alcohol and illegal drugs for the year 2002. In economic terms, abuse occurs when substance use imposes costs on society that exceed the costs to the user of obtaining the substance. These costs are designated as “social” costs. Measured in terms of the burden on services such as health care and law enforcement, and the loss of productivity in the workplace or at home resulting from premature death and disability, the overall cost of substance abuse in Canada in 2002 was estimated to be \$39.8 billion. This represents a cost of \$1,267 for every man, woman, and child in Canada. Tobacco accounted for about \$17 billion or 42.7% of that total estimate, alcohol accounted for about \$14.6 billion (36.6%) and illegal drugs for about \$8.2 billion (20.7%).

In 2002, a total of 1,695 Canadians died as a result of illegal drug use, accounting for 0.8% of all deaths. This can be compared to 37,209 Canadians who died from tobacco use (16.6% of all deaths) and 4,258 from alcohol use (1.9% of all deaths). The leading causes of death linked to illegal drug use were overdose (958), drug-attributable suicide (295), drug-attributable hepatitis C infection (165), and HIV infection (87). Deaths linked to illegal drugs resulted in 62,110 potential years of life lost. Illegal drug-attributed illness accounted for 352,121 days of acute care in hospital.

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) has also published a document outlining the relationship between the perceived seriousness and the actual costs of substance abuse in Canada. The study found that, while the total social costs associated with alcohol are more than twice those for all other illicit drugs, the public consistently rated the overall seriousness of illicit drugs as higher in the Canadian Addiction Survey. The reasons for this misperception may relate to the fact that alcohol is a legal, socially accepted product that is regularly used by the vast majority of Canadians. While over 90% of Canadians have direct, personal experience with alcohol, only 3% of CAS respondents reported past-year use of the five most popular illicit drugs, so perceptions of risk will likely be inflated for these substances due to the unfamiliarity factor. The CCSA also points to the police, concerned citizen groups, political leaders and policy makers as those involved in amplifying the perceptions of the risks associated with illicit drug abuse. One example of this is methamphetamine which, while a dangerous drug, is used much less frequently than alcohol, cannabis, and cocaine. This finding raises questions about the appropriateness of using a drug like methamphetamine as a primary driver for substance abuse policy.

The Current Law

The *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (CDSA) regulates certain types of drugs and associated substances. The drugs and substances are listed in Schedules I to VIII of the CDSA. There are currently no mandatory prison terms under the CDSA, but the most serious drug offences have a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. The offences in the Act include possession, “double doctoring,” trafficking, importing and exporting, and production of substances included in the schedules to the CDSA. The punishment for the offences will depend upon which schedule applies to the drug in question. Schedule I includes the drugs that are commonly thought of as the most “dangerous,” e.g., cocaine and methamphetamine. Schedule II lists cannabis and its derivatives, while Schedule III includes amphetamines and lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD). Schedule IV includes barbiturates.

The CDSA fulfills obligations under several international protocols and covers offences relating to property and the proceeds of drug offences. Three international conventions on illicit drugs cover cannabis, cocaine, heroin, other psychoactive substances and their precursors: the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, 1971, and the United Nations Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988 (Vienna Convention). The Single Convention limits the production and trade in prohibited substances to the quantity needed to meet the medical and scientific needs of the state parties. Each state creates the necessary legislative and regulatory measures for establishing the controls within its own territory to fulfill the commitments of the Convention. Under the 1971 Convention, psychoactive substances (such as THC found in marijuana) are to be subjected to controls similar to those that apply under the 1961 Convention. Under the 1988 Convention, parties must take cooperative action to control the illicit cultivation, production and distribution of drugs of abuse.

Canada’s drug laws do not prohibit all possession or use of illicit drugs. Thus, the *Narcotic Control Regulations* allow for the distribution of controlled drugs and substances by pharmacists, medical practitioners and hospitals

and outline the records that must be kept to account for the distribution of these drugs. Pursuant to section 53(3) of the *Regulations*, a medical practitioner may administer methadone, for example, if the practitioner has an exemption under section 56 of the CDSA with respect to methadone. Section 56 of the CDSA gives the power to the minister of Health to exempt any person or controlled substance from the application of the CDSA if the exemption is necessary for a medical or scientific purpose or is otherwise in the public interest. The minister may also issue a licence to cultivate, gather or produce opium poppy or marihuana for scientific purposes.

In addition, the *Marihuana Medical Access Regulations* allow for authorizations to possess marihuana to be issued to those persons who can prove a medical need for it. A holder of a personal-use production licence is also authorized to produce and keep marihuana for the medical purpose of the holder. A specific limitation on the lawful source of supply of dried marihuana was declared invalid as contrary to section 7 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 2008. The one-grower-to-one-user ratio was held to unjustifiably limit the ability of authorized persons to access their marihuana for medical purposes. This decision was confirmed by the Federal Court of Appeal. In response, the government published in the *Canada Gazette* on 27 May 2009 *Regulations Amending the Marihuana Medical Access Regulations*. These proposed changes will double the current ratio, making it one grower to two users. The explanation accompanying the proposed amendments states that a full review of the access to medical marihuana is required given that the program was never intended to facilitate the widespread, potentially large-scale production of marihuana for medical purposes.

