

Core Files Summaries 2009/10

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Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase social services for persons living in poverty in the United States.



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Index of Summaries

Housing First Affirmative	3
Housing First Negative	6
Education Affirmative	8
Education Negative	11
Katrina Affirmative	13
Katrina Negative	15
Single Stop Affirmative	17
Single Stop Negative	20
Military Readiness Disadvantage	22
New Philanthropy Disadvantage	25
Obama Agenda Disadvantage	28
Foucault Critique	31
Capitalism Critique	33
Vouchers Counterplan	35
Paternalism Net Benefit	37
States Counterplan	38
Federalism Net Benefit	39
Congress Counterplan	41
Hollow Hope Net Benefit	43
Topicality – Housing First	44
Topicality – Katrina	46
Topicality – Single Stop	48
Topicality – Education	50

Housing First – Affirmative

Significance

Every year, millions of Americans spend some time without a home; many are entire families that include children. National studies document that over 1 million teenagers are homeless at least once each year. While there had been some gains in recent years in addressing homelessness, with recent economic conditions, the problem has begun to grow again. New data indicate that homelessness among families with children is climbing sharply.

Inherency

The main reason that people are homeless in America is the lack of affordable housing. Two macro trends are currently compounding the problem. The first is the economic crisis. The recession hits low-income Americans hardest through loss of jobs, wages and other sources of income. It also erodes the safety net of public and private programs that can shield low income Americans from falling into poverty and homelessness.

State and local budgets are thrown into deficit during the downturn, causing them to have to cut assistance budgets. Foundations experience losses in the stock market and therefore have less to give. As a result, nonprofit organizations are getting squeezed as their donors feel the pinch of the recession.

And while the Federal Government under Barack Obama has increased spending in some areas on anti-poverty programs, demands on Federal resources are astronomical. Banks, investment and insurance companies, and entire industries like the auto industry, generally have more pull with Congress and receive the bulk of recession-era stimulus spending. The limited money in the stimulus bill that was targeted to deal with homelessness will be swamped by the sheer size of the problem. For example, the Federal Housing Voucher program, which subsidizes rent or mortgage payments for recipients, provides fewer than half the vouchers that are necessary to completely address the problem.

The Congressional Research Service showing that federally funded programs are serving only a fraction of the nation's homeless youth population demonstrates the result in a recent report.

A further problem with our nation's response to homelessness is that we have tended to focus our efforts, and social services, on temporary assistance programs



like overnight shelters. These shelters are often referred to as transitional housing. Social work with the homeless has attempted to solve underlying problems such as substance abuse before efforts are made to find permanent housing.

A second major problem is the housing market. As foreclosures rise, medium-to-low income families may be unable to find replacement housing once they lose their home. As these families enter the market for rental housing, current renters may be crowded out of the available units.

Harms

Homeless youth are vulnerable to a wide array of hazards, including physical abuse, sexual exploitation, health and mental health problems, drug and alcohol dependency, and even death on the streets.

For example, compared to low-income children who are housed, homeless children are susceptible to more health problems such as asthma, infections, skin conditions, parasites, and stomach ailments. They also suffer development setbacks due to frequently changing schools, deficient nutrition, inadequate opportunities to study and learn, and poor attendance at school. Compounding all of these harms are a number of mental health concerns, such as anxiety and depression that lead to dysfunction and behavioral problems.

Homeless children also experience violence and stress. They encounter random violence while on the street, including between their parents or parental figures. They are commonly victims of physical and sexual abuse.

Finally, homeless children are often rejected by their housed peers and may be neglected by their parents or guardians. This leads to substantial alienation and depression among this group.

Solvency

Housing First is a strategy that attempts to find permanent housing for homeless people even before their underlying problems are resolved. The theory is that once people have some permanent housing to rely upon, they are better positioned to deal with their other issues, like unemployment, mental health, and addictions. In addition, Housing First approaches follow up with intensive supportive services that counsel the homeless on how to address these problems.

Housing First approaches have been tried in many American cities and has received some federal support, particularly in the recent stimulus package. But it is nowhere near large enough in scale nationally to adequately address the problem. In the cities where it has been attempted it has proven to be an enormous success compared to strategies that utilize mainly transitional housing. It has also been shown to reduce the need for follow-up social services.

Housing First Negative

Inherency

It is possible to defend the status quo efforts to address the problem of homelessness. The adoption of a Housing First framework has been picking up across the country over the past 10 years. State and local governments have been adopting policies to address housing shortages such as trust funds. State trust fund can generate the income to build new housing and also give aid to the homeless. They have very few restrictions in comparison to federal programs. Mary Cunningham of the Urban Institute has gone so far as to describe it as a “national movement to end homelessness.”

The stimulus package passed earlier this year included over \$3 billion to help hundreds of thousands of people who are homeless or nearly homeless. Half of that money is targeted to help people pay their rent, utility bills, moving costs or security deposits. The rest will go to related social services. These funds concentrate on a rapid re-housing framework, similar to Housing First.

There are numerous private sector programs to solve homelessness. It is possible to defend them as being superior to government programs in that they are more in tune with local conditions and that the people they serve trust nonprofit groups more than the government.

The Earned Income Tax Credit is a government policy at both the federal and state level. It gives tax refunds to low-income taxpayers who are working. The federal government already has a generous EITC and many of the states do as well. You can defend the status quo solvency of these programs or you could counterplan with advocating an expansion of the EITC.

Significance

The negative can quibble with the statistics that are used to calculate the number of homeless children. The definition of homeless is very broad, and often includes people who are living with relatives. Home ownership is still very high among low-income families, in ample living space. Many others rent. There are reports from the CATO Institute and the Heritage Foundation that dispute the highest estimates of the problem.

One thing to keep in mind when you are debating against the Housing First case is that there are many pages of briefs in the Single Stop Negative file that could be

used, especially the ones about poverty estimates and the living conditions of those who are in poverty.

Solvency

The main solvency argument against Housing First is that underlying problems must be solved first before housing can become effectively permanent for the homeless. Social workers can gather at common spaces like shelters to address the needs of many homeless people in the same location instead of traveling to various different Housing First locations around the city.

Counterplans

There are two very effective counterplans that can be run against the Housing First case – vouchers and states.

