## SPIKES ON BOTTOM

## 1AC – Framing[LONG]

#### The starting point of morality is practical reason.

#### 1] Bindingness – A theory is only binding when you can answer the question “why should I do this?” and not continue to ask “why”. Only practical reason provides a deductive foundation for ethics since the question “why should I be rational” already concedes the authoritative power of agency since your agency is at work. Bindingness ow a) its meta-ethical, so it determines what counts as a warrant for a standard, so absent grounding in some metaethical framework, their arguments aren’t relevant normative considerations b) Absent a binding starting point frameworks would all share equal value. Weighing between them would be infinitely regressive as it presupposes there is a higher metric to determine who has the better justifications. That would make contestation vacuous as any locus of moral duty is sufficient since it would have an uncontested obligatory power

#### 2] Action theory – only evaluating action through reason solves since reason is key to evaluate intent, otherwise we could infinitely divide actions. For example: If I was brewing tea, I could break up that one big action into multiple small actions. Only our intention, to brew tea unifies these actions if we were never able to unify action, we could never classify certain actions as moral or immoral since those actions would be infinitely divisible.

#### 3] Empirical uncertainty – Evil demon deceiving us or inability to know others’ experience make empiricism/induction an unreliable basis for universal ethics. Outweighs since it would be escapable since people could say they don’t experience the same.

#### 4] All arguments by definition appeal to reason – otherwise you are conceding they have no warrant to structure them and are by definition baseless. Thus reason is an epistemic constraint on evaluating neg arguments.

#### 5] Is/ought gap – experience only tells us what is since we can only perceive what is, not what ought to be. But it’s impossible to derive an ought from descriptive premises, so there needs to be additional a priori premises to make a moral theory.

#### 6] Inescapability – Every agent intrinsically values practical reason when they go about setting and pursuing an end under a moral theory, as it presupposes that the end they are committing is an intrinsic good. That necessitates practical reason as a necessary means to follow through on any given end.

#### Rationality necessitates a free will – rational action must set before itself objective ends that we can categorically pursue through setting and pursuing ends. All frameworks concede the validity of a free will because otherwise people can’t be held culpable for actions they didn’t cause.

#### Next, the relevant feature of reason is universality – 3 warrants:

#### 1] Absent universal ethics, morality becomes arbitrary and fails to guide action, which means that ethics is rendered useless, necessitating a priori abstraction from physical experience.

#### 2] A priori principles like reason definitionally apply to everyone since they are independent of human experience therefore ethics is universal.

#### 3] Any non-universal norm is contradictory as it justifies someone’s ability to impede on your ends, which also means universalizability acts as a side constraint on ends-based frameworks. If we accept one contradiction we accept all statements as true.

#### Key for following rules since rules are arbitrary since the agent can form a unique interpretation and understanding which makes it impossible to verify a violation. Only universality solves since universalizing a violation of freedom entails a violation of your own freedom, thus a recognizable violation.

#### Thus, the standard is consistency with the categorical imperative as enacted through the omnilateral will.

#### Prefer:

#### [1] Performativity—freedom is the key to the process of justification of arguments. Willing that we should abide by their ethical theory presupposes that we own ourselves in the first place. Thus, it is logically incoherent to justify the neg arguments/standard without first willing that we can pursue ends free from others.

#### [2] Resolvability: Clarity of weighing under our framework: perfect duties above imperfect duties. Duties in right. Explicit categories that supersede other categories. All other FWs are consequentialist that use unquantifiable prob, mag, or prob x mag.

#### [3] Consequences Fail: [A] Every action has infinite stemming consequences, because every consequence can cause another consequence. [B] Induction is circular because it relies on the assumption that nature will hold uniform and we could only reach that conclusion through inductive reasoning based on observation of past events. [C] Aggregation Fails – suffering is not additive can’t compare between one migraine and 10 headaches [D] Predictions are impossible because anything could lead to a butterfly effect of unexpected consequences i.e. sneezing becoming a tornado and killing thousands

#### [4] What the neg reads doesn’t prove the resolution false but challenges an assumption of it. Statements which make assumptions like the resolution should be read as a tacit conditional which is an if p then q statement. For all conditionals, if the antecedent is false, then the conditional as a whole is true.

#### [5] Resource disparity – a focus on evidence and statistics privileges debaters with the most preround prep which excludes lone-wolfs who lack huge evidence files. A Kantian debate can easily be won without any prep since only analytical arguments are required which o/w accessibility.

#### [6] Other frameworks collapse – theories prescribe necessary actions based on objectively good ends, but those ends require something unconditionally good to serve as a condition of their goodness. Inclinations are insufficient because they are liable to change, whereas the rational nature of humanity is unconditionally valuable. Thus, obligations sourced in extrinsically good objects presuppose the goodness of a rational will to confer value upon them.