A recently published article in Statistics Canada's justice-related periodical, *Juristat*, used data from the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey to examine the incidence and nature of police-reported drug offences in Canada. It explored the long-term trends in possession, trafficking, production, importing and exporting of cannabis, cocaine, heroin and a catch-all category of "other" drugs, including methamphetamine (crystal meth) and ecstasy. It also presented information from the Adult Criminal Court Survey and the Youth Court Survey⁽³¹⁾ on the decisions and sentencing outcomes for those charged with drug offences. Given that not all crimes come to the attention of police, the data likely under-represent the total number of drug offences that occur in Canada. The full extent of drug crime, therefore, is unknown.

The results of the *Juristat* survey show that the police-reported rate of drug offences in Canada in 2007 reached its highest point in 30 years (just over 100,000 offences). This is in contrast to a generally decreasing overall crime rate. The explanation for this difference may lie in police policies, charging practices, and available resources. Most drug offences continued to involve cannabis (6 in 10), although the rate of cannabis offences has generally declined in recent years. In contrast, the rates of offences involving cocaine and "other" types of drugs, such as crystal meth and ecstasy, have risen. Part of the increase in the overall rate of drug crime can be attributed to an increase in the rate of youth accused of drug offences, which has doubled over the past decade. In recent years, most youth accused of a drug offence have been cleared by means other than formal charging by police, such as police discretion or referral to a diversion program.

In 2006–2007, about half of all drug-related court cases were stayed, withdrawn, dismissed or discharged, due to resolution discussions, lack of evidence, or a referral to court-sponsored diversion programs. If convicted, youth were most often sentenced to probation. Probation was also the most common sentence for adults convicted of drug possession; however, adults convicted of drug trafficking were more often sentenced to custody.

Marijuana Use Leads to Later Drug Abuse

(<http://alcoholism.about.com/cs/pot/a/blwusm030503.htm>)

A team of researchers from the United States and Australia has found that the age when a person begins to smoke marijuana has a significant influence on whether they will develop problems with drugs and alcohol later in life, independent of his or her genetic and family background.

In a large study of Australian twins, the researchers found that those who used marijuana before age 17 were two to five times more likely to use other drugs or to develop alcohol or drug abuse or dependence. The study appears in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Using Marijuana Before Age 17

"There is a fairly long history of research showing that early cannabis (marijuana) use is associated with increased risks for later use of so-called 'hard drugs,' but that research is based on the fact that most heroin and cocaine users report first having used cannabis," says lead author Michael T. Lynskey, Ph.D., a visiting assistant professor of psychiatry at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and senior research fellow at the Queensland Institute of Medical Research in Brisbane, Australia.

Lynskey says past studies have not been able to adequately control for familial factors -- such as genetics, environment and family background -- that may predispose people both to early marijuana use and to subsequent use of illicit drugs. In this study, Lynskey and colleagues from Washington University and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research studied same-sex twins from Australia: some identical, some fraternal. In 311 pairs of twins, one twin began using marijuana before the age of 17 and the other did not.

Higher Rates of Alcohol, Drug Problems

"By studying twins, we were able to compare pairs of individuals of the same age, same family background and - in the case of identical twins -- individuals with exactly the same genes," Lynskey explains. "But these twins differed in one important respect: One had chosen to begin using cannabis before 17, but the other had not."

By the time these twins were interviewed in their late 20s and early 30s, the early marijuana users had developed higher rates of problems with alcohol and other drugs. Some 46 percent reported that they later abused or became dependent upon marijuana, and 43 percent had become alcohol dependent.

The early marijuana users also used other drugs at higher rates, including cocaine and other stimulants (48 percent) heroin and other opioids (14 percent) and hallucinogens (35 percent).

Known Risk Factors for Drug Use

"Controlling for other known risk factors for drug use and drug use problems, these rates were between 1.8 and 5.2 times higher than the rates we observed in the co-twins who did not begin cannabis use before 17," Lynskey says. Results were similar when comparisons were limited to identical twin pairs.

"We actually were expecting that by using twins and controlling for genetic and familial effects, we'd find the association between early use and later abuse would disappear," Lynskey says. "But this study demonstrates that there is more to the relationship than we previously thought."

Recognizing the Increased Risk

Study leader Andrew Heath, D. Phil, Olin Professor of Psychiatry and director of the Missouri Alcoholism Research Center at Washington University School of Medicine, agrees.

"I think one important thing to say to the parents of a 16-year-old using marijuana is that the majority of kids who use cannabis do not go on to experience problems with drugs or alcohol, but it's important that we, as parents and as a society, recognize that there is an increased risk," Heath says.

It is not clear how early use of marijuana might be related to later substance problems. Although this study suggests that genetic and environmental factors alone cannot explain the risk.

BIRT we should Decriminalize Marijuana in Canada

Resources

Useful Sites:

- http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=8110
- <http://eldd.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index5769EN.html>
- http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Sites/LOP/LegislativeSummaries/Bills_ls.asp?lang=E&ls=c15&source=library_prb&Parl=40&Ses=2#ccanada
- <http://alcoholism.about.com/cs/pot/a/blwusm030503.htm>
- http://debatepedia.idebate.org/en/index.php/Debate:_Legalization_of_Marijuana
- <http://www.forces.gc.ca/health-sante/ps/hpp-pps/aap-sdp/ddec-eng.asp>
- http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/21/world/americas/21mexico.html?_r=1
- <http://www.justthinktwice.com/drugfacts/marijuana.cfm>
- http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/marijuana/marijuana_legalize.html