The voucher counterplan can be either a federal or state policy. The counterplan would expand the availability of housing vouchers to homeless families so that they can use them to find housing, pay rent, pay security deposits etc.

The net benefit for a federal voucher program is the Paternalism argument because the voucher gives recipients more choice than the plan since federal homelessness programs go through federally approved units. The counterplan is more choice and more empowerment for its recipients.

The debate over whether social services should be delivered by a federal program or by vouchers is one of the most important in the social services literature and one that is addressed by this negative strategy. The negative defends vouchers and the affirmative attacks vouchers and defends direct federal payments.

If the voucher counterplan is run through the state governments then there are the additional net benefits of Federalism and the Obama Agenda DA. Neither of those DAs link to state action but do link to the plan's federal action.

The second counterplan strategy is the 50 states counterplan. It basically has the state governments adopt the same policy as the plan does at the federal level. The negative argues that the counterplan solves the case as well as the plan, because the states are well equipped to handle housing policies. States or local governments set up most of the Housing First programs that the affirmative solvency evidence identifies. The net benefits for this counterplan are Federalism and Obama Agenda.



Education Affirmative

Inherency

In 1982, the United States Supreme Court ruled that immigration status did not matter when considering if an undocumented student can attend K-12 education. This means when an undocumented student (sometimes referred to as "illegal immigrant") enrolls in a public high school, the school will not ask if they are a legal or "illegal" immigrant, and therefore will be allowed to attend school.

The Plyler decision, however, did not hold the same for higher education. Two major benefits to being a legal immigrant are in-state tuition and federal financial aid for college. Both of these allow students to reduce their costs of attending higher education. The Plyler decision ruled that undocumented students are not entitled to qualifying for either in-state tuition or federal financial aid.

The result is that many undocumented students are not able to attend a college or university. Moreover, without qualifying for federal financial aid or in-state tuition, many undocumented drop out of high school because they know they cannot afford to attend college. Without a high school education, many of these students are faced with a life of poverty.

Harms

Hate Crimes – After the election of President Barack Obama, there has been a surge in hate crimes across the United States. In the past few months, the number of hate crimes has increased 4% - an astounding number. The affirmative argues that increasing contact between people in higher education can create a more tolerant environment that people will take with them after they graduate. This will help foster a more tolerant culture in the United States and cause a decrease in hate crimes.

The Economy – The United States is going through hard times economically and must prepare for the future. One way to improve the economic conditions within the United States is to improve the work force. Since many highly talented individuals are not completing high school or attending higher education, the affirmative argues the United States economy is suffering. Unlike many of the proposals you may be hearing about in the news – such as the stimulus plan – the affirmative tries to take a long term approach to helping the economy recover.

The affirmative, by allowing more non-citizens to attend high education, provides more highly skilled labor – electricians, computer scientists, engineers, etc. This not only improves the economy in the long run, it also helps the United States keep up in the world.

World economies are not only judged by their individual growth, but also their growth compared to other countries. For example, during the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union would compete for which country had the higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Although the Cold War is long over, countries still compete over economic growth for international prestige and power. The Affirmative claims that if the United States' work force fails to keep up with the rest of the world, then it could lead to a long-term economic crisis.

Competitiveness (the theory outlined above about countries competing for economic power) is considered an important factor in economic growth. Companies and investors want to invest their money in a country where their investment has the best chance to grow. One strong indicator of the future growth of a country is what kind of workforce that country has. In the past decade, many countries around the world, including China and India, have moved in the direction of creating a highly skilled workforce, and in doing so, could pose a threat to the United States.

Solvency

The plan has the United States Supreme Court make a ruling, stating that immigrants that are not US citizens are allowed to file for federal financial aid and qualify for in-state tuition. This ruling is based on the *Plyler* case that found non-citizen immigrants were allowed to attend high schools in the United States.

By allowing non-citizen immigrants to file for federal financial aid, these students will face a smaller financial barrier to attending college. Although there are other hurdles these students might face, such as racism, the affirmative claims that financial barriers are the primary ones to college enrollment.

With more students attending higher education and entering the workforce, the United States may actually spend less on immigrant social services. Within the first affirmative constructive, the affirmative begins the case that a more highly educated immigrant population would cost the United States less money. This is not only a strong affirmative argument against an economy disadvantage, it also can demonstrate how the affirmative may help address other issues non-citizen immigrants face. For example, if the plan helps decrease the amount of funding necessary for food assistance, then those funds could help non-citizens receive health care or other benefits.



Finally, the affirmative provides evidence against some of the major anti-immigration think tanks. A recent study by the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights outlined some stunning evidence linking most of the major anti-immigration think tanks to white supremacist groups. The affirmative team should try to call negative evidence into question if the negative chooses to utilize these authors.

Education Negative

Economy Advantage

The negative team begins its attack against the economy advantage by claiming welfare benefits, such as federal funding for higher education, helps attract immigrants to the United States. The affirmative is not limited to only non-citizen immigrants who are currently in the United States, so people outside the country may view the affirmative as a good reason to immigrate to the US.

The implication of a greater immigrant population is that these immigrants do not help the economy, but instead hurt it. The negative team presents studies demonstrating that even if immigrants pay federal and state taxes, their everyday use of medical and other benefits greatly outweigh their tax contributions. In fact, one study claims immigrants spend \$10 billion more in social services than they pay in federal and state taxes.

A good negative team will try to use this evidence as a direct and immediate harm to the economy, while any benefit from the plan will take a long time. This is a time frame comparison between the affirmative and the negative's claims about the economy.

Finally, there is evidence indicating the economy, although weak, will increase in the future few quarters. It is important for the negative to contend the economy will eventually recover in order for them to win the affirmative uniquely will cause a new economic harm.

Hate Crimes

There are two central arguments to the negative's attack against the hate crimes advantage: first, the number of Hispanic students is increasing in higher education, and second, the plan will cause a backlash against immigrants.

The negative provides evidence claiming the number of Hispanic students is increasing in colleges and universities across the United States. These pieces of evidence help provide a reason why the world as it is now – the status quo – is sufficient to remedy the harms of racism within higher education.

Second, the negative argues that providing benefits to non-citizen immigrants causes a backlash. When Colorado tried to extend in-state tuition for non-citizen students it caused a popular backlash against immigrants. This argument is a

powerful one against the affirmative because it says the plan would actually increase intolerance by trying to act too quickly in order to remedy racial injustice.

