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Part I:   
Resolutional Articles

Just another Game of Monopoly

An Analysis of Economic Freedom

by Ciera Horton

There was once a woman named Lizzie Phillips who created *The Landlord’s Game.* It was a board game that taught a principle known as the single tax theory. In the 1930s, the game concept was picked up and trademarked by Parker Brothers and became the beloved American game *Monopoly.*1

The game of *Monopoly* shows an exaggerated version of what can happen when there is too much economic freedom. One party can gain too much revenue and control and bankrupt the competition by raising rent and taxes because of the monopolized control. In 1973, Professor of Economics Ralph Anspach created his own response to the game, which he called *Anti-Monopoly*, originally named *Bust the Trust*. He was angered by the “lessons” taught in the Parker Brothers version, which he thought gave the impression that monopolies were desirable. His game showed how in the real world, monopolies are harmful and dangerous to a free market system and how antitrust laws work to limit them.2 In *Anti-Monopoly*, all the properties are independent businesses that have been forced under single ownership. Players are each federal case workers whose goal is to return the board to a free market system. Quite a different game, isn’t it?

These two different games illustrate two extremes—both of which are over the top, but also useful for examining the difference between economic freedom and economic equity. The original game of Monopoly is an exaggerated version of economic freedom. There is no external limitations, no antitrust laws (legislation that prevents monopolies with the intention of promoting free market competition). Players can run a whole industry by having all the color sets in a property. There is complete freedom, but only for those rich enough to exercise it. Anti-Monopoly is a dramatized example of what can happen when there is too much economic freedom. Ironically, the result is equalization and limited liberty.

One of government’s greatest challenges is to establish policies that will allow for economic growth. America often uses antitrust laws to keep tycoons from running the industry market by monopolizing materials and businesses. But, as a principle, what is the balance between allowing a free market that encourages a competitive system and an economy that tries to equalize with the egalitarian goals? (Egalitarianism relates to the basic belief that all people are equal and deserve equal opportunities and rights.)3

This article will help answer some of the basic questions regarding economic freedom. From a policy standpoint, what does economic freedom include? How does it influence politics and policy on issues like taxation, healthcare, minimum wage, consumer benefits and monopolies? How does a government establish restrictions on capitalism—and should they? We will look at the basic definitions of economic freedom, what this principle includes in the debate round and how you can focus your Affirmative stance.

# A Crash Course on Economic Freedom

The following are various ways of defining economic freedom. They are organized by different principles.

## Economic Freedom in regards to Civil Liberties:

“The freedom to prosper within a country without intervention from a government or economic authority. Individuals are free to secure and protect his/her human resources, labor and private property. Economic freedom is common in capitalist economies and must incorporate other civil liberties to be deemed as truly free.” -Business Dictionary4

Quick note: Civil liberties are individual rights that are protected by law from unjust governmental or social interference. This can include things like the right to vote or freedom of education. This is different than a civil right.5 A civil right involves purposeful interference (usually from the government) to promote political or social equality. Basically, civil liberties protect people from interference and civil rights need interference to protect equality. Just make sure you understand the differences, even if they seem minor!

## Economic Freedom in regards to Property Rights:

“Individuals have economic freedom when property they acquire without the use of force, fraud, or theft is protected from physical invasions by others and they are free to use, exchange, or give their property as long as their actions do not violate the identical rights of others. An index of economic freedom should measure the extent to which rightly acquired property is protected and individuals are engaged in voluntary transactions.” -Economic Freedom of the World: 1996 Annual Report 6

When this definition refers to property, it is mostly referring to money, especially in regards to issues of taxation. In regards to economic equity, there are two ways of determining taxation. Horizontal equity means that people with similar means pay the same amount of taxes. Vertical equity, also referred to as progressive tax, means that people with more pay more.

## Economic Freedom in regards to Political Motivation:

“Economic freedom is the key to greater opportunity and an improved quality of life. It’s the freedom to choose how to produce, sell, and use your own resources, while respecting others’ rights to do the same. While a simple concept, economic freedom is an engine that drives prosperity in the world and is the difference between why some societies thrive while others do not.” -EconomicFreedom.org 7

Here we come to a difficult concept- the difference between autonomy and anarchy. This definition is a little more libertarian, which is fine but it can also come across rather extreme, especially to a judge who may have different political views. We need to be careful to show that economic freedom shows autonomy, that the individual is in control of their economic decisions, and not anarchy, ultimate freedom and absence from any sort of limitation or control. Where should that balance be? If you like this way of describing economic freedom, make sure you show your differentiation for specific restrictions, if any. To what extent can or should a government intervene?

# How to Measure Economic Freedom

So maybe you already know what economic freedom is. But it’s such an open-ended concept that can encompass so many elements, how do we determine how much a given country supports economic freedom?

The Fraser Institute and Heritage Foundation have created standards to measure a country’s economic freedom from an external standpoint. This may be helpful in creating a case that has an objective means of measuring economic freedom. “These subcomponents include the size of government based on expenditures and taxes; the legal structure and its protection of property rights; access to sound money; freedom to trade internationally; and regulation of credit, labor, and business.” 7

There is also a term called the “Index of Economic Freedom.” This is a way to rank countries or states based on the number and intensity of specific government regulations on economic activity. The index evaluates international trade limitations, government spending in relation to GDP (Gross Domestic Product, the value of all officially recognized goods and services produced within a country), occupational licensing requirements, property rights, minimum wage laws and other factors that limit or affect someone’s ability to make a living and keep what they earn. The index from the U.S. Heritage Foundation and Wall Street Journal from 2011 ranked Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand and Switzerland as the most economically free countries in the world, in that order.8 The 2014 Index marked The United States as continuously declining, now placing us in a category of “mostly free” countries along with Lithuania and Georgia.9

# The Effect of Economic Freedom on Countries

We have now seen what economic freedom is and how we determine which countries most support it through political policy. But how does economic freedom affect those countries?

According to the National Center for Policy Analysis (NCPA), there are four central findings regarding how greater economic freedom influences the political scene.

1. Economies that are freer have more economic growth as opposed to those that have more restrictions.
2. Free economies are also more equal: economic freedom reduces inequality by increasing the share of market income that goes to the poor and lowering the share that goes to the rich.
3. Economic growth increases income inequality, but only a little.
4. There is greater reduction in inequality because of economic freedom than there is an increase in inequality from economic growth. This means there is a net benefit to lower income groups.10

This study was conducted with data from 26 advanced countries, measuring income inequality in a free market system. Overall, the free economies also had greater equality because it allowed for a competitive system and natural economic growth.

In addition, the countries that had governments that would aggressively redistribute income had lower rates of economic growth. This would actually hurt the poor. The analysis concluded by saying, “This study confirms that a relatively free market with a limited role for government will, over time, produce the greatest economic benefits for the lowest income earners.” 10

# Conclusion

The world is not as black and white as *Monopoly* and *Anti-Monopoly*. The world of economics is incredibly complex and convoluted. In your case, make sure you examine the relationship between economic freedom and economic equity. How are they related? How does one affect another? If you’re Affirmative, stress the fact that economic growth stems from freedom and definitely look to economic giants like Adam Smith and Hayek for support. If you’re Negative, don’t let the Affirmative win simply by appealing to a judge’s potential bias. Highlight the complexities, even the necessity for equality to balance freedom, so that the radical example from the game of *Monopoly* cannot become a political reality

# Endnotes

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Don’t be Negative about being Negative

Key Ideas for Negative

by Rachel Moss

This year, it will be vital to have a firm grasp of all that economic equity can mean. There are four angles you need to approach your research from:

1. Meaning/Common Definitions
2. Values/Viewpoints
3. Support
4. Economics

# Meanings and Common Definitions

I anticipate a common approach to the negative will be to define equity in terms of opportunity. This gives the Negative a significant amount of room without appearing to sway too far left towards a socialistic argument. In fact, under this definition a negative debater could use the majority of free market and Austrian economists to support his or her point (i.e. Hayek). Equity can mean equal freedom and the Negative is hijacking a significant portion of Affirmative territory. However, it may be difficult to establish that equal opportunity correlates directly to economic equity and equity as economic freedom is straying significantly from the common man understanding of the resolution.

An excellent approach is to understand equity as fairness or economic justice. You’ll find the majority of definitions pointing towards this angle:

* Merriam-Webster: “Fairness or justice in the way people are treated, justice according to natural law or right; specifically: freedom from bias or favoritism”
* Business Dictionary.com: “Fairness and impartiality towards all concerned, based on the [principles](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/principles.html) of evenhanded [dealing](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/dealer.html). Equity implies giving as much [advantage](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/advantage.html), [consideration](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/consideration.html), or [latitude](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/latitude.html) to one [party](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/party.html) as it is given to another.”
* Oxford: “The quality of being fair and impartial.”
* Investor Words: “A [distribution](http://www.investorwords.com/1495/distribution.html) of [assets](http://www.investorwords.com/273/asset.html), [resources](http://www.investorwords.com/4217/resource.html), and tax [liability](http://www.investorwords.com/2792/liability.html) among the people in a nation or [society](http://www.investorwords.com/11137/society.html) that is considered [fair](http://www.investorwords.com/9658/fair.html) and just.”

These definitions take the best of the equal opportunity and freedom approaches and allow for clear distinction and clash.

# Values and Viewpoints

Since you’ve purchased the Red Book, you already have in your hands a good selection of values that work well in this resolution. However, I want to add a few words of advice to consider when choosing a value to support equity.

Negative teams will most likely find themselves on the more compassionate side of the debate. Freedom at its worst becomes a cutthroat dog-eat-dog situation, while equity argues primarily for humanity and compassion to temper our economic policies. This on its own will have the tendency to make you sound left leaning or democratic (in the political party sense of the word). After all, Jon Stewart once described a democrat as someone who believes that the government can be a force of good in the world to lessen human suffering, rather than only placing limitations on people. There is little in that definition that is inherently wrong. However, just because you may share a few goals of those who are more left leaning than conservative doesn’t mean that you advocate achieving those goals in the same way. As New York Times author Joseph Stiglitz put it, “We are not embracing a politics of envy if we reverse a politics of greed.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

Unfortunately, you will need to walk a fine line of not running from negative territory, while being careful to not come across as socialistic. Recent political trends in America have made Republicanism and Libertarianism “Christian” and all else should be feared. Remember that Christ never commanded a specific political stance and that while we should do our best to apply biblical principles to our government, the GOP does not have the corner of the market of biblical politics. Be open to arguments from all sides but understand which political ideologies your case and your economics are endorsing before you run them.

Finally, here’s a list of a few values worth considering just to give you a place to start: justice, compassion, natural law, social wellbeing, general welfare, and economic growth.

# Support

This year’s resolution has so much potential for well-researched and well-supported cases! For a thorough discussion of philosophers and thinkers to study, head over to Joseph Abell’s article.

Here are a few places to begin your research and areas that would yield useful applications and anecdotal/historical support:

* The OECD or Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development is a fantastic database for international economic research and statistical evidence. Their social policies and data section will be particularly relevant. <http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/income-distribution-database.htm>
* The Equality Trust is a British organization based off of the book “[The Spirit Level: Why more equal societies almost always do better](http://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/resource/the-spirit-level" \t "_blank)” by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett. Their site provides great qualitative and quantified data on the varying levels of inequality. <http://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/resources/our-publications/cost-inequality>
* For a fast, easy to digest, and compelling presentation of their stance and statistics watch this TED Talk: <https://www.ted.com/talks/richard_wilkinson>
* Inequity Aversion is a fascinating theory (part of Game Theory) that seeks to explain why individuals will forgo personal benefit for the chance to support fairness and equity.
* Company Coal Towns. This era of American history showcases the worst side of monopolies. Coal miners would make less than the required cost of living, leaving them deeper and deeper in debt each day. It wasn’t until the U.S. government restricted the economic freedom of mining magnates that these practices changed.
* Railroad Barons and Steel Magnates. In the midst of “Manifold Destiny,” The gilded age, and the great race across the American continent, America saw a few rich individuals (for example, Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and Jay Gould) manipulate and monopolize industries to build never before seen levels of fortune on the backs of their exploited workers.
* “On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City” is a book just published by sociologist Alice Goffman that shows the gross inequity within our own cities. It highlights to hypocrisy of our criminalization policies and the incredible impact economic inequity has on our justice system. It also demonstrates how isolated many of us are from the problems of inequity currently facing our nation. Follow the link below for an interview from NPR that summarizes and explains more about the book and Goffman’s experiences in “underground” America. <http://onpoint.wbur.org/2014/06/10/fugitives-philadelphia-crime-america>
* Inequity in Africa. It’s well known that Africa is an impoverished continent with extreme human suffering. What’s tragic is that it is a land that has an incredible wealth of natural resources. Find out more about what mismanagement has caused the inequity of starving families and fortunes of a few. <http://sites.sandiego.edu/wl_reader/toc/2009-reader/chapter-6-economic-inequity/economic-inequity-in-africa/>

# Economics

I cannot stress how vital it is to have a functional, and broad understanding of economics. Use this year as a chance to really dig in and understand how markets, currency, and politics interact! The field is incredibly complex and difficult to understand; however there are multiple resources that help make it more accessible. My favorite is *Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science* by Charles Wheelan. The author is from the Economist and therefore writes in a more engaging op-ed style rather than a textbook style. The book gives a broad overview of economic principles, comes from a conservative point of view, and applies the concepts in memorable and understandable ways. It runs for about $10 on Amazon and is well worth it.

