

Judges Ballots 2012

Georgetown (Andrew Arshat & Andrew Markoff) vs. Northwestern University (Ryan Beiermeister & Layne Krishon) -3-2
Neg Georgetown

Round: the Finals 2012— Ryan Galloway - Samford

A great debate that is one of the closest I've judged in the final round of the NDT. I'll start with the decision, make a few comments about what made the debate great, and wrap it up with a few thoughts about the debaters.

I voted **Negative** for **Georgetown**.

I think it is better to describe the world as complex than linear. I think it is both more accurate and less likely to cause lash-outs that lead to war, we'd have a model that could better explain the scenarios of the AFF. While I think that historical predictions about the "Arab Spring" may have been accurate, I don't think scenario planning about economics or warfare with a brink necessarily is. If the AFF had convinced me that their scenarios engaged in such complexity, I'd have been more willing to vote AFF. I think the perm gets co-opted, as I'll explain in a bit. I only gave the NEG the war scenario, because the "terrorism, AIDS, and Russia" arguments aren't highlighted in the Negative evidence. I also don't think the NEG persuasively extends the value to life claim in the **Puente evidence**.

One thing about this debate was that I generally thought Northwestern's evidence was better and better highlighted, but Georgetown did a slightly better job explaining the warrants for their arguments. That kind of a divide is usually a recipe for 3-2's and 4-3's.

In the 2ar, Ryan goes for...

Environment scenario: The environment scenario is predicated upon economic internal links. The AFF doesn't explain this scenario, but it's based on demand for cocaine in Western Europe, which seems based on economic supply and demand models. Environment scenario of predictions based upon economics and how those rational expectations break down if some agents lack the computing power, this is the **Arthur evidence** from the Negative. The **AFF's Cochrane evidence** isn't really explained by the 2ar. It is good evidence that says economics frequently predict forecasts correctly, but the Arthur evidence and 2nr explanation is how actors respond to those models in an unpredictable manner.

Nabucco pipeline scenario: The 2ar spends a great deal of time explaining the internal link chain to the Nabucco pipeline scenario. I don't think this scenario avoids the kind of flawed logic that G'town indicts with the Kritik. The AFF explains that EU economic diversification is part of the logic of the Nabucco pipeline. The war scenario seems equally indicted by the linear chain of decision-making indictments.

The NEG links: it seems the neg is describing a way of thinking that leads to lash-outs—i.e. simplistic decision-making models lead to lash-out and not saying that one chain of events causes another chain of events. More development of this argument earlier in the debate would have helped Northwestern.

1% risk sufficient: This was close for me, and was well-explained by the AFF. I voted that the K turns decision-making though—we are better able to analyze and assess risks in a world where we embrace complexity, because that's actually how the world works. Singular events don't trigger other singular events, instead a multiplicity of causes lead to a multiplicity of results. Perhaps some empirical work by Northwestern on how singular events triggered other singular events in the context of their scenarios would have been helpful here.

Cede the political:

I think the AFF wins the link but not the impact. If we take less actions due to not engaging in linear reasoning, we are less likely to go to war and less likely to engage in the decision-making that led to the Iraq war. The NEG convinces me that singular chains of logic cause policy-makers to take lash-out type actions. Specifying what kinds of actions we need to take that we are not taking now to solve an individual scenario that is insulated from the K would be helpful

for the AFF.

Cult of personality/Fitzsimmons:

This is generally an argument I'm a big fan of, but I think the AFF needed to connect the dots for me more on why using a complex decision making model was the same as the uncertainty indicted by Fitzsimmons. Just because something is complex doesn't mean it's uncertain, or at least NU needs to connect the dots for me. I think the rationale that we go to war in places like Iraq based on simplistic linear logic is more persuasively explained by the Negative than the cult of personality fill-in is explained by the AFF. The NEG **Kavalski evidence** discusses why the recognition of complexity diminishes the likelihood of recourse to force and leads to diplomacy in situations like Iraq.

Arab spring is accurate:

This card (**de Mesquita**) from Northwestern is excellent and gave me a great deal of pause in the decision. Ultimately, I felt this card talked about the predictions leading to the Arab Spring and not a war or non-economics scenario that the AFF solved for. The AFF's impacts relied upon the linear chain of reasoning. Ryan briefly mentions in the 2ar that "we have an Arab Spring scenario" but didn't flesh out how the warrants for the impact didn't fall prey to the NEG's K.

Aid now non-uniques:

I feel like I need a better explanation of this argument. I don't know if we're giving aid to solve linear conflict scenarios. I think I could reject linearity in decision-making as a rationale for giving aid.

Should do the plan:

This begs the question of why—the 2nr argues that the K impact turns the AFF. If I accept a linear scenario as being correct, this co-opts the process. I think the permutation gets co-opted as per the NEG Rosenau evidence. In other words, if we include both linear decision making and complex decision-making we will prefer the simplicity of linear decision-making and corrupt the move toward complex models of decision-making.

Status quo/other events would corrupt the permutation: I think I could reject the status quo models of linear decision-making and move toward complexity, and that would be a good move to make. It would both explain the world better and stop lash-outs based on a model that one event triggered another or that we were on the "brink" of some kind of catastrophe that we needed to lash-out against.