Finally, the negative will argue that every state has laws against hate crimes. This evidence will help the negative build the case that laws are not a powerful way to prevent acts of racial hatred in the United States. If there are laws currently prohibiting hate crimes, but these crimes persist anyways, the negative will contend there must be other, more effective, ways of dealing with hate crimes.

Solvency

The central attack against solvency is that the plan is not necessary. The negative provides evidence stating that ten states already offer in state tuition for non-citizen immigrants. A strong negative team will examine the list of states and discover that many of these states are the ones with large populations of non-citizens such as California or Texas. This evidence helps build the case that the status quo – or the world as it is now – is doing enough to help students get into college.

Moreover, there is evidence challenging the solvency of the court as an actor to change people's minds about racism. This evidence claims that after the historic *Brown v Board* ruling, the public did not change their minds about racial tolerance or integration. This argument is helpful for the negative because it demonstrates that even if more non-citizens attend higher education, it will not fundamentally help address the problems of racism and hate crimes within the United States.

Katrina Affirmative

Inherency

Hurricane Katrina slammed ashore the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005. It caused widespread devastation in the states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. It was particularly damaging to the City of New Orleans as the levees failed, flooding the city and its many communities. Despite many promises, the response by the federal government was woefully inadequate, leaving thousands of people stranded without food or water. Only weeks later did supplies and assistance begin to be distributed effectively.

Now, nearly four years later, much of New Orleans remains in shambles. Residents of New Orleans are still saddled with inadequate access to affordable housing, health and mental health care, and economic opportunities. Many critics assert that President Obama's policies toward the area are no more generous or effective than those of President Bush. Even the stimulus package is argued to have shortchanged New Orleans.

Harms

There are two primary harms in the Katrina affirmative – one concerns racism and white supremacy, the other concerns treating low-income populations as disposable.

Katrina demonstrated that race still influences who lives and dies in the United States. While affluent white populations were generally able to escape before the storm hit, communities of color were less well equipped to cope with the oncoming deluge. This reflects decades of policies and structures that have discriminated against certain populations on the basis of city planning, levee construction, and mass transit policies.

The second harm area is about “disposable people.” Professor Henry Giroux published an important article that claims the policies of the federal government toward the Katrina victims operated as though those people were expendable, or worth nothing. Our failures in Katrina represent the politics of disposability, where large numbers of persons living in America are viewed as a burden on the government, including the expenditure of social services. While this attitude exists throughout our government policies, Katrina serves as an important symbolic area to counter these politics.

Solvency

Social services are the backbone for the recovery effort. Helping victims find affordable and safe housing, medical care, mental health treatment, job training, and access to adequate nutrition, is central to revitalizing the Gulf Coast area. The effort must be sustained, not merely emergency, transitional assistance.

The federal government has a unique responsibility to come up with an effective solution since it is locus of the main source of blame for the neglect leading up to and during the catastrophe. Affixing blame like this is the key to having a government that is accountable in a democracy. While President Bush may deserve special recognition for his ineffective role in Katrina, other Presidents and Congresses leading up to 2005 are also to blame because of the way they short-changed the levee and other support systems.

The affirmative does not just affix blame, however, it also offers a solution moving forward, which breaks down the cycle of public distrust and cynicism that people have toward their leaders which allows their leaders to, in turn, ignore their needs.

Katrina Negative

Inherency

The negative can defend several measures by which you could say that the city of New Orleans is recovering quite well already. Construction of affordable housing units, the return of tourism and conventions, and even job creation are examples of such measures. In fact, New Orleans might even be described as an island of growth in the national sea of economic recession.

In particular, the negative can defend actions taken by the Obama Administration to address Katrina recovery, including a recent decision by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to permit trailer owners to buy those trailers for \$5. Most people have already been able to relocate, but that small percentage that still finds a need to remain in a FEMA trailer can now afford to stay. The stimulus package has a homelessness fund that can be used by people in the Gulf Coast.

Harm

The main response to the harm contention is an argument that was developed by Stanford University law professor Richard Thompson Ford that playing the race card on Katrina diverts attention away from the big picture of recognizing the decisions were bad and alienating possible allies in reconstruction. Ford says that racist institutions that were established long ago were responsible for the way Katrina played out, but that it would be wrong to say that the actions of the Bush Administration were racist. Ford describes this as "racism without racists." We should not always assume that racism is the work of racists.

The impact point to the "race card" turn demonstrates that the affirmative does miss the big picture by failing to address the long history of racist structures. Only race-conscious solutions can adequately prevent future repetitions of Katrina.

A second argument that the negative can make against the harm point is to say that the election of Barack Obama is proof that our society is increasingly rejecting the racism that Katrina exposed. In fact, the awareness of the racial impact of Katrina may have laid the groundwork for Obama's successful run for the Presidency.

Solvency

The negative can argue that Bush was not to blame and that decades of bad policy were more responsible. That might set up a moral argument for the state counterplan or vouchers – with the paternalism net benefit. There is evidence against federal responsibility in terms of having government that is more effective dealing with future emergencies.

One argument in terms of federal responsibility – just because the federal government is to blame does not mean the federal government must pay for the recovery. The federal government, after all, is spending taxpayer money, not its own. If a child breaks a window, you might expect him/her to pay for it getting fixed. But if the money comes from somewhere else, at no cost to the child, then there is no lesson learned, probably something even worse.

Single Stop Affirmative

Inherency

Every year, state and federal social services go unused because families do not know the benefits exist, don't realize that they qualify, or are discouraged by how much time it would take to apply to receive them. The various programs have different eligibility requirements, different application procedures and can be extremely confusing. Many low-wage workers have two jobs and simply do not have time, or childcare, or transportation to make numerous visits to multiple offices to establish eligibility.

The result is that one family out of four that lives in poverty is receiving no benefits at all and only 7 percent receive the four major categories of support for which they qualify.

Recent cuts by state and local governments have made the situation worse by cutting social services and tightening eligibility rules. The Federal government has resisted calls for streamlining and reducing bureaucratic hassles with filing. This problem is worsening due to the ongoing economic recession as more individuals and families fall below the poverty level.