Barnes and Noble also just came out with a book called: *30-Second Economics: The 50 Most Thought-Provoking Economic Theories, Each Explained in Half a Minute.* Once again, a good comprehensive read that is not exhaustive.

FEE.org is also a site dedicated to educating about economic principles and will be very helpful.

Beyond this, I recommend asking friends, homeschooling parents, and any college students you know what economic books they’ve read and what they’d recommend for you.

# Conclusion

I wish you the best of luck and urge you to remember that your work and research will show in the round, so prepare well!

The *Why*

Philosophic Core of the Resolution

by Joseph Abell

Perhaps you’re a seasoned debater looking for some early ground on the new resolution. Perhaps you’re making a switch from Team Policy last year to Lincoln Douglas this year. Perhaps you’ve only just recently learned what debate is. However prolific or void your debate career has been so far, you’re going to need to have a firm grip on philosophy for the next debate season. No, you don’t have to enroll in college courses and study nihilism six hours a day, but you will need to get a steady handle on some of the major social and economic theories that have impacted the world as we know it.

Perhaps you’re thinking, “Isn’t economics a social science? And shouldn’t science be absent of values?” After all, if we use our personal values to interpret a science, aren’t we going to distort what science is based upon with subjective laws and opinionated facts? This is actually true. Economics, as a raw social science, isn’t studied in a value framework. It is studied as a collection of facts and data. What is the unemployment rate in Germany right now? Has it been growing or shrinking over the past decade? This is economics. Where the use of values and philosophy (and more importantly, the advocacy of your stance) begins to rear its lovely head is not at what the numbers are, but *why* they are.

Philosophy guides our interpretation of the facts. What we value drives our interpretation of the data all around us. For example, an atheist and a Christian see the same fact: The sun rises and sets every day, but where they disagree is in *why* does the sun rise and set? This is the essence of philosophy. The why. The logical reasoning behind our ideas and the deepest justification of our theories.

This season, chances are decent your rounds won’t consist solely of an evidence battle over conflicting numbers, because for the most part, debaters will agree on the facts. Rather, the reason why these numbers and data exist will permeate as the central arena for debate. As such, we return to the original inquiry: Is philosophy that important in a resolution dealing with economics? The answer is a resounding *yes*. Don’t let the heavy involvement in data and in impersonal information convince you otherwise; philosophy will be huge this year.

Let’s highlight three of the major theorists on both sides of the resolution and their theories.

# Philosophers for the Affirmative

## Theorist: Friedrich Hayek

Hayek made remarkable contributions to the fields of political theory, psychology, and economics. He authored the book “The Road to Serfdom” where he makes a compelling, deeply reasoned argument for individual freedom in an economy. In fact, the book was a best seller in the 1940s. Most notably, Hayek was the best-known advocate for a popular school of thought within the field of Austrian economics. Austrian economics is a collection of theories that place heavy emphasis on both the choices of individuals and the subjective nature of a good’s value in an economy. Being well acquainted with this set of ideas will take you far in your understanding of the resolution.

## Theorist: Milton Friedman

This man was arguably one of the 20th century’s most prominent advocates of free markets. In *Capitalism and Freedom*, he made a case for relatively free markets to a general audience. He argued for a volunteer army, freely floating exchange rates, a negative income tax, education vouchers, and the abolition of doctor licensing. He was also a leader of the Chicago School of Economics, another school of thought worth reading about. Bruce Kaufman gives a summary of the school’s ideals:

“A deep commitment to rigorous scholarship and open academic debate, an uncompromising belief in the usefulness and insight of neoclassical price theory, and a normative position that favors and promotes economic liberalism and free markets.” [[2]](#footnote-2)

## Theorist: Ludwig von Mises

This economist was a rebel to the mainstream economic philosophies of his day. He stood out during the mid 20th century, when popular Keynesian theories (a school of thought quite contrary to Austrian theory) were all the rage. One of his most valuable contributions to economics was his pioneering of the idea that socialism will always fail economically[[3]](#footnote-3). The article he published in 1920 projected the idea that a socialist government could never make the number of economic calculations required to organize a complex economy in an efficient manner.

# Philosophers for the Negative

## Theorist: John Rawls

Rawls’ core beliefs stem from his desire for a just and fair society. In his work “*A Theory of Justice”* he bases the standard for justice on two rules: 1) everyone is entitled to basic freedoms, and 2) the principle of equal economic opportunities, giving everyone the fair chance to contend for political and social power. By this, reserved for every individual, is a secure means of justly achieving their interests and maintaining their self-respect.[[4]](#footnote-4)

His second principle, that of equal economic advantage, stems from his theory called the “Original Position”, and it is quite an interesting thought experiment.

“We are to imagine ourselves in the position of free and equal persons who jointly agree upon and commit themselves to principles of social and political justice. The main distinguishing feature of the original position is “the veil of ignorance”: to insure impartiality of judgment, the parties are deprived of all knowledge of their personal characteristics and social and historical circumstances….Rawls contends that the most rational choice for the parties in the original position are the two principles of justice.” [[5]](#footnote-5)

In essence, Rawls contends that if individuals who did not know their ethnicity, gender, or social status had to choose a society’s structure, they would automatically make one that is fair to everyone, not slighting it in favor of one class of people over the other. The reasoning behind this is quite simple: No rational person would roll the dice and give a random class of people a weighted advantage over everyone else, lest they end up pulling aside the “Veil of Ignorance” and discover that are indeed the “everyone else.” This, he argues, is how society and economics ought to be: Everyone should have equal advantage and open opportunity to pursue their goals. Being well versed in Rawls theories will give you a sharper edge on the negative side of the resolution. His ideas are deeply reasoned and give powerful insight into the philosophy of social justice.

## Theorist: Amartya Sen

This guy is one of my favorites, and not just because his name is really fun to say. Amartya has demonstrated himself a man of diligence and empathy, and society recognized this. In 1998 he won the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for his contributions to welfare economics, social choice theory, and for his interest in the problems of those most stricken with poverty. His focus in economics evaluates economic policies not as how they affect specific individuals, but rather in how they impact the community as a whole. In 1981, he published a curious theory on famine. His “*Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation”* outlines that famine occurs not only from a lack of food, but also from the structural inequity in which food was distributed.5

Amartya Sen’s knack for showing the link between economic fluctuation and famine is quite profound. For example, he argued that an urban economic boom that made food prices jump caused the Bengal Famine of 1943.[[6]](#footnote-6) This boom brought the starvation of millions of rural workers when their wages couldn’t keep up with the skyrocketing prices. Keep this philosopher in mind when you write your negative case. He demonstrates the problems with inequity in society, and studying his writings should give you several applications to consider running throughout the season.

## Theorist: T.M. Scanlon

The last philosopher I will highlight is a modern economist. Scanlon, simply put, is extremely compelling. His TED essay offers valuable insight on why we ought to confront and fix the issue of economic inequality. From his essay, *The Four Biggest Reasons Why Inequality is Bad for Society:*

1. Economic inequality can give wealthier people an unacceptable degree of control over the lives of others.

If wealth is very unevenly distributed in a society, wealthy people often end up in control of many aspects of the lives of poorer citizens: over where and how they can work, what they can buy, and in general what their lives will be like. As an example, ownership of a public media outlet, such as a newspaper or a television channel, can give control over how others in the society view themselves and their lives, and how they understand their society.

2. Economic inequality can undermine the fairness of political institutions.

If those who hold political offices must depend on large contributions for their campaigns, they will be more responsive to the interests and demands of wealthy contributors, and those who are not rich will not be fairly represented.

3. Economic inequality undermines the fairness of the economic system itself.

Economic inequality makes it difficult, if not impossible, to create equality of opportunity. Income inequality means that some children will enter the workforce much better prepared than others. And people with few assets find it harder to access the first small steps to larger opportunities, such as obtaining a loan to start a business or pay for an advanced degree.

None of these objections is an expression of mere envy. They are objections to inequality based on the effects of some people being much better off than others. In principle, these effects could be avoided, without reducing economic inequality, through such means as the public financing of political campaigns and making high-quality public education available to all children (however difficult this would be in practice).

In *Paul Krugman’s Review of Capital in the 21st Century* by Thomas Piketty, he mentions these statistics from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics: “Real wages for most U.S. workers have increased little if at all since the early 1970s, but wages for the top 1 percent of earners have risen 165 percent, and wages for the top 0.1 percent have risen 362 percent.” (Krugman calls those “super-salaries.”) Again, the idea that this is objectionable is not mere envy. It rests, I believe, on this idea, my fourth point:

4. Workers, as participants in a scheme of cooperation that produces national income, have a claim to a fair share of what they have helped to produce.

What constitutes a fair share is, of course, controversial. One answer is provided by John Rawls’ *Difference Principle*, according to which inequalities in wealth and income are permissible if and only if these inequalities could not be reduced without worsening the position of those who are worst-off. You don’t have to accept this exact principle, though, in order to believe that if an economy is producing an increasing level of goods and services, then all those who participate in producing these benefits — workers as well as others – should share in the result.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

These four reasons could easily become part of your negative framework. Knowing his theories will heavily impact your understanding of the economic field.

# Conclusion

Having a handle on the philosophy behind inequity won’t just strengthen your negative case, but your affirmative case as well. Now you know the ideas that will guide many of your opponent’s cases throughout the year. Use this knowledge to your advantage! Having a firm handle on economic philosophy takes time and diligence. But if you can know the *why* behind your economic beliefs, you’re going to build stronger, more developed arguments on either side of the resolution. Judges will know you’ve done your homework and be impressed with how well versed you are. Going into a round doesn’t bring the anxiety it might have before, because you have nothing to worry about. You know your theories. You know their faults and weaknesses. Keep growing in this confidence, and never be satisfied with the extent of knowledge you currently possess.

Keep asking *why*.

A Valuable Workout

Strategic Value Argumentation

by Cheyenne Ossen

I have always found it to be a shame that I cannot bend over and touch my toes. I simply am not that flexible! I watch my friends do the splits, and leg lifts in the air and I’m like “See! I grabbed my ankle!” In the same way, you have to be flexible to be able to do cool things in values debate. Here are some tips on how to be strategic in value debate.

# Unified Analysis

When addressing this resolution you are posed with a rare problem: there are inherent values in the resolution. Let’s review.

A value is an external measure of the resolution. But freedom and equity are great values in and of themselves, and they are an external measure for the “realm of economics.” If you want a simple case that focuses solely on the resolution, a unified analysis might be your answer. A unified analysis is a case that proves the resolution has inherent worth in and of itself and thus should be voted for. Here is an example of a resolutional analysis for a unified analysis:

“Today instead of presenting a value I am running a unified analysis. In other words, I will not be justifying the affirmative stance by bringing in an outside value. Instead, I believe that freedom is the highest value in and of itself, unlike equity, which cannot stand without support from an additional value. Freedom is intrinsically valuable and stands on its own. Not only is freedom an excellent concept, it works in the real world, making the lives of real people like you and me better.

Freedom and equity come into conflict on three major planes of debate: the individual level, the societal level, and the governmental level. We shall see this by examining each level of conflict in a separate contention or major argument.”

**Pros:** The advantage to trying a unified analysis this year is that it focuses the debate back to where it should be. Instead of debating about human dignity, the definition of justice, and the dangers of general welfare you can simply focus on whether freedom is superior to equity.

**Cons:** First of all, not many people run unified analysis anymore. This creates a set of problems.

1. Your opponent probably has never debated a unified analysis and won’t know what to do with it. In this case you have to educate your opponent and your judge that you are not doing anything weird, just valuing your side of the resolution.
2. Debate culture: Lately debate culture has not turned a friendly eye towards unified analysis. While it is true that you are not technically running a valuing you are still valuing something- the resolution. In this case, if you’re affirmative, you are valuing freedom over equity in the realm of economics. You are fulfilling the resolution, because in the debate round freedom and equity are in conflict.

# Multiple Values

Have you ever had a difficult time choosing what to value? When you run multiple values you can rest in indecisiveness. This technique works best when you want to prove different levels of the resolution. There are many different “realms of economics”: international, governmental, personal, energy, bead shops in Africa, etc. For each level of conflict you choose to address, you can run a different value. For instance:

Level 1: International

* Value: Prosperity

Level 2: Domestic

* Value: Economic Stability

Level 3: Individual

* Value: Responsibility

One value could not provide all these benefits to your side of the resolution, nor allow you to explore as many conflicts.