Judge choice: the 2ar effectively counters the 2nr "every scenario must be true" with judge choice. However, I couldn't come up with a scenario extended by the 2ar that didn't rely upon linear decision-making or economic rationales, thus I couldn't choose one scenario to vote for.

Thus, I felt the extended scenarios by the 2ar fell prey to the logic of the Kritik, and the re-thinking into complex decision-making by the Kritik was a better way to conduct policy-making and avoid gut instinct lash-outs in the future. So I voted Negative.

Big picture: why this debate was so good and close—

1. The debaters were very clear—the explanations and the evidence were easy to follow because the debaters were crystalline clear in their speeches. The nuance necessary to explain arguments was easier because you could really understand the debaters. I think other debaters could learn to "read into their laptops" a little less and speak persuasively a little more. I told Ryan that she was one of the most persuasive debaters I've ever judged. Part of the reason she was top speaker at the NDT is because she could sell arguments, and not just read straight from a lap-top.
2. The debaters had in-depth knowledge of their evidence—the cross-x's in this debate were amazing and focused directly on in-depth knowledge warrants from the evidence. The best debaters do a ton of their own work and understand the cards in the debate. You really got that out of this debate.
3. Flexibility. Northwestern won the semis on a Kritik. Georgetown read T, 2 counterplans, a disad, a kritik, and case turns in the finals. The block collapsed to a process counterplan and a K. The 2nr went for a K. We're a little too embedded in a policy/k divide that

doesn't really exist. Especially on this topic, with a dearth of uniqueness for disads, the ability to go for a Kritik was pivotal for negative flexibility. Georgetown capitalized, and won the final round of the NDT for the first time on a negative Kritik.

Finally, the debaters—

I lied a little bit, because I'm just going to talk about Ryan Beiermeister. The boys will have their day in the sun; they still have time left on the clock. Ryan was a historic debater. Not only was she a Copeland winner, an NDT finalist, and top speaker, but I really admired her ability as a teacher to others in the community. I judged with Ryan twice at the Glenbrooks, and thought she was a great judge and teacher to the debaters in the room. In particular, after a debate where an all female team went for gendered language, Ryan spoke specifically to the two young women about how this was an important issue to her, and she was happy to discuss it with them afterwards. One of the women sought her out, and Ryan did exactly that.

The best give to the community; they don't just go along for the ride. I have seen Ryan Beiermeister do exactly that, and I hope she stays involved so everyone can benefit from her vast knowledge and experience.

Congratulations to both teams on a great season and a fantastic debate.

Dr. Ryan W. Galloway

Associate Professor of Communication Studies

Director of Debate

Samford University

Finals ballot - David Heidt - Michigan

Congratulations to both teams for an exemplary finals debate. It was a very enjoyable debate to judge, and quite difficult to decide – but only because both teams were performing at their best, which made it very close.

I voted affirmative for Northwestern on the permutation. I thought Georgetown was ahead on most parts of the critique, but that they needed more explanation time in a few areas to overcome the permutation. This is based upon several factors:

1. the negative alternative alone leaves me with some uncertainty. The 1ar's principal attack against the alternative is their Fitzsimmons evidence, which suggests that policymakers will inevitably make predictions, and that rejecting prediction means they will enact based on unconscious predictions anyway. The primary negative response is that the alternative doesn't reject prediction; it creates a different basis for predicting events based on complexity instead of linear scenario planning. While this addresses the majority of the affirmative's argument, I still think there is some risk involved with the alternative alone. The 2ar response is along the lines of 'Fitzsimmons still indicates the difficulty of changing mindsets, and the neg's inability to explain the new basis for prediction means the alt can't solve.' The 2ar also does a fairly good job connecting Fitzsimmons as a reason to prefer the permutation. There are two reasons I gave the affirmative some credit here:

a. Fitzsimmons is specific to the difficulty of changing minds for uncertain or ambiguous alternatives – using the phrase 'the greater the ambiguity, the greater the impact of preconceptions'. I think it probably applies to an alternative that is best described as 'the world is complex'.

b. the negative's alternative evidence is under-highlighted. At the end of the debate, I have very little idea of what 'complex IR theory' is, and the negative's explanation is weak when describing this. This under-highlighting problem is true for a good deal of the negative's evidence and it is quite possible that I would have changed my mind had there been more explanation behind some of the negative's cards. For the most part, the negative's actual debating was outstanding, but the evidence fell a little short. The affirmative had fewer cards,

but across the board were higher quality on this critique (although not all of the affirmative's evidence was responsive).

2. I am not *fully* convinced that linear scenario planning is a bankrupt exercise (although, on the whole, the negative is pretty far ahead on this part of the debate). The negative's argument amounts to 'there are unintended consequences when we view the world through linear models, and those consequences can be catastrophic'. I think the affirmative is unquestionably based upon linear scenario planning, and the negative is correct that even their environment impact is based upon a view of economic forecasting that ignores complexity.