Private charities and non-governmental organizations help with some assistance, but they do not provide nearly enough. Government programs are a necessary part of the solution.

The negative will argue that the Earned Income Tax Credit – which gives poor people a tax rebate – is large enough or could be expanded to solve access to shelter, food, health care and jobs. The affirmative can point out that the EITC only goes to people who are working, so the unemployed that are growing rapidly in number, are ineligible. Income alone is also not likely to help with affordable housing, as targeted social services are generally necessary to help people get into the housing market. Finally, many poor people are unaware they qualify for the EITC, so the affirmative plan is necessary to help people realize these benefits.

Significance

The growth in poverty is taking place among the unemployed as well as the working poor. As jobs and wages are cut back, more people living in America cannot make ends meet. They need assistance in terms of income, health care, food and housing. A large segment of this group, including millions of children,

live in what is referred to as “extreme poverty” – where income is below half of the official poverty level. A recent study shows that one in three persons living in America between the ages of 20 and 75 will spend at least a year in extreme poverty. High levels of poverty and extreme poverty are evidence of the failure of workfare programs to assure adequate incomes.

While there are many problems with the Official Poverty Rate as an exact measure of those who are living lives in poverty, there are good reasons to believe that the OPR actually understates the problem. Some estimates find that the poverty line should be almost twice as high to accurately reflect the situation.

Harms

Poverty affects the health, nutrition, development, and education, particularly among children. Poor children are also more likely to remain in poverty as adults. Only a tiny percentage of children who experience extreme poverty are able to escape poverty as an adult.

In addition to this compelling and real toll on human lives, there are important ethical and moral considerations in tolerating such a high rate of poverty. As one of the richest, most powerful nations on earth, the fact that poverty rates are so high and worsening is a terrible statement about the ethical foundation of our public policy. Poverty is not a condition that is outside of our society’s control, it is the result of choices we have made as a country over the years. Governments have a responsibility to reduce poverty to the extent that they can.

The poor are seen as disposable in our society, we don’t look at them, we don’t think about them. In many ways they are wasted lives. Certain segments of our society are written off and allowed to die because they “vanish into the sinkhole” of their economic class.

Poverty violates standards of basic human dignity. Many documents, including international statements, establish freedom from poverty as a basic human right.

Solvency

One important step in reducing poverty is helping individuals and families achieve access to the benefits they are owed that currently exist. Assistance from the programs can actually lift people out of poverty. This is the case for potentially millions of families.

Single Stop clinics are a social service that helps people find other social services. In just a very few minutes, counselors help their clients determine and establish their eligibility for social programs and tax breaks. Their clients receive individualized guidance through the process of applying for benefits, tax credits and other services.

In the status quo, private contributions have set up a few Single Stop programs throughout the country and they work very well. The affirmative plan takes the idea of Single Stop "to scale" which means that it supports its expansion of these neighborhood centers across the country. The plan also simplifies the way people can apply for their benefits so that it is easier for the recipients and allows them to file for them electronically at Single Stop locations.

The affirmative claims that currently existing poverty programs would be highly effective at helping people below the poverty level if they were just made available to people, and people received the support they are entitled to receive.

Single Stop Negative

Inherency

The negative can defend status quo actions to address poverty. First, private delivery of social services such as through churches, neighborhood centers, clinics and charitable organizations is increasing.

State governments are attempting to streamline their programs, making access to social services easier. This is a crucial part of the system state governments administer most federal programs.

The federal stimulus program had enormous anti-poverty aspects to it, including tax credits for low-income workers, expansions of the EITC and Child Tax Credit, increases in the food stamp and homelessness programs, as well as expansions of the unemployment insurance system. They are all designed to help those living in poverty survive the recession.

Harms

The negative can defend that current measures of poverty do not accurately reflect the standard of living of people defined as falling below the line. For many reasons, those living below the OPR show much higher levels of spending than they do income and the gap between spending and income has increased dramatically in recent years. The negative should argue that poverty should be measured by consumption, not officially reported income. Consumption levels are shown to be twice as high as officially reported income levels.

Studies show that the purchasing power of lower-income households is far higher today than it has been in previous decades, as has the standard of living overall. As a result, objective measures show that low-income and poverty-level households today are better fed, live in larger, better-equipped houses, are more likely to own a car, and have greater access to health care compared to 30 years ago. Not that any occurrence of hunger is acceptable, but those episodes of hunger that do occur are overwhelming of short duration.

Work Requirement Turn

One important negative strategy vs. the Single Stop (and other) affirmative is the Work Requirement turn. In the status quo, the majority of social service benefits

are conditioned on employment. These changes were brought about in the 1996 Welfare Reform policy adopted by President Clinton. This creates an incentive for people to find jobs and for states to help them find jobs. Work requirements for public assistance have succeeded in increasing employment, especially among parents. The affirmative undermines this incentive by providing the social services in their plan without the condition of the recipients having to seek or have work. The jobs are much better solutions to poverty than are the social programs they may qualify for otherwise. Studies have shown that the work requirement has lifted many children out of poverty.

There is extension evidence that answers the argument that the stimulus package undermined the work requirement.

The Earned Income Tax Credit

The negative can defend status quo EITC or expand the EITC through a counterplan. Not only is the federal EITC very generous, more than half of all people live in states that have additional EITC credits. The EITC is widely known as the most successful anti-poverty program in existence. It has a successful record of lifting people out of poverty.

The EITC has several distinct advantages as a program to solve poverty. First, recipients can spend the money on whatever needs they feel are most severe at the time. Government food programs cannot be exchanged for housing, even if families have adequate access to food at the time. Medicaid, health insurance for the poor, does not directly help people afford food. At any given time, families have a wide variety of unmet needs because of their income levels, and they know best how to prioritize. The EITC leaves that decision in their hands.

Second, the EITC maintains a strong work incentive since only people who are working qualify. The work requirement also maintains strong bipartisan support for it as a federal program.

The counterplan in the file is written as a state government counterplan but it could also be changed to have the federal government expand its EITC.

Military Readiness DA

Thesis

In the status quo military recruiters are barely meeting their targets and our armed forces are stretched to the breaking point. Individuals are attracted to enlist in the military because of the income, housing, health care, and education benefits that it provides. In the status quo they cannot receive these benefits in the civilian sector. The affirmative plan changes that by providing more social services, reducing the unique attractiveness of the armed forces, hindering recruitment. The result is a weaker military and a less effective United States presence overseas. The result will be an increase risk of wars and harm to our national security.