**Pros:** Multiple values are fun to run and can be a breath of fresh air to a judge at the end of the year because it is not the same old case over and over.

**Cons:** These cases can become confusing if they are not set up correctly. The best way to structure the case is to have a value analysis explaining that you are running multiple values, and then your first contention address a value and is support, second contention is the second value and its support, etc.

# Flex Negatives

As a disclaimer, I am completely in love with this form of negative! A flex negative is when you have a case that can change based on what your opponent is arguing. Here is how it should be structured:

1. Intro- just like normal
2. Thesis: You should have a solid, generic, unchanging stance on the resolution.
3. Value Analysis: Pick a generic value/criteria that supports your thesis.
4. Body: Have many (at least three) contentions and applications that could directly clash with your opponent’s arguments, but still tie into your thesis. You generally only run two to three per round.

The key to success: As you listen to the affirmative case you have to decide whether his or her value is stronger or weaker than your value/criteria. Here are the tactics to properly executing a flex negative:

## Stealing the Value:

For example, your value/criteria is “well being.” Your opponent is running the value of “human dignity.” Is there conflict between quality of life and human dignity? On a semantics level, yes. But as an impact to the debate round? No. So, just agree with your opponent’s value. You say something to the effect of, “Judge, I whole heartedly agree that human dignity is the highest value in today’s debate round. Since my opponent and I agree on this, now we have to discover which side of the resolution best achieves this value.” You have to then provide a value link between their value and your side of the resolution. This means that the stolen value has to be close enough to your value that you replace the word “well-being” in your case to “human dignity” and it still reads like you prepared this months in advance.

## Create a Criteria:

If you cannot easily create a link from your opponent’s value to your case, you may have to substitute your value as a criteria. So, the affirmatives value is “prosperity.” Your value/criteria is “well being.” There are some logical flaws in jumping straight from the negative side of the resolution (equity) to prosperity. What you would do is accept his or her value and then use your criteria of well-being to link the value and the resolution. It would sound something like, “Judge, I agree that prosperity is the ultimate goal in today’s debate round; however, when prosperity is left to its own vices it can be harmful. Thus we must limit prosperity with my criteria well being. We must ensure the well being of all parties before prosperity can be obtained. Well being is a pre-requisite for prosperity. We will see how equity is far superior to freedom at creating well being for society in order to achieve prosperity.”

The value debate is a wash now. You both agree that prosperity is the best value. The question becomes who can best achieve well being. You have managed to get rid of the affirmative value and set the entire value clash of the debate on your ground in one fell stroke.

**Pros:** Flex negatives allow you to avoided meaningless value clash that does not improve the debate. It can make the round simpler for the judge because now he only has one external measure for the resolution instead of have to choose between two and then look at the resolution.

**Con:** If you are not good at impromptu this will flop. You also have to be prepared to stand your ground in case you have to run a normal negative.

Flex negatives require you to know the resolution well enough to strategize, to know debate well enough to know how to take a generic tactful approach to the resolution, and to be good at impromptu.

# Conclusion

This resolution opens up so many possibilities to do adventurous thing with value argumentation. You simply have to want to stretch your abilities and be flexible.

Strategies

by Matthew Erickson, Cheyenne Ossen, & Emily Erickson

“Never start a land war in Asia, and never go against a Sicilian when death is on the line!”[[8]](#footnote-8) Strategy is everything, not only if you’re trying to rescue blonde princesses named Buttercup, but also if you’re trying to win debate rounds. There are complex strategies to being affirmative speaker in debate, and drilling them into your instinct takes a lot of practice over time. While this is by no means an exhaustive list of debate strategies, understanding these few ways to make your case impeccable and avoid common mistakes will exponentially help your debate career.

# Case Strategies

## 1. Write Your Case Like an Essay

I love essay writing because it’s so clean. Introduction, thesis statement, points 1, 2 and 3, conclusion. One problem with a lot of debaters is that they see their cases as creative writing instead of essay writing. I also love poetry and stories, but your case isn’t a story, it’s a case. You can spend six minutes reciting a poem about economic equality, but that won’t make the judge vote for it. The essay is the closest thing to a debate case in academic writing. Just like in an essay, for a debate case we need a clear thesis statement and that our paragraphs have to be explaining our thesis statement. You can do this in an eloquent or inspiring manner, but it also has to be done in a linear manner.

## 2. Spike Arguments

If you aren’t familiar with what it means to “spike arguments,” it means to bring up arguments your opponent might have and then destroy them; it “takes the rug out from under them.” If you notice an argument that most negative debaters have against your case, you’ll probably want to spike it. (This is usually done through a point of resolutional analysis, observation, or something like that.)

As always, be clear and honest in your arguments, even the ones that you’re trying to spike. I’ve seen dozens of rounds where debaters have lost because their opponent “snuck-in” a spike by calling it a value link when it really was a resolutional scope, or saying it was a measuring criterion when it was a limiting criterion (perhaps even unaware they had done so). Say what you mean, don’t try to hide things in your case to catch your opponent by surprise. This won’t only confuse your opponent, it will probably end up confusing your judge and it’s not the most ethical means of debating.

## 3. Understand Your Definitions

Understanding what you are arguing for is kind of important. (And by kind of, I mean INCREDIBLY.) Definitions are more than words we throw in the beginning of our cases for fun and take up time; they are the framework for the debate, the battleground for your argumentation. Look up every single definition for every single term in the resolution, ask yourselves, “What does this definition imply?” and choose which best fits your case. If there is an inconsistency between your case and your definitions, the negative can pull you apart in a matter of seconds.

## 4. Understand Your Applications

Research doesn’t sound like much of a strategy, but it really is. The key to never losing your applications is to knowing everything about them. You won’t be able to call out your opponent on factual errors or misrepresentations if you don’t know the whole story yourself. Read multiple accounts, bring evidence into the round, and be the expert.

# Common Mistakes

## The Mistake: Getting Defensive

Negatives have an incredibly annoying habit of bringing arguments up against your case. It’s just plain irritating. And often, they’re really good. (Have they no heart?!) This causes our emotions to overwhelm our brain and go into “defensive mode.” You’ll know what this means if you’ve ever seen an affirmative (or been that affirmative) that seems calm and collected in their first speech, then fall apart as the round goes on, begging the judge to side with them. This is from the emotions running through your body trying to pull the judge back to your side. If you view your opponent’s arguments as holes that you have to plug, your ship will sink. Don’t waste your time freaking out over the arguments that your opponent sounded really good making.

**The solution: stand your ground *on your ground.*** You’ve already defeated their arguments. You simply need to clarify to your judge how and why you have defeated their arguments. If you are convinced that your case is right (and you should be, never run a case you don’t believe in) you can convince your judge too. Focus your time on the arguments you have made and you know you can win. Confidence is everything when it comes to debate, be confident in your case. Perhaps even take a few moments of prep time simply taking a breath and a drink of water; it makes all the difference in your rebuttals.

## The Mistake: Treating All Arguments the Same

When you only have four or three minutes to respond to seven or six minutes of negative argumentation, it is easy to go into auto-pilot and shell out arguments one by one, realize your time is almost done, throw a quick conclusion in and sit down. Because affirmatives are so pressed for time, they often don’t stop to think what arguments are important and which aren’t. I’ve caught myself in the midst of debates about the difference between “Human rights” and “natural rights,” and then not focused enough on which debater actually protects those rights.

**The solution: choose your battles.** Sadly you can’t win every argument, so you should *choose to win the important ones*. The debate probably comes down to one or two assertions. If you defeat those few issues, everything else is irrelevant. If you can flow arguments against your opponent’s arguments while they’re speaking, this can free up your prep time. During prep-time try sitting and examining the flow and decide what are the key assertions the other speaker has made. The rest of the arguments should be viewed as, “wash,” or “okay to concede and weight,” but your ship will float without them.

## The Mistake: Dropping Your Theme

Time management is the absolute biggest hurdle the affirmative has to overcome. It affects everything. Six minutes is a lot of time to give a constructive speech, so most affirmatives are able to include beautiful quotations with analysis and closed with inspiring words of patriotism. The same affirmatives are the ones wheezing for breath trying to squeeze arguments into their three-minute speeches. When we get lost in the whirlwind of rebuttals, affirmatives often drop the “theme” of their case. (This is usually their value.) This makes their arguments dry and non- compelling, which can lead to a negative win by default.

**The solution: use quick, thematic tie-ins.** One of the simplest ways to tie your rebuttal in is to use quotations that re-affirm your theme. (Have a list of quotes about your value/side of the resolution prepared ahead of time.) In addition, you should be prepared to “extend” the thematic implications of arguments and applications. For example, if my value is human rights I am going to remind you in every single application where human rights were valued or undervalued and how good or terrible it was. This reminds the judge that the debate round isn’t about the Civil War and it isn’t just about Thomas Jefferson, it is about human rights.

## The Mistake: Overdoing Signposting

Signposting is an essential part of refutation because it allows your judge to know what arguments you’re referring to. While we all should signpost effectively, many debaters go too far and waste entire minutes of their speeches with, “He said, and then I said, and then he said, and now I say…” This is probably the biggest time waster in all of debate. Be clear, but also be concise in your signposting, you’ll be surprised how much time it saves you.

**The solution: make it about the big picture.** Instead of getting lost in the “he said, she said,” just remind your judge the debate is about bigger issues. “In response to their value of,” “Against their argument that freedom is bad my response is,” “My response to their second contention is.” Don’t sum up the entire round for your judge, just remind them where you are and what it is about.

## The Mistake: Half-Dropping Arguments

It can be very strategic to group arguments together when they’re about the same thing. However, I can’t tell you how many times I’ve heard affirmatives end their speech with, “And you can just cross-apply this” to try and convince their judge they haven’t dropped the arguments. This isn’t actual debate, its laziness or bad time management.

**The solution: briefly explain (and impact) the cross-application.** You see, even the claim “You can cross apply my argument,” is an argument. You need a warrant for that claim! Instead of saying, “You can just cross-apply,” tell your judge *why* it cross applies. For example, “You can cross apply this to their second contention because they both assume that freedom of speech is intrinsically good.” It takes up two seconds and makes your arguments valid.

# Conclusion

Wesley didn’t save Princess Buttercup because he was fast and strong, but because he had impeccable strategy. (Yes, I just referenced the Princess Bride twice in one article.) In the same way, it won’t matter how intellectual you are if you don’t have strategic tools to enable you to win debate rounds. Be as ethical and polite as possible in your strategies, but use them!

Logical Chronology

by Travis Herche

Traditional debate advice suggests the following approach to the Negative Constructive (NC): lower your head, read the script exactly as written, look up, gasp for air, and go over the affirmative case with whatever time you have left.

While that approach occasionally works, it usually shows serious weaknesses. The biggest weakness lies in something called logical chronology – *the idea that arguments should be presented in logical order*. In the same way that an instruction manual is confusing if you start reading in the middle, a negative constructive is confusing if you get to your contentions without handling your opponent’s framework.

You should have a negative constructive script, but remember: it’s just there to make your presentation as smooth as possible. It works for you, not the other way around. If you want to excel on the negative, you need to be able to adapt your plan of attack to every single round.

The order in which you present your arguments matters. Here’s how to present them for maximum impact.

# 1. Opponent’s Pre-value

“Pre-value” means any arguments that are presented before the value. These include definitions, resolutional analyses, and meta-frameworks. Early on this year, pre-value arguments won’t be a big deal, but some cases will emerge in the spring that rely heavily on them.

The obvious question that needs an answer before you present anything in your case is: do you agree with how your opponent has designed the debate? If you don’t – for example, if you want to reject his resolutional analysis or replace a definition – do that right away.

Your opponent’s pre-value comes first in the negative constructive because it impacts everything else you say in the round. It’s the elephant in the room. Get to it as soon as your introduction is over.

Typically, this step just involves saying: “I accept my opponent’s definitions.”

# 2. Your Pre-value

Before you get to your value, say anything you’ve prepared that comes before it. Whereas you’ll have stepped off script to cover your opponent’s pre-value, you can usually deliver your own pre-value arguments right off the negative constructive script you’ve prepared.

Typically this step is skipped. Only cover this if you have a case that has some pre-value advocacy, like a resolutional analysis. If you’re not sure what that means or how to use it, no problem! Move right along to the next point.

# 3. Your Framework

“Framework” describes the way you want the judge to measure, or look at the round. Typically, a negative framework is just a value and a “reason to prefer” or two. Some frameworks can get elaborate, with criteria and value links and the like. Whatever you have prepared, present it now. You should have a few reasons to prefer for your value pre-scripted, but remember to always adapt your arguments based on what you’re up against. If your opponent runs the value of life and you run human rights, your reason to prefer should be “Exhaustive, not Intrinsically Good.”

If you accept your opponent’s framework, just acknowledge that and jump to step five.