Having said that, the affirmative's appeal to their specific truth claims (supported by the 1ar Ulfelder evidence and the aff's reference to expert data within the 1ac) suggests that the affirmative's predictions are not worth throwing out altogether. I thought the Ulfelder evidence said that prediction was an inherently uncertain exercise, and that even if those predictions turned out to be incorrect, parts of them will be accurate and that nonetheless creates better decisionmaking. I do think that (in theory, assuming perfect adoption by policymakers) complex prediction models are probably better than the affirmative, but I do that the Ulfelder evidence is very good to suggest that even faulty prediction models create better decision-making and adaption. This leads me to conclude that the risk of error suggested by the negative's evidence is not nearly as high as the negative would like, and helps to reduce the cost of adopting the permutation.

3. The permutation doesn't foreclose complex prediction, and creates a better bridge to policymaking than the alternative alone. This conclusion is entirely based upon the affirmative's de Mesquita evidence – which is the only card the affirmative has read that explicitly accounts for the complexity of human behavior in prediction models. Without this card, I would have voted negative despite everything I wrote above. The de Mesquita evidence makes at least two arguments: that game theory can be used to make accurate predictions (that account for complexity) geared towards specific policy recommendations; and that de Mesquita's models were accurate in predicting events in the Middle East.

The negative's evidence indicting de Mesquita is poor, and extremely under-highlighted – word for word, the highlighting – removed from the context of the unhighlighted portions - creates this:

"We require theory as a prerequisite. He quotes Mesquita 'the field has languished without progress. Scientific study of war has not occurred due to the dynamic character of war.'"

To me, this doesn't say very much, and I don't know how it implicates the permutation, which would presumably help develop that study. The affirmative doesn't directly answer the de Mesquita indict so a strong argument could be made that I should just accept it anyway. But I chose the affirmative's story for 2 reasons – first, the neg's evidence is woefully unclear and the explanation of that evidence in the 2nr didn't provide much guidance, and second, the affirmative explanation of de Mesquita in the 2ar is vastly superior.

The negative has two other cards they've referenced to answer the permutation. The Olson evidence, which says that the US searches for enemies in the Middle East with little factual basis, seemed to be answered by a variety of arguments – the appeal to specific data, the non-enemy specific nature of several affirmative impacts, and the Middle East-specific context of de Mesquita.

The Rosenau evidence about cooption is much better to answer the permutation – it asserts that seeking specific policy solutions to complex problems is impossible. By implication, it probably precludes any policy action altogether and eviscerates the alternative, although this is not an argument the affirmative makes. They do, however, say that cooption is probably

inevitable due to status quo policies. This is not a perfect response – because it relies on the affirmative winning that policymakers may not change their minds about prediction theory – but my evaluation of Fitzsimmons above supports that conclusion – it at least suggests that it will be extremely difficult to engineer a wholesale change in attitude. More importantly, I think de Mesquita is just much better on the empirical foundation for tying complex predictions to policy solutions. Both cards to some extent are assertions without foundations, but de Mesquita at least suggests that he has already developed a viable model.

I did not vote on the ‘judge choice’ arguments or any other framework claim. This would have required greater affirmative development – preferably in the 2ac. I do think the 1ar could have done quite a bit more on this claim though, simply because the 1nc shell was under-highlighted and lacked an explicit framework argument. However, the 1ar (and 2ar) would have had to include a better justification for this approach.

Jarrod Atchison - Wake Forest
 NDT Finals 2012
 Northwestern BK vs. Georgetown MA

RFD: I vote negative for Georgetown. I believe that the alternative represents a better way of simulating policy decisions. The alternative will improve policy makers’ powers of prediction while avoiding the pitfalls of linear modeling which link to the Affirmative's description of conflicts based on phases of escalation and the Affirmative’s attempt to remedy environmental destruction through economic rationality.

How I arrived at this decision:

The role of the ballot:

Based on the limited post round interaction, I believe this may be the first major point of departure between my decision and the decision of the dissenting judges. I think that this should have been the focal point of the 1AR/ 2AR because the negative's argument here is more nuanced than the 2AR gives it credit for. The 2NR argument is that it is perfectly consistent for me to assume the role of the USFG and to want the best simulation possible for my policy decisions as that agent. The 2NRs argument is that before I determine whether or not I am deciding the correct course of action within the parameters of the simulation, the best policy makers would ensure that they have the best simulation. This is bolstered by the Rosenau, Saperstein, and Kavalski evidence that says the alt is key to policymaking.

My assessment of the role of the ballot debate changes things dramatically because it means that the kritik is challenging the Affirmative at two levels. First, a meta-framing level question that asks whether the Affirmative simulation is based on a notion of complexity or not? Second, are there specific problems with the Affirmative’s simulation? In order to answer those two questions I do need to look at the justifications for the plan, but I am not evaluating them from a traditional representation perspective wherein I would try to determine whether the language used to describe the impacts is objectionable or not. Instead, I am evaluating whether the impacts prove that the simulation of the Affirmative is flawed or not.