## 1AC – Contention

#### I affirm; In a democracy, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy.

#### 1] Anything other than objectivity renders a story fiction thus violating the categorical imperative

Beggs 19(Erine Beggs, April 22, 2019, The Importance of Kantian ethics for journalists., https://thecircular.org/if-youre-a-journalistyou-kant-and-you-must/) //dhsNJ

Kant stated that humans must never lie and that this is a perfect duty which must always hold true. If a journalist alters a story in any way, be it by embellishment, positive or negative subjective bias, withholding of essential facts etc, and in doing so alters the true reporting of the story and thereby rendering it a fiction. https://twitter.com/KantQuotes/status/713531296857866240 According to Kant’s “means to an end” preposition this was an immoral choice where truthfulness is one of the cornerstones of Categorical Imperative”. (Warburton) Otherwise, all parties to the story engage in a conspiracy of “fake news” which is a Hypothetical Imperative desire driven action and not from the reasoning of the Categorical Imperative. https://twitter.com/KantQuotes/status/494692048763891712 The most obvious current example of this is how U.S President Donald Trump has manipulated mass media and social media platforms with sometimes blatant untruths while at the same time debasing the basic tenets of journalism. Trumps approach is potentially very damaging for journalism as his propaganda may be perceived as actual news. It may very well be that Trump feels that he is acting in a Kantian manner based on duty with scant regard for the consequences of his actions.(Frankfurt) (Gardner) https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1119969946002440198 The Kantian view holds that merely by being rational humans certain rights naturally accrue, like dignity, privacy rights and a sense of worth. This implies an empathic disposition towards other humans. The Categorical Imperative states “that you must not exploit people to suit yourself”. Considering the maxim “that you shouldn’t let the truth get in the way of a good story” and its implications for media ethics. As humans are ends in themselves, the Kantian ethics dictate that the journalist must not exploit them as useful subjects. (Scruton)

#### 2] Advocacy with the aim of shifting media coverage towards your side is incoherent when universalized because if everyone was biased, the benefits are offset terminating in a contradiction.

#### 3] Fake news uses people as a means to an end and is nonuniversalizable

**Fiske 21** Samuel Bishop Fiske <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3744&context=cmc_theses> May 3, 2021

But what about moral harm? In what ways does fake news damage us as moral persons? Most clearly, the creation and proliferation of fake news stems from a maxim that we cannot rationally will into a universal law. The maxim, to wield information as a way to deceive others and erode trust in information, is selfish and impractical. While it might be advantageous for a single person to wield fake news for personal gain, the universal adoption of this practice would be fatal to the communication needed for nearly every social task. Imagine you are an avid supporter of a certain politician. However, this politician is very controversial, and she does poorly with Evangelical Christian voters. So, in a bid to salvage her campaign, you create a false story about her close relationship with a well-known evangelical pastor, share that article on Facebook, and promote it as though it were an accurate reflection of reality (as you perceive it). This might greatly benefit you, but it represents a tremendous harm to those who do not hold the same political views. Indeed, even if you undertake this fake news operation for the “greater good”, harm still occurs. What if the supporters of that politician’s rival had done the same thing? That is, what if every avid supporter used social media as a platform for spreading false, but convenient news? The consequence would be a total collapse of reliability on social media. You, as an avid supporter of one politician, would feel gravely harmed by the presence of slander against your preferred candidate. While you might myopically endorse the spread of fake news that benefits your interests, you cannot rationally endorse that the same behavior be adopted by your opponents. Like lying, the creation of fake news violates Kant’s first iteration of his Categorical Imperative: we cannot create fake news and also “act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a universal law of nature”.53 The creation and spread presents moral harm to every person trying to engage in honest discourse. Because we lack direct access to the mind of others, we must act in accordance with maxims that prioritize honesty and trust; the practice of fake news is simply irreconcilable with these aims. Further, fake news violates Kant’s second iteration of the categorical imperative: “act that you use your humanity, in your own person as well as in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means”.54 Put differently, Kant demands us to respect the equal, intrinsic moral worth of all people. When we cheat, steal, and lie, we see other people as instruments to our goals. Human beings, who are independently valuable, are seen as dependently valuable. For instance, in the same way that a hammer is valued for its ability to help the carpenter build homes, someone we lie to is valued for their ability to be led astray and aid our greater objective. In the case of a lie we fail to recognize the sacred agency of a person. The liar finds value in his audience not for their status as rational beings, but as instruments. When we spread fake news to gain political favor, for example, each reader is used and wielded to advance our own interests. There are times when creating fake news is synonymous with lying. Fake news involves forms of speech in the same way that a lie involves verbal speech. When we use that speech to falsely represent the contents of our minds for the purpose of deceiving our audience, the ethical consequences are identical. When we focus on the morality of communication and the intention of agents, our vessel of speech appears to be negligible. Even though digital speech differs from conventional speech, it fits squarely within the ethical framework presented by Kant and Shiffrin. For this reason, to draw on these authors is both insightful and practical. It allows us to identify the moral wrong of fake news clearly; as with lying, fake news instrumentalizes an audience. But if fake news was always a form of lying, it wouldn’t present any novel philosophical problems. I could simply attach all of the brilliant work done by Kant and Shiffrin to fake news and pat myself on the back for adding nearly nothing to the conversation.