# 4. Opponent’s Framework

If your opponent didn’t present any value links – sub points explaining why the judge should use the value – your job is easy. You’re now the only person in the round with a logically supported framework. The rest of the round should be smooth sailing to an easy victory.

If your opponent did run value links, you need to deal with them right away. If you move on to your contentions, the value links will be nagging in the back of the judge’s mind. He’ll be wondering if he needs to care about your contentions at all. Don’t put yourself in that position. Make sure that you’ve said everything you need to say about the framework before you move on. Make sure that the judge is completely on your side without reservation.

This one change to your negative constructive will have a huge impact on your persuasive power. Expect to see ballots that discuss your contentions and applications more, and expect to win value clashes more often because you handled things so clearly.

# 5. Your Contentions

Work through your contentions, trusting your script unless you’re short on time. When you finish, you should have no more than 90 seconds left in the NC. You’ve already handled the most pressing affirmative arguments; if you spend more than 90 seconds on what’s left, you’re signaling to the judge that your case isn’t the most important.

# 6. Opponent’s Contentions

If you have a value-centric case, you should be able to handle the contentions by explaining that they don’t matter anymore (because they don’t relate to your value). If not, you’ll have to go into a bit more depth with specific responses and application analysis. Either way, move quickly through this phase and cross-apply as much as possible. Because you saved this part for last, you can fall back on the things you already explained to make it easier.

If you have a pre-scripted conclusion, deliver it at the end. If not, just say “thank you,” and you’re done! The judge heard everything in logically chronological order, which made her understand it better and trust you more. Why are your opponent’s applications outweighed? Because of your applications, which came first. Why do your opponent’s contentions have no impact? Because of your value, which came first.

This approach to negative constructive looks a little complex on paper, but it won’t feel like a big change in practice. Be diligent about signposting and tagging your arguments and your judge will not get lost. Give it a try in practice rounds with your club. You’ll be surprised how quickly it becomes second nature. Later, you’ll be surprised by how many negative rounds you won.

Part II: Affirmative Cases

“Fun and Fancy Free”

Affirmative Case: Private Property Rights

by Ciera Horton

# Introduction

Writer and political activist Ayn Rand once said, “Political freedom cannot exist without economic freedom; a free mind and a free market are corollaries.”[[9]](#footnote-9) Because I agree that economic freedom must be the basis for a strong political system, I stand *Resolved: In the realm of economics, freedom ought to be valued above equity.*

# Criterion: Capitalism

Philosopher and economist Adam Smith first advanced his belief in capitalism in his monumental work, The Wealth of Nations.[[10]](#footnote-10) Capitalism is a system of economics where industry and trade are controlled by private owners in a competitive market. There are many different kinds of capitalism, but for today’s debate round, we are going to use laissez-faire capitalism which means that the government has its hands off of the consumer market and that only allows restrictions that are there to protect property rights.

Austrian economist Ludwig von Mises argued that, “The idea that political freedom can be preserved in the absence of economic freedom, and vice versa, is an illusion. Political freedom is the corollary of economic freedom. It is no accident that the age of capitalism became also the age of government by the people.” [[11]](#footnote-11)

# Contention One: Freedom Leads to Increased Property Rights

Economist Fredrich Hayek argued that freedom needed to be the foundation of a stable economic system. According to Hayek, when the state tries to equalize people, that’s really unequal treatment of individuals and leads to a redistribution of income. [[12]](#footnote-12)This does not value property rights. Instead, the focus should be on freedom, that people have autonomy and the ability to exercise the use of their own materials and property.

Political theorist Milton Friedman asserted that property rights were “the most basic human rights and an essential foundation for other human rights.”[[13]](#footnote-13) When freedom is valued, property rights are protected because people have the liberty to decide how to use their property and money, how to earn it, spend it, give it away—so long as it does not involve force, fraud or theft. A country that is founded on economic freedom also encourages investments and a free market system that will perpetuate the economy.

# Contention Two: Property Rights Support Economic Growth

Ronald Reagan once summed up his view of economics by saying, “The best social program is a job.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

He was correct. Capitalism has done more to reduce poverty than any government initiative in the modern world. This is because a free market economy encourages consumer competition by protecting private property rights, which in turn leads to job growth. More jobs means more money being poured back into the economy, which in turn leads to economic growth because of a governmental focus on supporting freedom above equity. Evidence has shown that countries with freer property rights have economic growth rates about twice as high as those countries without free private property rights and that a free market system is essential for strong democracy.[[15]](#footnote-15) The Index of Economic Freedom has demonstrably shown for over twenty years how countries with more emphasis on economic freedom have more growth and outperform the rest of the world. The nations with more freedom have higher incomes, better health care, education, environment production and less poverty.

In fact, countries like Chile and South Korea, who not long ago were in deep poverty, are now economic powers because they valued economic freedom.[[16]](#footnote-16)

# Contention Three: Freedom Supports Equality

Not only does economic freedom lead to increased property rights through capitalism, and thereby economic growth, but freedom also leads to a better protection for equality. This is because freedom and equity are not independent. An economy must be founded on freedom and individual liberty that supports property rights, but chances for equality can stem from such a system

The Research Institute of Industrial Economics: “Rather, the results point in a clear direction: that economic freedom - as a dynamic concept - appears to go together not only with general wealth and growth, but also with equality.”[[17]](#footnote-17)

How can this be? This is because in a more stable, strong economy, there are less economic inequalities. We have already seen how freedom leads to greater property rights and economic growth. When an economy is thriving, there are more job opportunities and chances for someone to better their condition. However, this change in equality is because of someone’s work and not from giving the government more power. It is from an emphasis on freedom, individual property rights and a capitalist market.

# Conclusion

Economic freedom, as shown through the concrete example of laissez-faire capitalism, leads to a protection of private property rights. When we value property rights and individual liberty, we see greater economic growth. Having a more stable economy founded on freedom actually can also lead to more equality. Therefore, we should support capitalism, limited government and a free market system by valuing freedom above equity.

Affirmative Addendum: Private Property Rights

This case is very logically outlined. You will need to make all of the links clear for your judge.

The reason we should uphold the resolution is because a system that values economic freedom above equity is capitalism, which supports private property rights, which leads to economic growth. Make these differentiations clear! Your best bet will be to play up the importance of your value and why freedom and not equity can provide a protection of property rights. Why is this important?

Economic Freedom = Capitalist System >>> Private Property Rights >>> Economic Growth

Negative Brief: Private Property Rights

# Value and Criterion:

1. Do we need protection? Point out that a laissez-faire system of capitalism like the Affirmative is using in this case does provide a checkpoint within the government to make sure that freedom doesn’t go too far. If there’s too much freedom, what happens when one person climbs to the top and takes control? (I.e. monopolies) And if monopolies are what can come from focusing on economic freedom, then can’t this system also harm private property rights, too? Don’t let the Affirmative over simply complex issues — there is never one simple answer or reason why something happens.
2. Private property rights for who? This system may be better for the wealthy and prosperous, but what about those who have nothing? Don’t let the Affirmative win simply by appealing to potential judge bias with words like “capitalism” and “limited government.”

Ask when the government should be allowed to intervene into economic issues. With the criterion of laissez-fair capitalism, the Affirmative is set up to make it seem like the government can only become involved in the free market to protect property issues. Is this true? Should it be?

The affirmative used a quote by Fredrich Hayek that says that equalization (equity) really isn’t equal. How can this be true if the affirmative is saying the resolution is a paradox? And does this contradict with Contention 3?

“The Land of the Free and Home of the Hard Working”

Affirmative Case: Responsibility

by Joseph Abell

# Introduction

You are in the Taco Bell drive thru and you order two juicy gordita supremes. The lady takes your order, and tells you to go around to the next window. Your mouth is watering with anticipation as you hand the lady your credit card. But instead of charging you for the small sum you owe, she tells you that your total has topped $60. As you sit there in disbelief, she explains that the people behind you just ordered nearly everything off the menu, and to be fair, she split the cost between the two of you. You feel outraged. This isn’t about not wanting the man behind you to get his food, and it’s not even about you losing $60. You were responsible for what you chose to buy. The man behind you has the same responsibility to pay for his choice in food. Responsibility is the cornerstone that both society and economics are built on, and that’s why I am *Resolved:* *In the realm of economics, freedom ought to be valued above equity.*

Because we are speaking about the realm of economics, I am going to define both freedom and equity in that context.

# Definitions

**Economic freedom** is defined by Heritage Foundation as: A condition in which individuals can act with autonomy while in the pursuit of their economic livelihood and greater prosperity.[[18]](#footnote-18)

What this basically means is that we are able to choose how to produce, sell, and use our own resources, while respecting others’ rights to do the same.

**Economic equity** is defined by BusnessDictionary as: The situation in an economy in which the apportionment of resources or goods among the people is considered fair.[[19]](#footnote-19)

This simply describes a different sort of economy: One in which resources are redistributed as seems fair.

# Resolutional Analysis: Ends and Means

This resolution is clearly asking us which is superior, freedom or equity? I want to establish a crucial idea before we jump in: The ends don’t justify the means. That may sound cryptic at first glance, but it is actually quite simple. I can’t use evil means to reach something good. For example, it wouldn’t be okay for me to break of every rule of the road and drive like a madman just because I was bringing my grandmother a warm batch of chocolate chip cookies. How we achieve something is just as important as the goal we’re pursuing. The same principle applies to the resolution: The negative can get up and talk about how cool equity is once we’ve already achieved it, but they have to remember how we achieved that level of equality. If we have to steal, rob, and cheat people in order to reach equity, perhaps it isn’t so valuable after all.

Understanding that the ends can’t justify the means, let’s talk about my value, or how I’ll be proving this resolution true, or false.

# Value: Individual Responsibility

This resolution is comparing two different kinds of economies: One underscored by freedom, the other by equity. Any discussion of economics necessarily reflects on both society and the individuals that compose it. It is for that reason that my value is individual responsibility, and I have two key reasons why this is the best measure for the resolution.

# Value link 1: Basics of Relationships

Responsibility is the foundation of any healthy society. If individuals aren’t held accountable for their actions, what would stop them from doing anything they wanted to? Absolutely nothing. One of the reasons anarchy isn’t all the rage these days is because it gives citizens no incentive not to wreak as much havoc as their little heart’s desire. You see, prudent societies set up governments and create rules, and these in turn generate individual responsibility. Because of individual responsibility societies can prosper, and be safer.

# Value link 2: Morality Vital

On a moral scale, responsibility again proves itself a valuable standard. In order for society to be fair, each man must bear the responsibility for his own actions. This is crucial, because without this principle, we are left with no standard for justice. Who are we to say, “men ought to be good rather than evil” if being evil bears absolutely no consequence? Justice is often understood as giving each man his due, and this is exactly what responsibility upholds. We take actions, and we receive the consequences ourselves. Responsibility gives us both moral accountability and a standard of justice.

Understanding that responsibility is the cornerstone of a just society, let’s see how equity and freedom measure up.

# Contention 1: Equity Erodes

Remember again the simple idea of responsibility: Each man is accountable for his own actions. Contrast that with economic equity, where resources are redistributed as seems fair to… someone.

In a system where we are free to succeed or fail based on our efforts, there is responsibility, but equity destroys this. Instead of my wealth being based on my actions, it’s just based on the redistribution of resources. Equity doesn’t take into account how hard you or I have worked, or even how lazy we’ve both been. Equity just distributes according to what people think is fair. And the results can be catastrophic:

# Application: Cuba

Cuba is a prime example of a country that has prioritized equity over freedom. The government has voided property rights and the basic human dignity of its citizens, all in the name of achieving equity. *The* *Heritage Index* writes: “Over the 20-year history of the Index, Cuba’s economic freedom has been stagnant near the bottom of the “repressed” category. Its overall score improvement has been less than 1 point over the past two decades, with score gains in fiscal freedom and freedom from corruption offset by double-digit declines in business freedom and investment freedom.”[[20]](#footnote-20)

Remember our resolution analysis: The ends don’t justify the means. If we abandon responsibility like Cuba did, we leave an open door of corruption for the government to gingerly stroll through. Not just that, but we can’t even be held responsible for our own economic choices. Pursuing equity means turning a blind eye to the violation of property rights, in the vain hope that this will somehow benefit society.

# Contention 2: Freedom Confirms

On the other side of the coin, granting a society economic freedom pays off – pun intended. When the individuals that make up a society know that they will be held accountable for their actions, something called incentive is bred. As long as they are free, the impact of responsibility will generate large economic growth. And history nods its head in approval.

# Application: Canada

Believe it or not, this country is home to more than just maple syrup and flying hockey pucks. It actually has one of the freest economies in the world, and look where it has taken them. From *The Heritage Index* again: “A transparent and stable business climate makes Canada one of the world’s most attractive investment destinations. Openness to global trade and commerce is firmly institutionalized, and the economy has rebounded relatively quickly from the global recession. The financial system has remained stable, and prudent regulations have allowed banks to withstand the global financial turmoil with little disruption.”[[21]](#footnote-21)

Unlike Cuba, this kind of economy hasn’t resulted in massive government corruption. Moreover, it doesn’t demand the violation of anyone’s property rights. People are free to control their own wealth and resources without excessive government meddling, and lo: a booming economy has resulted. The combination of individual freedom, responsibility, and the resulting incentive blends together to give Canada one of the fastest growing economies on earth. And this isn’t any accident. Countries that savor economic freedom like Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore have tasted high levels of economic success as well.