The two 2NR links that became extremely important:

The 2AR extended the pipelines scenario and the environment impact. The 2NR extended two specific links for those scenarios:

1- Mann Stages of Conflict argument that I do not believe is answered sufficiently in the 1AR/ 2AR. The closest answer is the 2AR explanation of all the internal links to the pipeline scenario. Although the internal links may be persuasive, the negative's argument is that the precision of the linear thinking that is articulated so clearly in the 2AR is actually a very reductionist understanding of conflict that tries to separate it into stages of escalation. The 15-20 seconds that

the 2AR spent explaining all the internal links to the pipeline scenario could have easily been the 2NR's explanation of the link. The fact that the terminal impact to this scenario is based on EU/US/Russian conflict was also important because some of the Affirmative's best 2AR defense of predictions (de Mesquita) was premised on the idea that policymakers have better predictive tools in the specific context of the Arab Spring, but the terminal impacts to this advantage assume stages of escalation between great powers outside of MENA.

2- The economic rationalization link (Arthur evidence): The 1NR ad hom attack on Layne should have signaled that the negative was very excited to have a piece of evidence that argued that economic rationality is an ineffective way of determining how people interact in the world. This becomes especially important because Arshat prompts Markoff to go back to the environment advantage and argue that since the scenario depends on economic rationality to access the scenario that this evidence takes the scenario out. Once again, the 2AR is great at explaining the Amazon scenario through the lens of the 1ac, but needed to take the time to address the 2NR application of the kritik to this scenario.

What, then, are the impacts to attempting to make a policy decision with a flawed simulation?

1- Terminal no solvency claim (Jarvis) that simply says that the simulation will get it wrong and produce the wrong policy that will have unexpected complexities which will ruin the AFF.

2- Extinction Impact (Skyttner and Saperstein): the world is in fact a crazy place so having the best predictions actually gives us the best chance to avoid extinction (try or die)

3- Root cause of war argument (Kavalsk): more global claim that resolves the long term uniqueness that conflict is inevitable or coming now.

What, then, does the alternative do?

Simply put, the alternative defends a new method of simulating the world (complexity analysis) that results in better predictions and better policies. The 2NC reads more evidence that says that the method produces better predictions, better policies, and that the key to making the method work best is to keep it pure and distinct from the linear methods of the AFF. The major problem for the affirmative in this debate is that their attacks on the alternative solvency were built on specificity when it is precisely the hyper-specificity of the affirmative scenarios that triggers the link to the kritik. The fact that the alternative solvency is broader and more generic ends up helping the negative because it allowed the negative to access the broad issues of war/extinction without linking to the flawed simulations of the 1AC.

Lastly, what about the permutation?

1- This does beg the question of the role of the ballot argument described above. My ability to do the plan and the alt at the same time may be possible in theory, but the inclusion of the plan still links to all the method purity arguments that are read in the 2NC on the perm <<Saperstein, Rosenau>>.

2- Too much of the 2AR is built on conditional statements: "IF X then Y" such as "if the alt can deal with the current aid/police reform then the permutation solves any link to the AFF" or "if the links are built on reps then you can vote for the perm which only includes the plan." The problem with depending so much on conditional arguments is that there is a risk that the judge does not agree with the initial premise and then the conclusion that is presented ends up being wrong. For instance, the alt claims that it is the purity of the method that is crucial to overcoming the problems with aid now and the current police reform so the permutation either includes the advantage framing of the AFF which links or a plan that is the result of a linear calculation which sacrifices the purity necessary to resolve the links to the status quo. Additionally, as I mentioned above, the link is not as simple as representations vs non-representations. The 2NC/2NR argument is that it is a question of the simulation that justifies the

policy and what I should or should not choose to use as evidence in that simulation. The negative was not objecting to a particular word or phrase in the 1ac, but the overall framing of the advantages which are the justifications for the plan.

William Mosley-Jensen, University of Georgia

Introductory Remarks

The 2012 final round of the National Debate Tournament is one of those rare debates that challenges a judge to not only decide a close match between two excellent teams, but also to reflect on some of the broader principles of the activity itself. I voted Affirmative for the team of Ryan Beiermeister & Layne Kirshon from Northwestern University over the team of Andrew Arsht & Andrew Markoff from Georgetown University. Before making any other remarks, I want to congratulate both teams on being here; it is incredible that there are three sophomores represented in this mix including both debaters on the national championship team from Georgetown. This is especially impressive given that Georgetown has only fairly recently made a resurgence onto the scene of nationally competitive policy debate. I am sure that there are many epic matchups in the offing, and it was truly great to adjudicate this one.

This debate was a joy to watch, and challenged me in assessing the arguments for each side. Though both teams were debating at an extremely high level, Northwestern edged out Georgetown narrowly in my opinion. In essence my decision for the affirmative rests on a greater ability to substantiate their claims; due mostly to the strength of their evidence, but also to the specificity of their argumentation. I should also note that the 2AR given by Ryan Beiermeister was a particularly eloquent speech, as she effortlessly quotes from different sections of the debate in advancing her arguments and skillfully analyzes the evidence that is read by both sides. I give a brief outline of the specific decision here, then provide a more detailed analysis of the debate, and finally offer some commentary on what this debate means for the activity as a whole.