## 1AC – Underview

#### 1] 1ar theory is key to checking back against infinitely abusive 1NCs, and recourse outweighs on predictability since 1NC reactivity means there are infinite permutations of possible hard negs but the aff is tied to the topic. Use drop the debater for aff recourse and preventing 2n sandbagging and because the 1ar is too short to win theory and substance. Competing interps on 1ar shells a] prevents 2ns that collapse to 6 min of reasonability good b] 1ars don’t have enough time to win substance and paradigm issues. No RVIs on 1ar shells: a] overcompensation – they have 2 speeches so they can win the 2n in other ways like impact turns b] time investment is larger so err aff on abuse stories c] creates a chilling effect against checking legitimate NC abuse. We don’t preclude you from contesting these paradigm issues, so combo shells on the underview are non-sensical and concede you could’ve just line by lined.

#### 2] AFF fairness issues come prior to NC arguments a) The 1ar can’t engage on multiple layers if there is a skew since the speech is already time-crunched b) Sets up an invincible 2n since there are a million of unfair things you can collapse to to win every round c) its key to compensate the structural skew

Shah 19 [Sachin Shah, 2019, "A Statistical Analysis of Side-Bias on the 2019 January-February Lincoln-Douglas Debate Topic," NSD Update, http://nsdupdate.com/2019/a-statistical-analysis-of-side-bias-on-the-2019-january-february-lincoln-douglas-debate-topic/] AG accessed 6-22-2019

As a final note, it is also interesting to look at the trend over multiple topics. In the rounds from 93 TOC bid distributing tournaments (2017 – 2019 YTD), the negative won 52.99% of ballots (p-value < 0.0001) and 54.63% of upset rounds (p-value < 0.0001). This suggests the bias might be structural, and not topic specific, as this data spans six different topics.

#### 3] No 2n theory arguments and paradigm issues. a) overloads the 2AR with a massive clarification burden b) it becomes impossible to check NC abuse if you can dump on reasons the shell doesn't matter in the 2n.

#### 4] Presumption and Permissibility affirm- [a] – Freezes action: requiring pro-active justification for all our actions would make it impossible to make morally neutral claims like ‘I ought to drink water’ which means we always assume we can take an action absent a proactive reason not to. [b] – Epistemics: We could never start a strand of reasoning if we had to question that reasoning. [c] – If I told you my name was Vishnu you’d believe me

#### 5] The neg may not read theory against arguments in the AC since a) this moots AC offense because they can read theory on my theory arguments in the aff which ensures that I won’t be able to leverage any theory offense in the 1AR from the AC, giving them a huge time advantage, b) it leads to contradictions since the neg can just read theory against this arg, but this indicts those shells, so there’s no way to determine which comes first. But, prefer this shell because the neg has the ability to adapt in the NC and it comes lexically prior.

#### 6] The neg may not read necessary but insufficient burdens a) Strat Skew- You can uplayer with 7 minutes of NIBs I have to beat back before I can access offense which is terrible for a 4 min 1ar, it is impossible for aff to overwhelm the neg because you always have longer times and reactive speeches to overcome any unfairness b) Norms- It would justify infinite neg abuse because neg would just read 7 min of autonegate arguments which is the biggest impact to fairness because its impossible to correct

#### 7] Reject 2N weighing – A) Fairness – Otherwise the 2nr can spend 6 minutes sandbagging new weighing arguments after winning one argument for 10 seconds and it’s impossible for me to win counter-weighing in 3 minutes B) Norm setting – It encourages the 1n to be breadth over depth to make the debate as late breaking as possible to spam new weighing arguments which prevents in depth discussion over what actually comes first and C) Education – It incentivizes strategic thinking by pre-planning what arguments are your best ones and making weighing arguments for them in the 1nc.

#### 8] Use reasonability on neg theory – [a] Competing interps moots 6 mins of AC offense creating a 7-13 time skew which outweighs minimal aff abuse. [b] Offense-defense disincentivizes substantive education by shifting the round from the AC to a norm so their model prioritizes diminishing marginal skews over substance. That outweighs – the end goal of theory is better substantive debates. [c] Binary interps make it possible for the reactive neg to always read theory, so the aff needs reasonability to protect their core ground.