# Conclusion

In short, free economies are more responsible and successful than economies who embrace equity instead. Who gets to decide how to fairly redistribution of our resources? The ones with all the power: Hint, hint, the government. Tossing the economic vice grip to our government cripples growth and punches a ticket straight down “Corruption Avenue”. Society flourishes best when it embraces responsibility and pay for your own Taco Bell, and I hope that you would agree. Thank you.

Negative Brief: Responsibility

Even with the applications, this case is highly value centric. My advocacy lies in the idea that there is a strong link between responsibility and freedom. But does freedom ever result in people making irresponsible decisions? Take them by surprise. Is responsibility the most important part of an economy? What if we violate responsibility, but end up saving more lives? Challenge the affirmative’s value system: Is responsibility really always worth the cost it can bring?

The next thing you want to hone in on is the understanding of equity in an economy. Equity, as a concept, is actually rather broad. There’s plenty of room for you to widen the judge’s horizon of this; equity is not strictly socialism. You could talk about anything from social security to the different types of taxes levied – ways that we distribute resources to make life fairer for all parties involved. Your options are really quite vast.

This is a passionate case. When the judge looks over his flow in the judge’s lounge, you don’t want to leave him with the impression that a vote for neg is a vote against freedom, bald eagles, and cherry pie. I’ve really focused in on a good side of a freedom, but are there instances where economic freedom hurts people? Search diligently and press your findings against the affirmative in cross-examination.

Finally, the case is built around the relationship individuals have with society. To get past this case, you’re going to need to defeat the meta-framework and/or the strictly positive side of freedom as presented. You don’t have to preach total subjugation of freedom to win, so look for situations that society uses equity to its advantage. Give the judge a better understanding of economics than he had before he came in and your efforts won’t go without reward.

“Freedom Means Prosperity”

Affirmative Case: Prosperity

By Michael Patton

# Introduction:

Julian Simon, a former professor and an expert on economics in relation to population changes once remarked, “The world's problem is not too many people, but lack of political and economic freedom.”[[22]](#footnote-22)When the government tries to ensure fairness in our markets by limiting our freedom, we have little economic prosperity. It is because prosperity is best achieved through liberty, I stand **Resolved:** That in the realm of economics, freedom ought to be valued above equity.

## Definitions:

**Economics:** “a science concerned with the process or system by which goods and services are produced, sold, and bought” (Merriam Webster’s Online Dictionary)[[23]](#footnote-23)

**Equity:** “The quality of being fair and impartial” (Oxford Dictionary of American English)[[24]](#footnote-24)

**Freedom:** “The power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint” (Oxford Dictionary of American English)[[25]](#footnote-25)

# Scope of Debate:

In today’s round, I’m going to start by presenting the scope of **Pragmatism**. Pragmatism is operationally defined as, “The idea that truth can be derived from practical consequences and real-world applications.” I’m simply saying that we need to examine the values in this round with a pragmatic point of view.  Pragmatism should be upheld in today’s round for one main reason: it defends truth. If we say that something is true, we expect it to be logically possible and applicable to the real-world. If I made the statement, “I can lift an elephant by myself,” you would automatically assume that I was lying; and you’d be right. Because in the real world, you know that it is physically impossible for a human to do that. This example illustrates pragmatism in action. Pragmatism focuses on what is actually true rather than what we want or hope to be true.

# Resolutional Analysis: Focused on Government

This resolution implies that the government is the actor that values Freedom or Equity higher. The government is the only actor with the power and the authority to control how our economy works.

# Value:

My value is **Prosperity**. Prosperity is defined by Random HouseDictionaryas, “a successful, flourishing, or thriving condition, especially in financial respects; good fortune”.[[26]](#footnote-26)

## Value-Link: Defines Success

Despite the fact that our nation has had multiple failures, most people around the world would refer to our nation as “successful”. But what characterizes success? Is it based on how many wars we have won? Is it based on the size of our population? The reason why we are considered successful nation is because of our economic prosperity.

## Criterion:

My criterion (or how I plan to achieve my value) is **Free Enterprise**. Free Enterprise is defined by Merriam Webster as, “a system in which private businesses are able to compete with each other with little control by the government”.[[27]](#footnote-27) Let’s see how my criterion leads to prosperity in my criterion-link.

## Criterion-Link: Promotes a Vibrant Economy

When businesses are forced to compete with each other, the country advances in ingenuity and inventions, which propels the economy forward. An article from the *Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas* stated, “Adam Smith, in *The Wealth of Nations*, showed us more than 200 years ago that people pursuing their own self-interests in a free enterprise economy, as if led by some “invisible hand,” end up promoting the public interest. But with all these people looking out for themselves, how does free enterprise result in such beneficial outcomes for society? That’s where competition enters the picture. For example, when computers first came on the market, they had great value but were extremely costly to produce. Relatively few businesses could afford them. But the lure of profits prompted other companies to start producing computers. This added competition had two results. It prompted computer companies to cut costs in order to compete, and it led them to look harder and faster for innovations that could give their computers an edge over the others. Now, computers are much less expensive, more powerful and more user-friendly than they used to be. Competition and the lure of profits, combined with ingenuity, continue to drive the market[s] forward.”[[28]](#footnote-28) In order to illustrate this idea further, I present the following application.

## Application: Apple vs. Microsoft

In business, no rivalry may be bigger than Apple and Microsoft. We are constantly bombarded with commercials about why one company’s product is better than the other’s. These organizations are continually coming out with the “latest and greatest” technology. Consumers decide which one they like by purchasing from the company that makes the product they want. Because of this rivalry, these companies are forced to improve their products and lower their prices. As a result, consumers continue to buy from them which drives the economy forward and promotes prosperity.

# Contention 1: Equity Can Limit Free Enterprise

When the government tries to make everyone happy by forcing us to work for the common good, free enterprise ceases to exist. When leaders try to make our society “fair” for everyone by redistributing our wealth to the masses, the economy eventually fails.

## Application: The Fall of the Soviet Union

According to the *Cold War Museum* website, part of the reason why the Soviet Union fell, was due to the fact that their government-controlled economy lacked freedom. The economic planning of the government failed to meet the needs of the state. There was no competition to improve efficiency, promote invention, and drive the economy forward. This led to economic disaster, which created a need for change.[[29]](#footnote-29)

# Contention 2: Free Enterprise is a Form of Economic Freedom

As I alluded to earlier, Free Enterprise is a form of economic freedom that was developed by philosopher and economist Adam Smith. Our founding fathers were some of the first people to implement Professor Smith’s ideas. As a result, within 175 years after its inception, America dominated the world economy.

# Conclusion:

The answer to our economic problems is not more government involvement, but more power to the citizens. It is because I believe that freedom is the clearest path to prosperity, I affirm this resolution. Thank you.

Negative Brief

# Definitions:

Refute the definition of equity. The affirmative speaker is using this definition to try to say that equity is equal to communism. Present a counter-definition of equity that relates to fairness and justice.

In order to break the link between equity and communism, during cross-examination ask the questions like…

* Is it ever possible for equity to be a good thing? Can you name a few examples where equity would be a good thing?
* Is it ever possible for communism to be a good thing?

Your opponent will likely answer that it is possible for equity to be a good thing in some instances while communism always fails. Using these answers, you can show that equity and communism are two completely different things.

# Scope of Debate:

Accept the scope of pragmatism. Use it against your opponent. Pragmatism can be very useful in proving that government regulations are necessary. For instance, you could say, “Pragmatism says we should focus on how things work in the real-world. However, my opponent failed to mention that in the real-world people are utterly depraved. That’s exactly why the government has regulations like child-labor laws and minimum wage. It understands that in the real world, citizens need laws to ensure that no one gets hurt.”

# Resolutional Analysis:

Accept.

# Value:

Refute the value of Prosperity. Present a counter-value of the general welfare.

During cross-examination, ask questions like…

* Is prosperity more important than life?
* Is it ever acceptable to compromise safety or rights in pursuit of prosperity?

When you ask your opponent these questions he has one of two options: He can admit that your value is more important than his or he can destroy his credibility by responding with an absurd answer. If your opponent ever makes the statement, “Prosperity is more important than safety and rights” during cross-examination, capitalize on the fact that what he just said was ridiculous. Follow up his answer with another question that highlights his mistake. For instance, you could say…

* So you would be willing to sacrifice the rights and safety of average citizens, if it meant overall economic prosperity?

During your constructive, you will have valuable answers from your opponent that you should highlight. If the affirmative speaker said that life and safety are more important than prosperity, use his answer as evidence for your point. If he said that prosperity is more important than basic rights and safety, use his answer to show why his side is dangerous and why your side is good.

# Criterion:

Show that free-enterprise is not necessarily an example economic freedom. Freedom (as the affirmative defined it) is the ability to do what you want without any hindrance or restraint. However, even the Free-Enterprise model includes government involvement in economic affairs. The model says that the government should have limited power over the economy but that it should still make regulations. For instance, America has a free enterprise economy but we still have thousands of regulations to keep workers safe and ensure that justice is upheld.

# Contention 1:

Remind the judge that equity does not equal communism.

# Contention 2:

Remind the judge that by definition freedom has no restraints. Show that true economic freedom is disastrous in the real world. Examples of this include…

* Child labor and extremely low wages during the industrial revolution in England.
* Sweatshops in Asia. Adults and children work for hours on end with abusive bosses and extremely low wages.

“Ah, it’s an Invisible Hand!”

Affirmative Case: National Security

By Cole Brown

# Introduction:

Founding father Patrick Henry once observed “Perfect freedom is as necessary to the health and vigour of commerce as it is to the health and vigour of citizenship.”1 Because I agree that freedom is essential to the success of our economy, I agree with the resolution: *In the realm of economics, freedom ought to be valued above equity.*

## Definitions:

**Equity:** The quality of being fair and impartial. (Oxford Dictionary) 2

**Freedom:**  The absence of necessity, coercion, or constraint in choice or action. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary) 3

## Resolution Analysis:

In a free economic realm, people are free to engage or refrain from any trade or production as they see fit. This allows people to determine what goods and services have value. Equity requires that the market value of goods and services be fair and proportional to the resources, labor, time, etc. spent providing the good or service, independent of consumer or producer choice.

# Value:

My core value for today’s round is **National Security**. Security defined by the Oxford dictionary is “the safety of a state or organization against criminal activity such as terrorism, theft, or espionage.”4 National security allows our economy to exist in safety, and should be valued by everyone in this round because regardless of whether we are arguing for freedom or equity, only national security can ensure we keep such an economy.

## Criterion:

My criterion is Adam Smith’s Invisible Hand Theory, as it gives us a way to achieve National security because “By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.”5 Today’s debate should focus on whether freedom or equity will better serve the Invisible Hand and increase National Security.

# Contention 1: Economic Freedom Improves Military Defense.

Increasing freedom in the realm of economics increases a nation’s ability to use military force as protection, whether in foreign countries or domestic security roles. Private Military or Private Security Companies, or PMC’s, are prime examples of this ability. Doug Brooks and Jim Shevlin in the Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, summer 2005, show that PMC’s act faster than governments and use manpower more efficiently.6 PSC’s have faster response times than police because economic freedom allows them to choose which services are most valuable and focus on those areas.7 Economic equity would make PMC’s prohibitively expensive because of the massive risks involved with combat situations, but economic freedom allows PMC’s to achieve the invisible hand by acting in their own interests to take advantage of these opportunities. All of these factors demonstrate how freedom benefits national security where equity cannot.

# Contention 2: Economic Freedom Improves Economic Stability.

Having a strong, growing, and secure economy is a major prerequisite to having national security. Sheila Ronis, President of the Management Consultant Firm the University Group8, notes, “We know from history, though, that when nations' economies are at risk of failure, the way Japan's and Germany's were before World War II, their penchant for going to war is high.”9 Even if weak economics don’t lead to war, they can lead to an inability to compete in the global market, making it easier for enemies to sabotage the state, and making both the state and organizations susceptible to theft, harm, or destruction. When we value equity in the realm of economics, we harm businesses ability to compete in the global market, thus harming the nation’s economy and its security. Numerous business models we see every day rely on this freedom. Consider the idea of a sale at your local grocers. In an equity based economy, such a thing would be impossible, since such a price is unfair to the proportional labour and materials that went into the product, but it can be used to benefit the company’s interests, through the invisible hand principle, to draw in new customers, encourage sales of other products, or simply get rid of unwanted stock.10 The entire idea of being competitive in the market is inherently opposed to equity, because businesses need to be able to change prices as needed in response to other companies, a process that equity would require actually decreasing the physical value of the product before lowering the price. This method, while more “fair” is economically harmful, and that economic harm translates into significant national security risk, again demonstrating why freedom ought to be valued above equity.