Uniqueness

To win uniqueness for this disadvantage the negative has to prove that the armed forces are meeting their established recruiting targets right now. This has become easier for them to prove since the economic crisis. As it becomes more difficult for young people to find jobs in the civilian economy because of the recession they give more consideration to joining the military. The Pentagon regularly reports their recruiting rates. The evidence on this point must be very recent as recruiting successes vary over short periods of time.

One possible affirmative answer to uniqueness is that recruiting shortfalls are inevitable because people are reluctant to join the military during wartime because they are afraid to die in conflict. The military has missed several recruiting targets over the past few years because of this factor. So even though the military might be meeting their targets right now, they haven't lately, so that might empirically disprove this disadvantage. For the negative, there is an answer to this argument in the file – because fatalities have declined in Iraq, reluctance to join for this reason has declined.

Links

The link evidence from Schickel the connection between the unique economic benefits offered by the military and the way these benefits attract people to enlist. There is specific link evidence to health insurance, education, housing and poverty in general. If a person does not have health insurance outside the military they may join the military to gain insurance for themselves or their family. If a person

does not have a stable housing situation, they may join the military so they have a roof over their heads.

While there is definitely a certain percentage of people who join the military for non-economic reasons – many people join out of patriotism or because of a family tradition of serving – there is a large segment of recruits who consider the military because of the unique opportunities provided by military jobs.

The link argument is that when the affirmative plan provides these benefits to people in the civilian sector – like college admissions, housing support, services to people below the poverty level that helps them out – then the unique attractiveness of the military declines and recruiting becomes more difficult. It turns out that economic need is a crucial factor in enlistment decisions.

The affirmative can argue that much enlistment is motivated by factors besides economic motivation, such as wanting to fight in the war on terrorism, or because other members of their families have served. They can also point out that just because they may provide one or two economic benefits – say housing – that the other economic benefits might still attract people to the army.

Impact

Virtually every analyst would agree that our national security depends on having an adequate supply of soldiers. Ground forces are a crucial part of winning and deterring conflicts. If the United States becomes overstretched by its commitments abroad then adversaries may take the opportunity to try something or our armed force may just not be able to respond to a particular crisis.

To bring this up to date, the negative has to argue that currently we have enough soldiers to cover all of our commitments and that President Obama is using them wisely to avoid overstretching them. The best way to argue this for the negative is to say that even though we do have everything covered right now, the troops are stretched really thin. That provides a good brink or threshold to the disadvantage.

The affirmative can say that ground forces are not essential to win wars any longer, now in the days of super-accurate missiles and unpiloted aircraft. The negative can respond to this with evidence from Donnelly and Kagan explaining how ground forces remain essential to holding territory and securing victories. Ground forces also still conduct many operations.

The affirmative can also argue that other aspects of our foreign policy, such as diplomacy and persuasion, are more important to achieving our national security

goals than is the size of our military force. These less militaristic solutions are often called “soft power.” The negative can respond by saying that military strength (hard power) is essential to back up and make credible our soft power, and that certain problems can only be solved with hard power.

The negative should also argue that adequate forces deter conflict. It’s not that the United States must go around the world fighting all the time, but we must be prepared to do so. This will prevent wars from occurring in the first place.

Morality

Finally, one important issue related to this argument is the perception by some that it is immoral. This line of reasoning goes that we should not be encouraging poverty as a way to coerce people into joining the military where they may die. There are several good answers to this: first, a stronger military would prevent wars, so it would actually reduce the risk that enlistees would be killed. Second, it is still a free choice for people to join the military – they are not coerced by their economic circumstances. Every disadvantage on this topic can be framed as an immoral “poverty good” argument. The negative needs to resist that frame by saying they are not advocating poverty they are advocating national security and peace. The negative should try to turn the tables and say that it is the affirmative team being immoral since they apparently are in favor of war.

New Philanthropy DA

Thesis

In the status quo as a result of the recession and decline in government support for anti poverty programs, philanthropy – private charity – has stepped in to replace government assistance. A new generation of young billionaires and millions have increasingly begun to target social conditions, in a movement known as New Philanthropy. The affirmative plan undercuts the motivation by having the government provide the services – this is known as “crowding out” the New Philanthropy. It turns out the private programs are more effective at addressing the impact and root causes of poverty as well as the structures that underlie the entire system.

Uniqueness

The negative must win that private philanthropy is at high levels right now. As government assistance to the poor has declined, or at least failed to meet the needs of the recession, wealthy individuals have stepped up their contributions to fill that gap. At the Keohane evidence says in the shell, the amount of wealth and charitable contributions are larger now than ever before. From 1996 to 2006 it increased from \$13 billion to \$22 billion. That amount is probably much larger than the affirmative plan. To put that in perspective, the total amount of money the federal government spends addressing homelessness is around \$2 billion, and that includes the increase in the stimulus package.

Link

One of the largest motivating factors for a philanthropist is perceived need. People want to give money where it can have the greatest impact as they see the situation. Areas of our society that are being neglected by the government offer attractive targets for charitable giving.

When the government increases their spending in one of these areas, philanthropists may be discouraged – this is referred to as the “crowding out” effect of government programs. This crowding out is not just a theory, it has been confirmed by numerous studies. Evidence in the file from Brooks and Wooster describe several examples where crowding out has occurred.

A secondary link story is that government programs might also discourage volunteering. Philanthropists want to have an impact and increasingly want to have a say in how the money is spent or how the social service develops. They may volunteer their own time in order to make sure the charity is moving in the direction they see fit. When the government (affirmative plan) steps in to address a problem, they will do it in a certain way, decreasing the direct impact that an individual can have as a volunteer. That makes it less likely they will donate their time that way, and therefore their money as well. Both time and money are important.

There are two link magnifiers the negative must be prepared to discuss. The thesis of this disadvantage is that there is a new generation of younger philanthropists who are just starting to give. They are socially motivated and interested in getting very involved in their causes. Many of the new philanthropists are women or people of color who are seeing this wealth for the first time. The stereotype of philanthropists in the past is one of old, white men.