The affirmative won this debate because the risk of the negative's offense is sufficiently low that I can safely endorse the permutation in order to forestall a conflict with potentially existential implications. In establishing the risk posed by the linear scenario planning of the affirmative the negative's evidence was insufficiently highlighted to establish the strong causal claim they were asserting, namely that linear scenario planning was more likely to cause a conflict than the plan was likely to solve it. I then defaulted to the specific analysis that was done in the debate (in particular the 2AR on the Nabucco pipeline scenario) in combination with the superior evidence that was presented on these questions by the affirmative. I would have been willing to vote negative had the negative's evidence been longer and well-warranted or had they provided stronger warrants for why the link to the criticism overwhelmed the affirmative's ability to solve their scenarios. As it stands, it is unclear how the alternative solves the link arguments and also why the permutation would be unable to do so. The trick of the K (arguing that predictions are good but linear ones are bad) is 1.) Diminished by the lack of specificity in establishing the link and 2.) solved by the permutation.

The Decision

In making this decision, there were three issues that I needed to assess for each side, framework, impacts, and solvency. I focus the most attention on the impacts portion as that constitutes the largest devotion of time by the affirmative and negative throughout the debate and has the most bearing on my decision. I will go through a rather lengthy treatment of these issues, focusing in particular on the evidence that each team reads and how I resolve each section of the debate. I then present some synthesizing thoughts on how the issues bear on the decision.

Role of the Ballot

The affirmative argues (along a fairly traditional track) that I should understand myself as a policymaker with control over the implementation of USFG policy. The negative argues that rather than simply engaging in the implementation of policy, we should ask the question “how do we construct the policy simulation” arguing that the model is as important as the simulation itself. The negative does not argue that the implementation of the affirmative does not occur, but only that the critique offers reasons for why that implementation would be undesirable or unsuccessful. Consensus emerges that the judge does have the power to implement policy, but that the strategy of policy planning should be taken into account. I will discuss the negative’s framework cards more specifically in the “predictions” section.

US-Russian Conflict

The affirmative argues that the plan (The United States Federal Government, through the Department of Justice, should make available requisite democratic police training for Tunisia) restores the confidence of foreign investors by alleviating the corruption of police officials, which imposes a “corruption tax” on business interests. This boosts foreign direct investment in Tunisian energy infrastructure, facilitating the transport of North African energy to Europe, and obviating the need to build an alternate energy pipeline (Nabucco) which would bring natural gas through Turkey. The affirmative argues that preventing the construction of the Nabucco pipeline is essential to forestall a new conflict in the region involving Russia. Conflict in that region is particularly likely to spill over, they say, because of the general instability, as well as the Russian perception that the Caspian is a part of its sphere of influence. Northwestern’s evidence for each of these internal links is excellent, in particular their Akan 9 evidence. It argues that Russia will start a war over Nabucco and quotes Russian sources analyzing the likely response to the pipeline construction. They also read a source that cites a number of experts (Central Asia News 11) that believe the Caspian region is the most volatile region in the world. Additionally, the 2AR analysis of this conflict scenario is the most complete and in-depth description of any internal link/impact read in the debate.

Risk of Offense - Given the specificity of Northwestern’s evidence and their detailed description of the scenario, Northwestern was winning a healthy risk that the plan would stop a US-Russian conflict, which could cause the destruction of humanity. I outline below why I think the risk of the negative’s offense is low, fails to implicate NU’s impacts, and why the permutation addresses any residual risk.

Linear Scenario Planning Bad

The primary argument of the negative is that linear scenario planning encourages conflict and inevitable wars (they hint at the possibility for the creation of other problems, such as environmental destruction and terroristic violence). The 1NR/2NR explanation is a bit thin on warrants for why this might be the case. I am afforded no historical examples of conflicts that arose because of linear scenario planning, nor are there reasons presented for a logical relation between linear planning and conflict (which would likely be indicted by the thesis of the negative’s argument). In order to substantiate the claim that the affirmative’s model of linear scenario construction is more likely than not to cause conflict, I am forced to turn to the evidence that is read in the debate. There are three pieces of evidence that the negative points to in support of this claim.

1NC Jervis 97 – The entirety of the highlighted portion of Jervis states: “*identical behavior does not produce identical results: organizations confront each other through time. Like linear social scientists, statesmen see actions produce a desired outcome, and project future states caught in a conflict spiral believe that they have little choice.*” I believe that a number of these claims are essentially nonsensical unless read in the context of the rest of the evidence, but I am disinclined to do that in favor of the team that has highlighted away the warrants of the claim. While it seems likely true that a government caught in a conflict spiral may not see other ways

out, I am unsure why the affirmative keeps us trapped in a conflict spiral, when it could be equally as true that they attempt to avoid that same spiral. Absent a specific argument about why the affirmative would be interpreted as an offensive military strategy by other states (such as Russia) it seems unlikely that the democratic police training assistance of the plan would leave the United States with “little choice” but war.