# Conclusion:

When examining freedom and equity in the realm of economics, it is clear that only freedom can promote our national security, by increasing innovation in risky areas, making our nation more efficient, and protecting useful business processes. The Invisible hand principle clearly benefits national security, and this principle requires Patrick Henry’s “perfect freedom” for the health of our commerce and our nation.

Negative Brief

# Value:

I want you to consider for a second how national security relates to freedom and equity. Over all security is the foundation of any economic and governmental decisions in our nation. But the goal of a value is to weigh which side of the resolution ought to be preferred. Our biggest security threats in modern America include: cyber-attacks, terrorism, and a lack of education. Will freedom or equity help any of these situations? Your argument should be that security is a wonderful ideal, but it is not useful in context of the round.

# Contention 1:

This does not address the conflict between freedom and equity. Sure, maybe if we all had mercenaries the world would be safer, but how does that relate to equity, “The quality and state of being impartial.”?

# Contention 2:

There are many examples that can disprove the primes that freedom leads to stability. For example George Soros, known as “The man who broke the Bank of England.” He is a hedge fund artist, who bet against the pound in 1992 and made over a billion dollars off of the event. His freedom to do what he wanted almost destabilized the United Kingdom.

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“The Price of Happiness”

Affirmative Case: Quality of Life

Travis Herche

As the affirmative, I’m proud to endorse the belief that in the realm of economics, freedom ought to be valued over equity.

I’m going to prove that using a series of points, starting with a

# Resolutional Analysis: Equity is Net Worth

The word equity is sometimes used as a synonym for “fairness.” Obviously, that’s not what the resolution is talking about because you never have to choose between them. Everyone is entitled to freedom; if some people don’t have it, that’s unfair.

Notice however that the resolution is talking about equity *in the realm of economics*. That means we use it in another sense. When economists use the word equity, they’re talking about the total worth of an economic unit, minus its liabilities.

American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines equity as: “The residual value of a business or property beyond any mortgage thereon and liability therein.”[[30]](#footnote-30) Or, in other words: net worth.

Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary uses a similar definition: “the money value of a property or of an interest in a property in excess of claims or liens against it”[[31]](#footnote-31) Which, again, is a fancy way of saying: net worth.

So the resolution asks us: in the realm of economics, should we maximize net worth, or freedom? Those two things do come into conflict, so we need a tool to decide between them.

# Value: Quality of Life

Quality of Life is operationally defined as: “The personal satisfaction and well-being arising from health, happiness, achievement, and connection.” Quality of Life is the best way to decide between freedom and equity, as shown in my

## Value Link: Topic Context

Freedom exists to empower you to make the best possible decisions. When you’re not limited by anything but yourself, the hope is that you can maximize your quality of life. Meanwhile, equity exists as a means of building wealth – which in turn is useful only as a way to promote Quality of Life. So both sides of the resolution are all about Quality of Life. That makes it the best way to make a decision.

Now let’s take a deeper look at each side of the resolution.

# Contention 1: Freedom Promotes Quality of Life

Freedom means that your life decisions are made by you, not other people. It means you have the power to pursue your best possible self. And that directly leads to Quality of Life. The evidence that freedom is a key ingredient in quality of life all over the world is compelling.

The Fraser Institute releases an annual report called “Economic Freedom of the World.” It analyzes a host of factors, from democracy to divorce rates in each society. It presents a massive amount of data for each country, and its conclusions are pretty impressive. The executive report reads: “Nations that are economically free out-perform non-free nations in indicators of well-being.” After 230 pages of charts and analysis, the conclusion to chapter 4 of the report reads: “Economic freedom, therefore, not only makes people richer, but it also makes them happier.”[[32]](#footnote-32)

# Contention 2: Equity does not Promote Quality of Life

Contrary to the gospel of materialism, happiness cannot be bought. Sure, money does have some impact on Quality of Life, especially for those who are escaping poverty. But net worth is simply an unimportant factor in having a happy, healthy, meaningful life. You can do that whether you’re worth twenty-five hundred or twenty-five million dollars.

Robert Kenny is a developmental psychologist and senior advisor at the Center on Wealth and Philanthropy at Boston College. He conducted a study on very wealthy households to see what the relationship was between money and happiness. In an interview with the American Psychological Association, he said:

“This research shows the rest of the world, who often think that if they just ~~made one more bonus or sold one more item or~~ got one more promotion, then their world ~~and their family's world~~ would be so much better, that this isn't necessarily true. There's another whole level of concerns ~~that parents are going to have about their kids~~. One of those concerns is ~~this feeling of~~ isolation. That's actually a No. 1 concern for families with a high net worth — this sense of isolation — and the higher the wealth, the worse it gets. We know this is a very powerful feeling when it comes to one's overall sense of well-being, and these people feel very isolated ~~because they have what most of the world thinks they want. But~~ just because you have money doesn't mean you're not going to have a bad day every once in a while. But what you often lose when you have all this money is the friendships that support you through the difficult times.”[[33]](#footnote-33)

That doesn’t mean that you can’t be happy when you’re rich, or that being poor makes you happier. What it means is that increasing your equity doesn’t really have much to do with quality of life. You’re not getting rid of your problems, you’re swapping them out for new ones. As Robert Kenny said: “~~The takeaway from all of this is that there seemed to be a trend that said~~ you can't buy your way out of the human condition.”

I’d like to wrap up this speech with one more point.

# Case Study: Retirement Plans

Many retirement plans are built around prioritizing equity over freedom – and people buy into them because they incorrectly believe that the money being offered will make them happy. For example, the 401(k) is one of the most popular retirement plans in America. It gives you very limited investment options and strictly controls when and how much you can withdraw. Meaning it’s your equity, but you don’t have the freedom to decide what to do with it. Signing onto a 401(k) means you’re at the mercy of the company, and no matter how bad it gets, you’re not free to leave.

There are other options like Individual Retirement Accounts. While they may not offer the same equity as the constricting options, the freedom they offer leads to a better quality of life in the long run.

Both freedom and equity offer you happiness. But the science shows that only one can deliver on its promises. I hope you’ll pick freedom. Thank you.

Affirmative Notes

This case is pre-value-centric, meaning you need to win the resolutional analysis to win the round. If your opponent argues against it, push the “in the realm of economics” phrase. Point out that your opponent is trying to interpret the resolution as if that phrase didn’t even exist, and they’re defining themselves out of the round.

Avoid value debate. If your opponent runs a remotely reasonable counter-value, accept it and route your impacts through it.

If you’d like to run a fancy introduction, go for it! But remember that most introductions are a waste of time. Only use it if you’re sure that it’s helping you build persuasive momentum. I favored jumping right in and saving some time to really explain the arguments.

The case study is an application that covers the entire case, as opposed to a traditional application that is used as a sub-point to a specific argument. The case study proves that quality of life is a good way to measure the round, that freedom promotes quality of life, and that equity does not.

With your contentions, you have statistics, studies, and figures backing you up. Do your own research; look at the reports, even bring them with you to the round. Characterize your opponent as the one doing battle with science. Do what you can to make the studies easy to understand; measuring quality of life is no simple feat.

Negative Notes

You probably need to disagree with the resolutional analysis. Have your own definitions ready and run reasons to prefer that acknowledge the phrase in the *realm of economics*.

Remember, it’s not your job to show a conflict in the resolution. You may even have a resolutional objection case arguing that there is no conflict, so the resolution can’t be true. That’s one of the strongest negative cases out there this year from a logical standpoint.

Having refuted the resolutional analysis, be careful not to implicitly validate the rest of the case. You should be able to run a group response of “No Impact” to all of it – because none of it is talking about what the resolution *really* means. So your negative constructive should cover the resolutional analysis, then hang out on your case, then spend no more than thirty seconds on the affirmative contentions.

Part III: Negative Cases

“Liberty and Justice for All”

Negative Case: Justice

by Rachel Moss

A popular American Idiom says, “Fire is a good servant but a terrible master.” This resonates so well with us because we know that when we take a good thing, and make it the ultimate end goal, bad things happen. That principle stands true for this resolution. Freedom is an excellent tool, and essential for any societal and economic system. However, when we hold freedom as paramount, society and our economy will suffer greatly. Thus, I am convinced that, *in the realm of economics, equity ought to be valued above freedom.*

To ensure that we’re all talking about the same thing, let’s begin with

# Definitions

Merriam-Webster defines Equity as:

“Fairness or justice in the way people are treated, justice according to natural law or right; specifically: freedom from bias or favoritism.”

A more economically minded definition is:

A [distribution](http://www.investorwords.com/1495/distribution.html) of opportunities, [assets](http://www.investorwords.com/273/asset.html), [resources](http://www.investorwords.com/4217/resource.html), and tax [liability](http://www.investorwords.com/2792/liability.html) among the people in a nation or [society](http://www.investorwords.com/11137/society.html) that is considered [fair](http://www.investorwords.com/9658/fair.html) and just.

(Adapted from InvestorWords.com and New Oxford American Dictionary)

# Value

While the affirmative value is interesting, I believe the best way to debate this issue is by measuring our arguments against a standard that is equally idealistic and pragmatic. Due to the immense complexity and impact of economics, it is important to understand what ideologies both sides of this resolution stem from, and what realities they create. With such a comprehensive debate, my opponent’s value is not adequate to the task.

Instead, I recommend the value of **justice**. Now to properly understand the full meaning of justice, we must see it as a two-part process- referred to as “rectifying” and “primary” justice. “Rectifying justice,” means punishing wrongdoers and restoring their victims. “Primary Justice” is conduct that, if followed, would make rectifying justice unnecessary, because no one would do wrong to his fellow man. In the words of modern thinker and author Timothy Keller, “Doing justice means giving people their due. On the one hand that means restraining and punishing wrongdoers. On the other hand it means giving people what we owe them as beings in the image of God.”[[34]](#footnote-34)

Equity holds up to this standard by refusing to give unjust preferential treatment to anyone. Unbridled freedom, however, allows the rules to be written and shaped to make the poor poorer and the rich richer. We can see this in two observations:

# Contention 1: How we lost the American Dream

James Truslow Adams wrote in 1931 that the American dream is "that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement…”[[35]](#footnote-35) However, we’ve long lost sight of this dream.

Merle Travis grew up in a Kentucky town in the 1920’s.[[36]](#footnote-36) Even though his father worked excruciating hours at the town coal mine, Travis and his family still lived in deep poverty. His brother wrote him a letter describing the situation: “You load sixteen tons and what do you get?  Another day older and deeper in debt.”[[37]](#footnote-37) This inspired Travis to write the famous American ballad “16 Tons.” He explains, “…The chorus is from a saying my Dad often used.  He never saw real money. He was constantly in debt to the coal company. When shopping was needed, Dad would go to a [coal company] window and draw little brass tokens against his account.  They could only be spent at the company store. His humorous expression was, ‘I can’t afford to die.  I owe my soul to the company store.’”

Fast forward nearly a century and the number of families and individuals like this who face crushing economic situations has only increased. While this in and of itself is disheartening, what makes it intolerable is that the more we lose sight of economic equity, the more we lose justice, both rectifying and primary, for the average American. Joseph Stiglitz wrote on June 27th,

“Our divisions are deep. Economic and geographic segregation have immunized those at the top from the problems of those down below… Almost a quarter of American children younger than 5 [are] living in poverty… Where justice is concerned, there is also a yawning divide. In the eyes of the rest of the world and a significant part of its own population, mass incarceration has come to define America—a country, it bears repeating, with about 5 percent of the world’s population but around a fourth of the world’s prisoners…

Justice has become a commodity, affordable only to a few. While Wall Street executives used their high-retainer lawyers to ensure that their ranks were not held accountable for the misdeeds that the crisis in 2008 so graphically revealed, the banks abused our legal system to foreclose on mortgages and evict people, some of whom did not even owe money…”[[38]](#footnote-38)

The yawning divide between the rich and the poor is ever growing and has drastic impacts on Justice. “On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City” is a book explaining life in inner city Philadelphia. A radio interview explains: “Sociologist Alice Goffman has gone there.  To an urban economy and culture so shadowed by police and incarceration that it lives ‘on the run.’  To a system that finds millions living as fugitives in their own neighborhoods.”[[39]](#footnote-39) During the interview, Goffman highlights a story from her book where a boy was chased by his teacher across the schoolyard. The teacher pulled his hamstring. The eleven-year-old boy was then charged with assault and sent to juvenile detention for three years. An incident like this would never occur in the schools most middle to upper class white American children attend. Yet due to the enormous economic inequity, certain portions of our society are so heavily policed and criminalized that for them, the American dream has become a wild fantasy.