The negative should argue that philanthropy requires a habit of repeated giving over many years. For new philanthropists, they are just now developing those habits. If they find charity rewarding, they may dedicate their lives to it. If they don't, they may not form that habit and decide to spend their wealth on other pursuits, like buying sports teams. The negative has to use this argument to make the case that this is a very important time in philanthropy – that this new giving is not inevitable, it can be discouraged for good.

A second link magnifier is the concept of “giving circles” where a bunch of wealthy friends decide to get involved together. These circles multiply the amount of resources available for the social causes. Giving circles are fragile, as many times the members have to be convinced to join even though they are reluctant. So they might be among the first aspect of philanthropy to be discouraged by crowding out.

Impact

A key part of winning this argument on the negative is being able to explain how private sector solutions are better than government ones. So if the amount of money is the same either way, the philanthropy has a better chance of actually solving the case harm than does the plan.

The Brooks evidence in the shell explains that federal decision-making is less effective than decisions made by private donors. Successful people in the private sector have better skills than government bureaucrats in organizing and making things work out.



A second way to explain the superiority of the private sector is by arguing that the recipients of the aid trust private individuals more than they do the government. There is evidence for this in the Katrina Negative file.

A second impact, besides solving the case better, is that when philanthropists become engaged in solving the problem they will aggressively attack the roots of poverty, not just its symptoms. New philanthropists especially, are looking to shake up the system and address problems at their core, not just superficially. It would be much better to get people out of poverty than just making sure they are comfortable within poverty.

The negative can use Single Stop as an example of the type of private philanthropy they can use in the status quo to address problems. This would work against the Housing First, Education and Katrina affirmatives.

The affirmative has many good responses to this disadvantage. First, they could argue that if philanthropists get discouraged in one area they will just target their money to another area, possibly overseas. They can also argue that the economic recession is hitting wealthy pocketbooks pretty hard through the stock market collapse and this really cuts into how much money they have to donate. Also, much philanthropy is poorly delivered, or used in problematic ways. Also, government programs are more likely to last a long time, as philanthropists are known for hopping from one cause to another. In the end, a progressive government is more reliable than a private citizen in providing for the core needs of real people.

Obama Agenda DA

Thesis

In the status quo President Obama has a full agenda dealing with health care, energy, immigration and the struggling economy. He is going to have to use all of his political strength and focus to get that agenda passed in a timely manner. The affirmative undermines that by putting another item on his plate – the affirmative plan – making it less likely that any of his agenda will be adopted since the political system will be overwhelmed and President Obama’s effectiveness undermined. The impact is that the economic problem will not get better and instead will crash globally.

Uniqueness

To win uniqueness on this disadvantage the negative must win that President Obama’s agenda is not too big right now and that he will have the political strength (called “political capital” by many) to get his important items passed.

Currently, the President is compromising on small things and putting off controversial items (like gays in the military) to keep his approval ratings high and maintain his strength as long as possible. He has very high approval ratings, and enough political capital, to pass his agenda now, although it will be difficult. He must remain careful because Presidents have lost their clout quickly in the past.

The affirmative can argue that the President’s political capital is already weakening, that it is ineffective in passing what he wants because special interests are stronger, and that it is inevitable that other controversial issues will arise, causing him to lose popularity.

Links

There are several possible link arguments to this disadvantage. The first concerns President Obama’s political strength – his political capital. He needs all of his efforts to pass his agenda. The Mitchell card in the shell points out that his agenda items like health care; energy and the economy will not pass without “spending political capital.”

So where does this capital come from, and how does passing the affirmative plan affect it? Political capital comes primarily from his high approval ratings. If he is

popular with the public then he can make the Congress do what he wants. If his popularity sinks, like what happened with George W. Bush, then he won't be able to persuade members of Congress.

The affirmative plan is unpopular because it is focused on helping poor people, which will be spun as "welfare" from people who are opposed to it. Plus if the affirmative does not require the recipients of the plan to be employed or seeking work it will be even more unpopular. The controversial nature of the plan will hurt the President – Presidents get blamed for everything that happens in the federal government.

A second link argument deals with the sheer size of the President's agenda. He now is currently straining the capacity of the system to deal with everything because there are so many problems and he has proposed so many major solutions. The affirmative plan would be another addition to the agenda and make it more difficult to pass any of it. While the affirmative plan is assumed to pass (we call that "fiat" in debate jargon), its passage would complicate the rest of the President's agenda.

The affirmative can argue that anti-poverty programs are popular, and even more so in the current economic situation as more and more people either slide into poverty or know someone who does.

Internal Link

The President will have to pass more legislation dealing with the economy if we are to pull out of the prolonged economic slump and preventing us from falling back into a deep global depression. A second stimulus package, for example, will be very controversial in Congress and will be difficult for the President to pass. The plan, by weakening the President and overcrowding his agenda, makes it much more difficult to pass the necessary economic legislation.

The affirmative could argue that the President will not be able to pass a second stimulus package no matter what. They could also say that one policy, the affirmative plan, would not be enough to derail the President.

The affirmative can also argue a turn that passing one law makes it more likely the President will be able to pass additional laws – it sort of gives him momentum and proves that he is a successful politician. Plus it helps him discredit the opposition because they just seem to be against everything. This turn is often referred to as "winners-win" because one win leads to another. The affirmative plan makes the rest of the President's agenda more likely, not less likely.

Impact

The result of failing to pass a new stimulus bill or other economic programs will be a repeat of the 1930s and the Great Depression. History proves that in periods of global economic stagnation that wars are more likely to begin. As the Mead evidence in the shell indicates, "Bad economic times can breed wars."

Foucault Critique

Thesis

French philosopher Michel Foucault examined the relationship between truth and power. His conclusion was that truth and power are both interrelated and can be influenced by the other. For example, why do you listen to your teachers? In a classroom, students rarely have the proof their teachers are knowledgeable about what they are teaching. Instead, students listen to their teachers because they act a certain way that gives them power. Teachers dress in a certain style, perhaps they speak differently than students; they have a larger desk; and stand at the front of the classroom, etc. All of these contribute to the performance of what it means to be a teacher.

Now imagine your teacher walked in one day and was dressed like the students, decided to play basketball at recess, but then went on to teach the class like nothing was different. The teacher would no longer have the authority (or power) they once had because they have violated the expectations of what it means to be a teacher (this is often referred to in philosophical literature as identity). This example demonstrates how power (through acting like a teacher) is linked to truth (or why students listen to the teacher).