1NC Skyttner 5 evidence – The entirety of the highlighted portion reads: *“systems are integrated incomprehensible and unmanageable. Circumstantial planning is a thing of the past. A war with disastrous consequence can happen without early warning in a situation which we apprehend to be in deepest peace. Traditional managing is no longer possible. ‘Everything is connected to everything else.’ The theoretical basis is the prerequisite for relevant decisions studies in a complex area scarcely are possible without theory.”* This is the evidence which includes the impact that the 2NR is going for, AIDS, poverty, environment and Russia in the **UN-highlighted** portions. In those sections, the evidence is decidedly ambiguous, if not aff leaning. It notes that *“extremely fragmented scenarios of a threat exist... Russia still has attacking capability via distant and NBC-weapons.”* Also that *“[j]ust now the most probable threat comes from terrorism. The last years have signified a development towards an ever increasing extent of terrorist groups with better and better armaments. No doubt, some of these groups have NBC-weapons. Those who not have access to such weapons strive for them...”* This seems to argue that both Russia and terrorism are threats that need to be addressed, and Skyttner suggests that the best method of addressing these problems is *“a smaller, more modern and flexible elite-force...a more flexible way of handling a new situation – to combine different entities and components for more complex tasks. One of its main duties will be peace-keeping international contributions.”* This could be read as supporting the affirmatives peace-keeping engagement, and is in line with the affirmative’s strategy of conflict avoidance with Russia, as well as the strategy that the affirmative has in dealing with terrorism, which targets terrorist ideology as well as improving intelligence, and does not engage simply in military counter-terrorism strategies.

2NC Saperstein 97 evidence – The entirety of the highlighted portion reads: *“One of the prime reasons for failure with Iraq—is that we fear confusions policies towards China have suffered It is not evident that a tool is useful in dealing with "complexity." Instead of specific new tools, metaphors can contribute to new attitudes required for the more complex world. the act of moving over the surface can change the surface. we may not be able to look for the "good strategy" but settle for the appropriate strategy." successful military and political policy makers have entertained chaos If pre-WWI states recognized the railroad schedule was a source of instability they would have avoided the process. But this recognition would have required the chaos metaphor in the "intellectual air" Given a Newtonian paradigm chaos is to be avoided complexity should be required to survive our future. no specific tool—like predicting comes to mind.”* This evidence is stronger than Skyttner or Jervis at making a claim for the introduction of complexity to the analysis of international relations, but does not connect the dots between a reliance on linear scenario planning and the “inevitable conflict” that the negative presents as their impact. Saperstein is also successfully indicted by the affirmative as talking primarily about military interventions; not the democracy assistance of the plan. Additionally, this evidence is the first card of Georgetown’s which establishes the bar for successful policymaking. It argues that *“it may not be useful for the policymaker to always look for the uniquely ‘best solution.’ It may be necessary to settle for a local temporary maximum—a good solution, rather than the best. In the elastic fabric of our present and future world, the ‘perfect’ is often the enemy of the good.”* Establishing the bar as something that is “good” rather than “perfect” is a rather low hurdle for the affirmative to meet. Nowhere does the affirmative make claims that the plan is the only possible solution for a US-Russian conflict, terrorism, or any of their other impacts. In fact the affirmative’s reasoning process is thoroughly inductive, relying on specific and narrow claims rather than sweeping generalizations. The 2AR argues that the aff represents a “snapshot” of the world as it is today, not a long-term end-all strategy for permanently solving stability.

Rollback – The negative also asserts that the affirmative has no access to the case because there are “unintended side effects” according to a piece of Jervis 97 evidence they read. Though Jervis cites a couple of historical examples, including the 1890 German withdrawal from the Reinsurance Treaty with Russia, there is no specific articulation of what these side effects might be in the context of the aff. Had the 2NR extrapolated an argument about how the police assistance training of the affirmative would create a perception of foreign military involvement, inviting a backlash by the population, then the rollback argument may have had more purchase. As it stands, neither the negative’s evidence on this question, nor their analysis was sufficient to buttress more than a tiny (possibly zero) risk that unintended consequences would overwhelm affirmative solvency.

Predictions

The Trick – The strategic utility of this K can perhaps be summed up by saying “predictions are good and possible, but not the type of predictions you make.” The 2NR points to three cards that they have read substantiating this claim; Saperstein 97, Osinga 5 and Curtis 11.

Saperstein argues that: *“The role of the policy maker is to master the system metaphors which underline our discussions determine our responses to war. Action follows theory. The “field of endeavor,” is molded by our metaphors; may be altered by forces. Policy and response are more effective, the more appropriate metaphors. Metaphors will be helpful educating statesmen which have not experienced complexity. It may be easier to have university freshman read works on complexity”*

Osinga states: *“Theory should cast light on phenomena so that we can recognize ignorance; it should show how one thing is related to another. Theory becomes a guide, it will ease progress, train judgment, and help avoid pitfalls. This deviates from positivist science, theory provide a point of reference a way of thinking.”*

Curtis: *“philosophical implications are seen as a ‘soft’ by those using quantitative tools, metaphors must precede such activity and is equally important to sciences complexity has been driven by the desire to transform dominant theories, and open up space for debate, The biggest error would be to see in models accurate representations of specific real-world systems initial conditions, non-linearity and feedback preclude any reliable prediction of a social system assumptions draw upon the modeller's inclination. Generalized complexity, demands engagement with philosophical consequences of open systems emphasis that complexity places upon open systems overcome post-structuralist suspicion systems are not totalizing structures they are fluid and open-ended without any stasis; within them we find politics.”*

Each of these cards quoted above represents the entirety of the negative’s evidence as highlighted. Neither Saperstein nor Osinga provide a clear delineation of the “good” predictions or how those predictions are made. Curtis is better in this regard, pointing out that models rarely reflect the real-world system they represent, but not impacting the importance of this claim. The negative also did not extrapolate the claims of these authors by pointing out that the situation in Tunisia in particular resists modeling even though I think that claim would be an easy one to warrant.