# Contention 2: How we can reclaim the American Dream

Joseph Stiglitz continues from the previous article, “The problem of inequality is not so much a matter of technical economics. It’s really a problem of practical politics… We are not embracing a politics of envy if we reverse a politics of greed. Inequality is not just about the top marginal tax rate but also about our children’s access to food and the right to justice for all… It is not too late to restore our position in the world and recapture our sense of who we are as a nation. Widening and deepening inequality is not driven by immutable economic laws, but by laws we have written ourselves.”5

While nothing sounds more American than voting freedom as highest, placing freedom above equity denies justice and dampens our economy. Denmark and Japan are two countries with drastically different politics, legal systems, and cultures. But something they both have in common is that they have far more equity than the United States. Richard Wilkinson reported that they also have drastically lower proportional rates of school dropouts, homicides, criminal violence, infant mortality, population percentage in prisons, teenage pregnancy, obesity, and mental illness. “There are endless problems with social gradients that are worse in more unequal countries -- not just a little bit worse, but anything from twice as common to 10 times as common. Think of the expense, the human cost of that.”[[40]](#footnote-40)

# Conclusion

In short, it’s time that we take inequity seriously. For in our pursuit of unbridled economic freedom, we’ve lost both our freedoms and a healthy, just society. It’s time that we bridle our thirst for freedom and remember that it is our tool, not our master. When we regain the goal of equity for the sake of justice, then we have a chance to reclaim the American dream and hold true to our promise of “liberty and justice for all.”[[41]](#footnote-41)

Negative Brief: Justice

There are five key elements to attack in this case:

1. It is lengthy and complex. This means that your opponent will have difficulty finding to explain his/her own stance while adequately addressing your Affirmative case. Don’t abandon your case if he leaves it unaddressed, it is still your biggest asset. Keeping your arguments simple will also exploit the complex nature of the connection of economic equity, freedom, and justice
2. It is heavy on the applications. This means that it is light on the philosophy. Don’t get me wrong, it’s in there but if you’re opponent hasn’t fleshed out and done the research to understand the philosophical underpinnings, this can provide a great “soft spot” for you to attack
3. Causality. There is overwhelming correlation between equity and social issue, however it is virtually impossible to prove causality. Press this issue by emphasizing the direct correlation of freedom and your value while asking the Negative to prove or explain why inequity *causes*injustice.
4. It’s reliance on the American dream. This takes assumes that the judge values and believes in the American dream. However, more and more people doubt the merits of it and increasingly view it as a flawed and materialistic measure of success. Exploit this, especially in cross-examination.

“Freedom Needs a Kennel”

Negative Case: Social Good

by Travis Herche

# Introduction

This is a tricky topic to debate because the word “freedom” is a buzzword in American culture. It’s easy to lump it in with bald eagles and grandma’s apple pie.

Now, I love my country. I am proud to take what I believe is the most American position possible: that everyone is created equal and everyone deserves the same chance at a great life. That requires that we understand freedom as more than just a buzzword.

To do that, I offer the:

# Value: Social Good

Social good is operationally defined as: “The elements of well-being which are experienced by all members of a community, nation, or other group.” Let me give you a few examples. You don’t have to write these down; these are just so we understand each other.

Everybody needs to breathe to stay alive. That makes air a social good because it is experienced by all members of the group.

Some people like collecting Russian nesting dolls. While they may be good for those people, Russian nesting dolls are not a social good because most people in a society do not experience them.

So I’m asking you to evaluate the round based on what best promotes social good: economic freedom or economic equity. Here’s why social good is the best way to measure the round:

# Reason to Prefer 1: Topic Context

The topics of freedom and equity are very broad. We need a broad value that can tackle this resolution – one that is robust enough to allow you to evaluate every relevant point. Social good can do that.

# Reason to Prefer 2: Foundational

There are plenty of personal goods – like having a fulfilling career, or resting on a comfortable couch – that exist outside of social good. But here’s the thing: without a strong foundation of social good, we can’t hope to have any of those personal things. We need food, water, air, clothing, shelter, essential medical care, and so on. If we don’t have those things, then the more personal goods like romantic success or promotion at work are impossible. That makes social good the top priority in the context of this resolution.

Now let’s dig into the two contentions. Each will have a few sub-points.

# Contention 1: Freedom harms Social Good

Freedom allows you to do whatever you want without restraint from government, family, friends, or strangers. Of course, that doesn’t allow you to inflict direct harm on others – that would violate their freedom. But outside that condition, freedom means you’re unleashed to do anything. Now, I’ll show you why that’s a bad idea.

No one in the room is in favor of tyranny or oppression. People shouldn’t be enslaved, or imprisoned, or even micromanaged. However, overvaluing freedom has two serious consequences.

# Sub-point A: Instability

Freedom means chaos in everything from the banking system to the availability of labor. A completely free market – meaning one in which the government only stops people from directly injuring each other – is a roller coaster of booms and busts.

It’s easy to point to the boom period of a free economy and say “This proves that freedom is the best route.” But if you take a longer view, you see the busts that come afterward – like the recessions in 1991 and 2007. Slower, steadier growth is a better road. That means restricting freedom a little in favor of equity.

# Application: Bitcoin

Bitcoin is a completely free virtual currency. It is celebrated by many as an escape from government regulation in currency.

Sabari Selvan reported in E-Hacking News December 2013 that:

“Bitcoins are highly Unstable, the Price keeps going up to $1100 and then it crashes back one nite [sic] to $700 and again climbs to $1100, then again drops with negative news.”[[42]](#footnote-42)

That’s the result of economic freedom: chaotic rises and falls. That’s not an environment you want to be making a living in.

# Sub-point B: Misbehavior

Remember, freedom only prevents direct harm. It doesn’t stop you from being mean to your sister, or forgetting to vote, or dropping out of college. It doesn’t stop you from using hard drugs in your own home, or enjoying a little prostitution or gambling. As long as everyone agrees to it and your actions don’t cause immediate injury to others, you are free to do it.

When you unleash freedom into the economy, people are free to treat each other terribly. They can build monopolies that drive everyone else out of the market, then charge three times a fair price. They can put unspeakable things in their food to make it cheaper, tastier, and more addictive. They can pay workers poverty wages and fire them if they protest. They can abuse the stock market to rip off entire societies.

# Application: Black Wednesday

One of the richest and most notorious investors in modern history is George Soros, also known as “The man who broke the Bank of England.” Soros used his tremendous capital to buy huge amounts of the British pound sterling. Then he abruptly sold billions of dollars’ worth overnight – something he was fully within his rights to do. The value of the sterling plummeted. The UK was forced to take drastic measures to avert disaster, including raising the interest rate by 5% and pulling out of the European Monetary System. By 7:30 PM, George Soros had made more than a billion dollars.*[[43]](#footnote-43)* Black Wednesday devastated the financial wellbeing of an entire country just to make one man rich. That’s the product of freedom unleashed.

Let me offer you a better alternative.

# Contention 2: Equity builds Social Good

This debate round is only 45 minutes long. Even if that entire time were devoted to exploring the benefits of economic equity, we would still only be touching the surface.

For a summary, I quote the Equality Trust, a social advocacy group that has analyzed the effects of economic inequity across dozens of different levels.[[44]](#footnote-44) Equality Trust says: “People in more equal societies live longer, have better mental health and have better chances for a good education regardless of their background. Community life is stronger where the income gap is narrower, children do better at school and they are less likely to become teenage parents. When inequality is reduced people trust each other more, there is less violence and rates of *imprisonment are lower.”[[45]](#footnote-45)*

# Conclusion

These are social goods – things that impact every single member of a society. And so the choice we have to make in this round is clear. The resolution leads to a world in which one unscrupulous billionaire can crush the dreams of millions. On the other hand, voting negative builds a society in which all can prosper – including the rich. I hope you’ll vote for that one. Thank you.

Negative Addendum: Social Good

The intro is designed to pull out a “monster” – a potential element of hostile judge bias – and kill it before the speech develops. Hopefully, it nerfs the 1 affirmative rebuttal rhetoric a little too by making it harder to just blindly wax eloquent about freedom.

Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary defines “freedom” as: “the absence of necessity, coercion, or constraint in choice or action”[[46]](#footnote-46)

Run that after the introduction if the affirmative forces you to by running some odd definition.

Fun fact: in the Heritage Foundation’s Index of Economic Freedom, USA doesn’t even make the top 10 list.[[47]](#footnote-47) It comes in 12th, behind Estonia.

The value is not an important part of this case. Don’t get too tangled up in the value debate; focus on your contentions. If the affirmative runs a broad value that doesn’t threaten you, accept it.

The first paragraph of Contention 1 pulls the rug out from the expected 1 affirmative rebuttal response: that freedom is self-limiting and doesn’t allow any sort of harm. You’re saying that first, and you’re saying it more meaningfully: that freedom doesn’t just prevent all bad stuff. We have another word for a system that tries to prevent all bad behavior. It’s called tyranny.

Depending on how the affirmative case is built, you should aggressively cross-apply either Contention 1-A (if the case is economically focused) or 1-B (if it isn’t). There are literally millions of applications that would work great for Contention 1-B. If you go with Black Wednesday, do your own research on it and make sure you’re familiar enough that you could join a conversation about it around the dinner table. You need to be able to answer cross-ex questions.

Affirmative Brief: Social Good

If your value is really important to your case, find a way to fit it into a framework with social good. Don’t fight it head on – at best, the value debate will wash, which is exactly what the negative wants.

Don’t let the negative steal the persuasive power of ‘murica. You’re the guy fighting for freedom. Be proud of that!

Push the negative to offer alternatives to the both side’s applications. How would he stabilize bitcoin, or stop massive short-selling of currency? If he doesn’t have good answers to those questions, he doesn’t truly have a position. The same goes for his responses to your applications.

This case is almost immune to most affirmative definition defenses. Don’t use them here.

“An Equal Slice”

Negative Case: Social Justice

By Ciera Horton

# Introduction:

The International Monetary Fund organization launched a fiscal study intended to show the effects of globalization on economic equity. Their question was, “Should equity be a goal of economic policy?” Should governments overcome obstacles of financial barriers in order to provide equal opportunities and reduce poverty? Their answer was yes. They noted in the conclusion of their ’98 report, “Governments should sometimes intervene to ensure not only that the size of the pie increases, but that everyone gets a fair share.” [[48]](#footnote-48)

Because I agree that one of the goals of economic policy should be to provide fair opportunities and reduce inequalities, I stand resolved: In the realm of economics, freedom ought not to be valued above equity.

## Definitions:

**Equity:** “The quality of being fair and impartial.” (New Oxford American Dictionary)

**Freedom:** “The power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.” (New Oxford American Dictionary)

**Economics:** “The branch of knowledge concerned with the production, consumption, and transfer of wealth.” (New Oxford American Dictionary)

# Value: Social Justice

Equity comes from the philosophical principle of social justice, also known as distributive justice. Social justice refers to ensuring that individuals have the ability to realize and reach their potential in society. It includes forms of human development with relevant policies and institutions that commonly include education, healthcare, labor rights, progressive taxation and social security. When we value equity above unchecked freedom in the realm of economics, we better achieve social justice.

# Criterion: Egalitarianism

Egalitarianism relates to “the principle that all people are equal and deserve equal rights and opportunities.” (New Oxford American Dictionary) It maintains that we are all fundamentally equal in worth and social status. And because we are equal, we deserve similar economic opportunities. Egalitarianism is the underlying philosophical principle behind why we should value equity. It is based on the moral essential that all people are created equal and, therefore, should be protected from discrimination and should be granted similar opportunities to better their economic situations.

# Contention 1: Equity Leads to Social Justice

As a principle, equity is both intrinsically and extrinsically valuable. It’s intrinsic because equity and fairness is important in and of itself. It’s extrinsic because, by valuing equity through egalitarianism, we achieve social justice, institutions and protections in the government that take care of citizens impartially. Kate Bird, a researcher with the Overseas Development Institute, argues that social justice is important because “People share a common human dignity, and as such should be treated as equals, with equal concern and respect. This matters for policy because citizens can hold the state responsible for ensuring that all citizens are treated as equals and for influencing how things are distributed.”[[49]](#footnote-49) By valuing equity, we are affirming to take care of those without a voice, those who are hindered by widening gaps in between the wages of workers and bosses in industrial countries. Egalitarianism, as a philosophy that values human dignity, provides equality of opportunity through progressive taxation (vertical equity), free health care and reduced income inequality.

# Contention 2: Social Justice Creates a Healthier Economy

Income inequality varies greatly from place to place. Unfortunately, wage inequality has been increasing in many countries and where there is greater inequity there is a greater poverty. The results from policies that promote equity above freedom are astounding. Studies have shown that there are fewer cases of life-crippling poverty, less discrimination based on gender, race or ethnicity and more fair treatment in the labor market. Policies that support equity also reduce political conflict, since there is statistically less conflict when income distribution is seen to be equitable.