Link

This kritik is about how social services reinforce certain norms in society. One mechanism "what it means to be normal" is enforced is by people watching other people. Social norms (what it means to be a teacher, what it means to be a good student, etc) are enforced by people watching others. Have you ever noticed that people act differently around their parents than when they do around their friends, or by themselves? This is because people are disciplined into acting a certain way when they are being observed.

To receive social services, people must submit all kinds of information about themselves, and therefore, submit themselves to being watched. The danger with social norms is that they can often lead people to harm others. For example, once people start to believe there is a certain way to live (social norm), and they see other people violating that norm, it can result in them trying to correct the so-called "outsiders". People were once considered outsiders who could not pay their taxes, had leprosy, believed in paganism, etc. This is true today; often people who are considered "different" are treated unfairly and sometimes subject to violence.

The negative should attempt to think through all the social norms that are created by the affirmative and use them as link arguments in the debate. Moreover, the affirmative should focus on finding ways they provide people with ways of resisting dangerous social norms.

Implication

Biopolitics is the act of governments managing life. This can be beneficial by building services like hospitals, preventing crime, etc. Yet it can also be dangerous, because in an attempt to save lives, biopolitics can also lead people to take lives. Take the example of the holocaust: In order to "save the lives" and preserve Germany, the Nazi's decided they had to brutally murder millions of Jewish people because they were the outsiders.

Capitalism Critique

Thesis

This argument asks the philosophical question: How should we deal with poverty? There are two competing ideas: The negative kritik argues people should address poverty from the "ground up" – or in order to address poverty we need to begin by questioning capitalism. The affirmative argues that providing solutions to specific problems – like housing, can reduce poverty.

Antonio Gramsci was an Italian philosopher who wondered why more people did not revolt against oppressive systems. His conclusion was that the ruling power (people who are wealthy and/or control the government) would offer minor concessions to groups that are upset with the current system. These concessions would end up calming down the upset group, and life would go back to usual. This exists in everyday life as well: Imagine if your teacher gave you an unfair test and everyone in the class failed it. The next day, your teacher decides to give a few bonus points in order to prevent the students from becoming upset. Even though the whole test should be thrown out because it was unfair, students will generally accept the deal and take the bonus points.

Link

The negative's focus in this argument is that we need to address poverty at the ground level: the economic system. For about two hundred years capitalist societies have tried to remedy poverty with social programs like Medicare and government housing, but poverty still exists. The negative argues this is because poverty is an inherent feature of the capitalist system and these "band-aid" solutions are a way of preventing the people who are harmed by poverty from revolting. Make no mistake, after the affirmative people may have a marginally better life, but they still will lack access to many of life's necessities to overcome poverty.

Implication

There are two implications to the kritik:

The affirmative makes poverty worse – if the affirmative demobilizes (or makes people more willing to accept capitalism), and capitalism is a strong cause of

poverty, then the affirmative has ensured that poverty will remain, and perhaps even get worse.

Capitalism can cause war – The negative shell has a piece of evidence claiming that capitalist states often fight wars in order to secure their own place in power. The affirmative will contribute to this by preventing a larger questioning of capitalism.

Vouchers Counterplan

Thesis

The counterplan solves the affirmative case by providing people with vouchers in sufficient value necessary for them to solve their poverty. Vouchers have empirically worked in this way in many areas including housing, childcare and education. Vouchers are preferable to the status quo since the people who receive them can choose among a wide variety of service providers, including states and non-profit organizations. The affirmative plan has to work through federally recognized contractors. Giving the recipients vouchers and more flexibility empowers them and is less paternalistic.

Counterplan Text

There are two vouchers counterplan texts included in the Core Files. One is the federal government the other is state governments. The federal version takes advantage of the currently existing Housing Choice Voucher Program and simply expands it by funding more vouchers. The states version funds vouchers in general without any specific reference. Both the federal and state versions fund vouchers for supportive housing services, which is the second part of the affirmative plan.

Solvency

**There is quite a bit of negative and affirmative evidence on housing vouchers in the Housing First part of the file. The evidence in the Vouchers CP section is general to vouchers.

Both counterplans solve by giving homeless persons vouchers that they can use to find housing and supportive services. The vouchers can be spent only on those commodities. The federal government and several state governments have operated voucher programs for housing that have worked very well. Vouchers can stimulate demand in the housing sector for the construction of additional low-income housing or apartments.

Vouchers work differently than direct payments. Under a system of direct payments the federal government must approve the provider to receive contracts. That narrows the range of possible providers. Under a voucher system the

recipient of the voucher can use them with whatever provider they like, including state, local or non-profit providers.

There is plenty of evidence from Kirby and Burwick that proves the effectiveness of using vouchers to deliver social services.

The affirmative can argue that federal contracts are necessary to ensure stable social service provisions over the long term. Some landlords won't accept housing vouchers from low-income customers. Vouchers don't do much good if the housing market is tight – meaning there is just an absolute shortage of housing altogether.

Net Benefits

The net benefits for the federal version are the Paternalism disadvantage and the empowerment of allowing recipients to make choices for themselves. The states counterplan enjoys the same net benefits plus the Federalism and Obama Agenda disadvantages.

Net Benefit - Paternalism

Vouchers provide choice and empowerment to their recipients. Compared to direct payments by the federal government, vouchers allow recipients to choose from among service providers. The plan, by contrast, is paternalistic in that it insists on the federal payment method of choosing providers, which is through approved contracts. The shell link evidence, which talks about vouchers and social services, talks about how vouchers “facilitate a better match between clients’ interests and activities” as the “make decisions for themselves.”

The impact claim is that every example of encroachment by federal decision-making must be resisted to protect the overall level of freedom in our society. The proper role of government is enabling choice, not making choices. When the government makes a choice for individuals – such as through direct contracting of social services – it is paternalistic in nature. There is evidence in the extension file from Richman that says that the “government itself” is the “greatest risk to American society.”

The affirmative can argue that many social services offer choice to recipients so vouchers are not needed for that aspect. Contracts can be devised to provide choice. Government intervention is often justified, especially in the area of fulfilling fundamental human needs and protecting people from exploitation.