Northwestern’s Response - In assessing the efficacy of Georgetown’s “trick,” I think that Northwestern’s evidence comes out ahead in providing more warranted claims, but also being more specific to the debate at hand. The 2AR points to the de Mesquita 11 evidence as buttressing predictions in the Middle East and North African political situation through the use of game theory. This evidence suggests that consulting experts and analyzing their responses can produce a range of probabilistic outcomes, with nearly 90% accuracy de Mesquita argues. This evidence defends the perspective of the affirmative, both in questioning the link to the criticism, but also in asserting the necessity of evidence based reasoning. It frames the 2AR call for specificity and probability. The affirmative’s Fitzsimmons 7 evidence goes a step further in asking how endemic uncertainty allows us to take action at all. Fitzsimmons argues *“a strategist who sees uncertainty as the central fact invites ambiguity, and substitutes scepticism about prediction as a rationale for discounting analytic rigour. Without analysis of what is likely what*

will be the bases for choices? A decision-maker with no faith in prediction is left with little more than existing beliefs.” This suggests that the alternative’s recourse to “complexity” leaves the judge only with their beliefs about democracy assistance and Tunisia to rely on in understanding the critique, something that the paucity of negative argumentation on the case corroborates. Given the shallow discussion of the alternative throughout the debate, I am inclined to agree with the 2AR that the permutation would overcome the residual links to the linear scenario planning that they facilitate.

Alternative

The INC argues that “The alternative is to reject linear scenario planning in favor of complex theoretical analysis—unconditionally inserting complexity analysis into the simulation creates better policy planning” and reads a Rosenau 97 card in support. The 2NR frames the alternative as being a form of “forecasting,” where we identify trends rather than the “linear” planning model of the affirmative. They argue that the reprogramming successfully re-orient us away from the linear scenario planning of the affirmative. There is not much analysis from Markoff in the 2NR as to how the alternative accomplishes this task, but they point to the INC Rosenau evidence as well as to a Kavalski 7 card read in the 2NC.

1. **1NC Rosenau 97** – The entirety of the highlighted portion of Rosenau states: *“exact predictions are least likely to occur, models and simulations are a long way from charting human affairs premises of complexity challenge assumptions in academic and policy communities that political relationships adhere to linear regressions. A complexity perspective does not specify outcomes offers guidelines it rejects single cause single effect. if we ever slip, we revert to simplistic formulations”* This evidence is inconclusive about the role that the alternative plays in reprogramming our current policy perspective, except to say that we should reject the idea of single cause, single effect logic. It seems that as long as the permutation accepts the possibility that there are other potential causes of the problems they seek to avoid and that there are other potential solutions, then it addresses the dangers of simplistic formulations of international relations as identified by this evidence.

1. **2NC Kavalski 7** - The entirety of the highlighted portion of Kavalski states: *“CIR has emancipatory, policy implications. made possible through theory—CIR has made it possible for individual and collective actors to put pressure on ‘states’ impervious to demands activism generates priorities across whole systems, in contrast to mainstream IR, CIR advocates a ‘new politics that emphasises responsibility’ recognition of complexity diminishes likelihood of recourse to force policy-makers who recognize the unintended consequences indicate preferences for diplomacy over confrontation Iraq points to reductionist decision-making— ‘planning based on predictions is logically impossible’.”* This evidence is better at providing a warrant for why the alternative can overcome some of the status quo links, but in doing so it also supports the permutation. The affirmative represents an engagement strategy, not a military intervention and so the tension between the plan and the alternative is not as stark as the tension would be if the aff’s scenario planning was used to advocate an invasion strategy. Kavalski even notes that complexity theory *“should compel the strongest states to act in ways that reduce the vulnerability of the weakest”* something that seems entirely consonant with the affirmative

plan, providing solvency for the permutation, rather than denying the possibility of a synthesis.

Permutation

The permutation is debated very quickly in the 1AR and the 2NR. The 1AR description of the permutation includes two comments: first that the aff should be able to sever the representations that are problematic, and second that if the alternative can overcome the links to the status quo and the plan then the permutation should be able to as well.