The study from International Monetary Fund quoted at the beginning of this case, went on to show the different ways that policymaking in favor of economic equity can influence the economy: “Policies that promote equity can help, directly and indirectly, to reduce poverty…fewer individuals fall below the poverty line. Equity-enhancing policies, particularly such investment in human capital as education, can, in the long run, boost economic growth, which, in turn, has been shown to alleviate poverty.”

# Conclusion:

Because equity values human dignity through its underlying philosophical foundation of egalitarianism, the Negative side supports the value of social justice. By valuing equity and social justice, we are able to work towards a stable economy that seeks to be fair, impartial and provide equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of their social situation. We should increase the size of the pie and make sure everyone gets an equal slice.

Affirmative Brief

While this case supports equity and show problems with freedom, it has one major flaw: the case does not set up clash.

# Value:

Social justice can be achieved by either side of the resolution. Link your affirmative applications to the value to prove: 1. It is not unique to the negative side of the resolution 2. Equity does not always achieve.

# Criterion:

Egalitarianism and equity, as defined in this case, are essentially the same idea, so the criterion does not differentiate from the negative side for the resolution.

# Contention 1:

Hit on the idea of “fairness”. Why is fairness good? What does fairness mean?

# Contention 2:

This contention has an underlying assumption that freedom is within the economy and equity makes the economy better. If you look at countries where the underlying framework of the economy is equity you find that freedom cannot flourish.

“The Case for Sustainability”

Negative Case: Economic Sustainability

By Joseph Maroney

# Introduction:

The Secretary General for the United Nations once stated, “[Sustainable development is the pathway to the future we want for all. It offers a framework to generate economic growth, achieve social justice, exercise environmental stewardship and strengthen governance.](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/b/bankimoon643741.html)”[[50]](#footnote-50) In assessing whether or not freedom or equity should be valued higher, we should take into account an important principle: its value is determined by its sustainability. Unless freedom or equity is proven to bring about positive impacts in our future, in a manner that is sustainable, our value of freedom or equity would be pointless. It is proven that equity is the fundamental factor of sustainability. It is for this reason I firmly stand against the resolution that “In the realm of economics, freedom ought to be valued above security.”

## Definitions

In order to establish an understanding about the round, a few terms are needed to be clarified:

**Economics**: “A social science that studies how individuals, governments, firms and nations make choices on allocating scarce resources to satisfy their unlimited wants.”[[51]](#footnote-51) (Investopedia)

**Freedom**: “The power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.”[[52]](#footnote-52) (Oxford Dictionary)

**Equity**: “The quality of being just, impartial, and fair.”[[53]](#footnote-53) (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language)

In debating this resolution, we are looking at the arena where freedom and equity come into conflict. We are taking freedom, which can be simply put as “the ability to do,” and weighing it against equity, which is the standard of treating everyone fairly.

## Resolutional Analysis: Scope of Conflict

By stating “In the realm of economics,” the resolution inherently narrows our scope of debate to matters of economics, whether that would be through regulation or business operations. However, the realm of economics can cover an exhaustive range of topics. To provide clash, we must be brought back to the basics. In any economic textbook, you will find that economics boils down to the allocation of limited resources. These resources are land, labor, and capital. Therefore, in centralizing our arguments within this debate, we must maintain the context of basic economics.

This is only said to clarify the nature of our clash. Freedom and equity do not always come into conflict, and most of the time they complement each other. Therefore, we are not arguing for one in the exclusion of the other. This debate isolates the situation where both elements come into direct conflict, and we are to assess whether we would have freedom at the cost of equity, or equity at the cost of freedom.

# Value / Weighing Mechanism: Economic Sustainability

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines sustainability as “Capable of being continued with minimal long-term effect on the environment.”[[54]](#footnote-54) Since we are debating within the realm of economics, we are arguing for which side best upholds the economic state. Economic sustainability is the most effective weighing mechanism for two primary reasons. First, it serves as a way to weigh argumentation by assessing the long-term effects. This must be proven by historical precedence, logic, and future impacts, rather than anecdotal evidence. Second, it highlights the side that not only makes sense in the short term, but can ensure positive impacts in the future.

Whatever side provides the groundwork that can ensure economic sustainability, will achieve the goal for this round.

# Contention 1: Freedom Self-Destructs

When freedom and equity come into conflict, and freedom is upheld at the cost of being fair and unbiased, freedom will work against itself and end up violating freedom for others. One only has to look at discrimination to find this is true. Discrimination[[55]](#footnote-55) in both hiring employees and providing services to customers prioritizes the freedom of the business owner over maintaining equal treatment to the whole audience. In turn, this violates the freedom of potential employees to pursue a job that they were qualified for, but could not obtain because of a bias against them. This does not mean that valuing equity first supports movements such as Affirmative Action. Equity does not mean giving everyone the same thing, but rather equity provides the standard and obligation to treat everyone with the same set of rules, without bias.

# Contention 2: Equity Provides a Sustainable Framework

Roland Watson, in *Principles of Democracy*, stated that the case was simple. Referencing the Declaration of Independence, equity came first. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal…” Even though we see America as valuing freedom as paramount, the fundamental element that ensured the protection and accessibility of that freedom for all, was in holding equity first. Looking at the example of law,[[56]](#footnote-56) predominantly in western societies, the protection for private property, intellectual property, land, and ability to be free, originated in valuing equity over freedom when they come into conflict. Prioritizing equity does not allow freedom of one to intrude the rights of others. And it is only through equity that freedom can exist with positive consequences. Equity established first, provides the foundation from which freedom is able to flourish.

# Conclusion:

Therefore, in looking at what ought to prioritized we have a couple factors to consider. Freedom is necessary, but when freedom and equity come into conflict, equity provides sustainability when it is valued higher. Freedom without restrain will end in destruction, and equity provides the context and framework where we freedom can exist and result in positive ends that are sustainable for generations in the future.

Rebuttal Arguments

# Definition of Freedom

This negative structure defines freedom as “the ability to do.” However, if freedom is defined as “Negative Freedom,” where it is unrestrained, then this allows the freedom of one to violate another. This has even been pointed out by the negative in examples provided. In order to give justice, and provide the standard for a fair debate, freedom must be defined as “Positive Freedom,” where restrained freedom is inherent. This is stated by Fredrick Bastiat, in *The Law*, where he stated, “…the freedom of every person to make full use of his faculties, so long as he does not harm other persons while doing so?”[[57]](#footnote-57)

This collapses all of the contentions from the negative, because they are all rooted in the view point of freedom being unrestrained, where it is inherent in the definition. Thus, the examples where the negative says that freedom is at fault, is not applicable.

# Contention 2

Equity does not guarantee positive consequences

This contention concludes that equity is the same in all situations. The argument even conceded, in the example of law, that equity only provided for freedom in western civilizations. Equity simply means to treat equally and fairly. The standard in which people are treated can vary by society or group, as the negative even concedes. This means that there are times where equity could be the state that people are treated equally bad. Such as legal systems in Russia, China, North Korea, or the Middle East, where everyone is treated the same, but the standard itself is flawed and harmful. Thus, equity is not the same in all situations and therefore cannot guarantee freedom and sustainability when it is valued over freedom.

“Same Difference”

Negative Case: Interdependent (Kritik)

By Levi Gulliver

# Introduction:

It’s Thanksgiving Day at your house. Someone asks, “Where’s the nutmeg?” Of course, you’re all out. So, you volunteer to go to the grocery store and get some. Your cousin, however, thinks he should go because you’ve been cooking all day. And, ten minutes, you argue about *who* should go before you remember the grocery store is closed today. Your argument was useless because no one *can* go to the store. In the same way, it does not matter whether you want freedom or equity more, they need each other to exist. It is for this reason I stand against the resolution.

## Definitions:

**Freedom:** “The power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint.”(Oxford Dictionary Online) [[58]](#footnote-58)

**Equity:** “The quality of being fair and impartial.” (Oxford Dictionary Online) [[59]](#footnote-59)

**Economics:** “The branch of knowledge concerned with the production, consumption, and transfer of wealth.” (Oxford Dictionary Online) [[60]](#footnote-60)

**Fair:** “In accordance with the rules or standards; legitimate.”(Oxford Dictionary Online) [[61]](#footnote-61)

## Reason to Prefer: Respected source

The Oxford Dictionary Online is in the tradition of the best lexicography in the world, Oxford University. No other dictionary has as much respect, prestige, or credibility.

(Note: Only run these definitions if the Affirmative’s definitions are odd.)

The Affirmative has given you a lot of reasons why, in the realm of economics, freedom ought to be valued above equity, but they presumed freedom *can* be valued above equity. My position is that the resolution *cannot* be true, because freedom *cannot* be valued above equity.

# Thesis: Freedom and Equity are Interdependent.

The word interdependent is not used much, but the concept is. Think of the Gateway Arch in St. Louis. Essentially, the Arch is two supports that rest against each other for strength. If either support were removed the other would fall. Neither support is wholly independent or dependent. They are interdependent. And so are freedom and equity, which I’ll show through two contentions.

# Contention I: Freedom Depends on Equity

For an economy to be truly free, it must be must free for everyone. It must be equitably free. I have two sub-points under this contention.

## Sub-point a: Freedom for All

Everyone is given freedom when they are born. This idea is defended by English politician and political theorist Algernon Sidney. Sidney—who was regarded by Thomas Jefferson and John Adams as a leading philosopher in Early America[[62]](#footnote-62), wrote, “…[man] having nothing, and being nothing but what the creator makes him, must owe all to him, and nothing to anyone from whom he has received nothing. Man therefore must be naturally free…”[[63]](#footnote-63) Sidney’s point is that all men are free. Not some men but all are equitably free to engage in commerce.

## Sub-point B: Equity tempers freedom

Freedom is a strange thing. It means we can do what we want, but never at the expense of someone else’s freedom. This limiting, or tempering, element is equity. Why can’t I punch my brother in the face? Because that would unfairly violate his freedom. In economics, the best example of untampered freedom is monopolies.

### Application: Standard oil

In the late 1800s, John D. Rockefeller amassed a huge oil conglomerate—Standard Oil. By the turn of the century, Standard Oil controlled the vast majority of oil production and sales in the US. In 1911, the Federal Government sued Standard Oil under the Sherman Antitrust Act. The Supreme Court found that Standard Oil was practicing, in the words of the Court, “unfair methods of competition, such as local price-cutting at the points where necessary to suppress competition, [the] espionage of the business of competitors, [and] the operation of bogus independent companies…”[[64]](#footnote-64) Standard Oil exercised their economic freedom well. What Standard Oil abused was the economic freedom of others. They did not value equity along with freedom.

Freedom, freedom for everyone, not just the select few, depends on equity.

# Contention II: Equity Depends on Freedom.

Without freedom, economics cannot be fair. I’ll explain in two sub-points.

## Sub-point A: Freedom or control

Every economy is ruled by freedom, control, or some mixture of the two. If an economy is not free, it has to be controlled by someone, usually some kind of government. So, we have, without freedom, a controlled economy trying to instill fairness in the people.

## Sub-point B: Control erodes equity

Every major attempt to redistribute wealth in history has failed. Why? People are fallen. They cannot resist the temptation control gives them to abuse equity by taking more for themselves; thus, the people who try to uphold equity cannot.

### Application: Animal Farm

In George Orwell’s allegory of the Russian Revolution, *Animal Farm*, the animals’ economy is one of control. The pigs, the leaders of the farm, claim the economy is equitable. As time passes, it becomes clear that the pigs are taking more for themselves than everyone else. The pigs then change the law “All animals are equal,” to “Some animals are more equal than others.” Like the pigs, no matter how well-intentioned, all economic controllers will eventually fail to be fair. Equity cannot thrive without freedom. They won’t uphold equity. Only freedom can.

# Conclusion: Freedom cannot be Valued above Equity

The resolution is not true, because freedom and equity are interdependent. Since freedom and equity can’t be valued separately, freedom cannot be valued above equity. It’s not just that the resolution is false, but that it can’t possibly be true. Whether you or your cousin gets the nutmeg is irrelevant, the grocery store is closed on Thanksgiving Day. Thank You.

Affirmative Brief

The case essentially ignores your affirmative constructive by moving the debate on to different grounds. After the negative constructive, the judge will be thinking “Is it possible to value freedom above equity?”

As the Affirmative, you have two options: kritik arguments or show freedom can be valued above equity. Either approach is viable.

If you run kritiks, avoid arguments about unfairness to you. Instead, try responses like Undebatable or Framer’s Intent. Before you run any kritik, however, make sure you understand what a kritik: an argument that does not deal with whether your opponent is right, only with whether he should be debating that point or in that way.

The other approach is to draw distinctions and distances between freedom and equity. The two concepts are not usually thought of as related like the negative thinks. If the negative objects to your definition(s), fight for them. Create in the judge’s mind a bifurcation of the two ideas. You don’t need to prove your value and contentions anymore, because the negative has not addressed them. If you can beat the negative and move the debate back onto your case, you’re golden.

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