1. The 2NR has three responses to the perm: first, he argues that because it is a new affirmative, there is no need for a fairness redress and so the aff should be disallowed from severing their reps. Second, the 2NR extends their cooption disad to the permutation. Third, the 2NR applies their link descriptions to the permutation, including the “brink of war” link (Mann) and the middle east scenario planning link (Olsen). The negative’s Mann evidence is simply an argument for why referring to the WWI era as a “tinderbox,” is inaccurate while their Olsen evidence is not specific to the Middle East and describes the current process of threat construction through the US bureaucracy. The biggest threat to the permutation here is probably the **Cooption Disad** – The negative argues that the permutation is coopted because it channels complexity theory in service of a linear model and reads a Rosenau 97 card to substantiate this claim. The Rosenau evidence stresses the importance of curbing “panacean impulses” in favor of complexity theory, pointing out its limits in policy analysis. It does not however make a further claim that the incorporation of complexity theory with traditional linear analysis will corrupt or derail the impact of complexity theory.
1. The 2AR on the permutation does an excellent job of describing how to understand the permutation as a concrete strategy for implementing the plan. Beiermeister quotes Markoff’s 2NR on the alternative to “rethink forecasting then decide to act upon it,” and characterizes the perm as being the process of rethinking the aff’s predictions and the status quo’s predictions. The “Aid Now” arguments are explained as providing the theoretical backdrop for the permutations investigation of linearity. The 2AR does not extend that it is a “severing of reps,” but that the function of the perm is to solve the problematic representations. Skillfully extending and extrapolating the 1AR’s double-bind, the 2AR points out that if the alternative can overcome hundreds of years of linear scenario planning of the status quo, it could overcome the miniscule links to the affirmative. The 2AR accurately describes the Olsen evidence as being about *current* enemy constructions, and indicts the Rosenau evidence as cautioning against a panacea approach which the affirmative does not engage in.

Decision Recap

In my opinion, the affirmative won this debate because the risk of the negative’s offense is sufficiently low that I can safely endorse the permutation. The perm presents an opportunity to both avoid the impacts that the affirmative is winning, and also combine some of the insights of the alternative in improving policy planning in the future. It may have helped the affirmative that the negative was vague in describing the action of the alternative and that the evidence that was offered in support of the critique’s perspective was poorly warranted (as highlighted). When weighing the risks involved, I had to stack the possibility that the affirmative’s plan could stop a US-Russian nuclear war up against the negative’s argument that there are many complex factors at play that could make the affirmative’s plan counter-productive in preventing such a conflict. In the end there is no clear explanation grounded in either the arguments that are made in the

debate, or the evidence that was read for *how* the affirmative would incite such a conflict. Would Russia misunderstand the intentions of the affirmative and precipitate a conflict in the region? If so, why wouldn't the affirmative's aid now arguments non-unique that possibility? Given that the very existence of humanity is at stake in the affirmative being correct about their plan, it seems like a large leap of faith to apply the general argumentation of the negative to the specifics of the affirmative.

Voting negative in this situation would require one of two things. Either 1.) Accepting that they make predictions more effective and extrapolating that to mean that the alternative re-describes the situation in Tunisia and recommends a better policy OR 2.) Accepting wholesale that the affirmative's description of the world is completely inaccurate because it involves linear scenario planning. I felt that neither of these decisions would be warranted by the arguments in the debate nor by the evidence that is read by the negative in support of these claims.

Concluding Thoughts

I reflected on the broader question of how we can substantiate the claims of a debater in any given debate, and what this debate may suggest in answering that question. I think that my answer comes as no surprise to anyone that has judged a number of debates, but it may be worth laying it out briefly. There are essentially three ways to substantiate the claims of a debater. The first method is to rely on the debater to provide warrants throughout the debate, in cx, in prior speeches and in the final rebuttal. For me at least, this is my preferred means of substantiation as it leaves most of the work in the hands of the practitioners. The second method relies on the warrants in the evidence that is read in the debate as undergirding the claims of the debaters. A highly qualified and warranted piece of evidence can go a long way towards substantiating a claim, while a poorly warranted card can hurt that same claim. In this case, much of Georgetown's evidence was severely under-highlighted stripping out many of the best warrants that the 2NR rests on but does not explain. The third method of substantiating the claims of a debater is to rely on background knowledge of the world around us and our experience with it to guide our intuitions on the "truth" of a given argument. It is worth noting that it would be rare for any given decision to be guided by only one of these methods, but usually incorporates some combination of the three, depending on the debate. Reflecting on how we can trust what debaters are telling us as true makes better judges, coaches, and competitors.

Given the prevalence of paperless debate and the increasing adoption of open-source evidence disbursement, it may be time to discuss two emerging trends in debate and their effect on the practice and pedagogy of the activity. The first trend is the increasingly broad and generic 1NC's and negative blocks. Though this debate was not above average in the number of issues (there were 6 off-case arguments in the 1NC) I feel that the critique that was ultimately the subject of the debate was one which could have used significantly better development. The literature defending complexity theory in international relations is wide-ranging and variously applied. It is not without a touch of irony that Georgetown argues that we need a more complex understanding of the world around us, but offers not a whit of evidence or argument about Tunisia, democracy assistance, or the specific police reform assistance of the affirmative in the last rebuttal. Had the block provided more specifics in their analysis of these issues; or read evidence that contextualized their argument, the 2NR would have benefited significantly.

Whether we decide that specificity is important in debates, or that generality is sufficient, it is an issue that is worth discussing. The second trend is the increasing need to highlight evidence until nearly all of the warrants are stripped out. It could be the case that the community would regard something akin to academic citation as sufficient to invoke the warrants of an author's claim, as long as those warrants are presented in a debate, or we may decide that only the evidence that is read counts in substantiating a debater's claim. Either method has its benefits and costs and may be worth investigating in different situations and contexts. Debate remains an evolving practice and the final round of the 2012 National Debate Tournament demonstrates this wondrous fact.