States Counterplan

Thesis

The state counterplan solves the case advantage by having states provide the same social services that the affirmative plan does except through state governments instead of the federal government. States are the most effective level of delivery and have the most experience at it right now. The counterplan also avoids the links to the Federalism net benefit as well as the Obama Agenda DA. So you can solve the case as well while avoiding the disadvantages to the plan.

Text

The goal of the state counterplan is to test the words “federal government” in the resolution. The negative writes the counterplan to have the 50 states simulate the action of the federal affirmative plan. Instead of having the federal government do XYZ, the state governments will do XYZ. The strategy attempts to focus the entire debate on which level of government should increase social services to those in poverty.

So when writing the state counterplan the negative tries to come as close as possible to repeating the exact wording of the affirmative plan, except for the parts that deal exclusively with federal aspects.

Also, the counterplan must find a way to include parts of the United States that are not covered by the 50 state governments. Examples of this include Washington D. C. and Puerto Rico. Typically the counterplan agents could be written as “the fifty states, the District of Columbia and relevant territories of the United States should...”

Solvency

To prove the counterplan solves the case you need to describe how state governments can set up policies and implement them as easily as the federal government can. In fact, the state governments have more experience at social work than does the federal government.

Keep in mind that if the affirmative reads indictments with the way states are handling the problem today, that evidence does not apply to the counterplan. The

counterplan improves the way states address the issue in the same way that the affirmative plan addresses current federal failure. For example, if the problem in the status quo is that the states do not spend enough money on homelessness, the counterplan solves that by ensuring (“fiating” in debate lingo) the states spend more.

Here are a couple tips for arguing the solvency of the state counterplan. First, use the affirmative solvency evidence when possible. In many cases the empirical solvency evidence is based on trials or examples that were actually done at the state or local level. Frequently you can “borrow” their evidence to prove the solvency of the states.

Second, describe the plan as something relatively easy to do. Ask questions in cross-examination that expose how easy it is to provide a housing voucher, or counseling about the earned income tax credit. If a policy sounds easy to do then it is more likely the judge will think that “anyone can do it” including the states.

Also there is specific solvency evidence for how the states can solve three of the Core Files affirmatives.

The affirmative can argue that the counterplan doesn’t provide a reason to reject the affirmative plan since the best policy would be to do both because it would provide even more services to those in poverty. The affirmative should describe the problem as very difficult to solve so having more actors working on it at the same time would be worthwhile.

Net Benefit – Federalism

The negative argues that the counterplan can solve the affirmative case without linking to the net benefits. Net benefits are disadvantages that apply to the plan but do not link to the counterplan.

The affirmative plan has the federal government act in an area where the states traditionally act. This signals that our system of federalism – where the states are granted broad authority – is not working. Other nations, who are considering whether or not to establish or lock in a federalist system, look at the United States to see how it is working here. When they see us backing off of it then they will be less committed to it. Federalist structures are good because they defuse ethnic conflicts and calls for secession around the world that could lead to horrible wars and conflicts.

There is a specific India scenario that can be used as an extension. It claims that India models American federalism and that a federalist structure would help defuse war between India and Pakistan over the state of Kashmir.

The negative can also use the Obama Agenda DA as a net benefit for the state counterplan since when the states act it does not affect the President's popularity or the size of his agenda.

The affirmative can argue that the federal government intrudes on the state government all the time on social service programs like Medicare, Social Security and the economic crisis will guarantee even more centralization will follow. They can also win that federalism, as a doctrine is dead and worthless. There are plenty of federalist models throughout the world, not just the United States. Even if other nations might model the general notion of American federalism, individual policy choices, like this one social service action, would not affect their overall perception of the success of our system.

Congress Counterplan

Thesis

The affirmative plan uses the Supreme Court to adopt their plan. The counterplan has the U.S. Congress adopt the counterplan. This sets up an important debate about which branch of government is preferable for achieving social change. The reason the Congress is preferable is that a liberal ruling by the Supreme Court would attract social movements to use the Court in the future in hopes of winning, but they would find failure in the Court. If the Congress acts liberally and organizations shift their strategies to lobbying Congress they will be more successful.

Text

The Congress Counterplan should be worded to adopt the same basic outcome as would be achieved by the Supreme Court action in the plan. In this particular case the Congress would pass the DREAM Act legislation, which would solve the case advantage while also creating an avenue for legalization.

The point is to make the agents the main focus of the debate – Congress vs. the Court.

Solvency

The Congress can guarantee through legislation the same outcome as the Court does. While the Congress can't base their legislation on the U.S. Constitution, they can achieve the same policy as the Court decision. There is a well-developed debate about whether the Court can achieve social change.

An author named Rosenberg wrote a book in 1991 (since updated) where he argued that the Court has not achieved greater social change than would the legislative branches. The Court is controversial and ideologically polarizing – the people who are on the losing end of the Court case view it as illegitimate. In comparison, legislative action is seen as more legitimate by the losing side and less ideologically polarizing since it tends to be seen as the product of compromise and influence by both political sides.

Acceptance by the public is very important in this circumstance since the DREAM Act is controversial and would be strongly opposed by those who are very sensitive

to the illegal immigration issue. The backlash evidence in the negative file proves this.

One interesting policy to consider is how more or less effective would a policy be of BOTH the Court and the Congress acting together. That would be a permutation argument from the affirmative. Perhaps both the Congress and the Court acting together is what it would really take to settle the issue in the public eye, creating conditions for acceptance and attitude change.

Net Benefit – Hollow Hope

When the Supreme Court makes a ruling, how much does that change the world? How important was *Brown v Board of Education*? Did *Roe v Wade* really change anything? Court theorist Gerald Rosenberg decided to investigate these questions in his landmark book, *Hollow Hope*. Rosenberg investigated how many schools were desegregated ten years after the *Brown* ruling. The results were surprising: there was virtually zero evidence that schools had become more integrated in the follow decade.

The hollow hope disadvantage argues that the plan's victory in the Supreme Court will draw other movements, specifically, the environmental movement. The negative argues the environmental movement, due to Obama's victory, is currently focusing on lobbying congress and the president for stronger environmental victories, but the newfound hope in the Supreme Court draws their attention.

Winning court battles is a long and resource consuming process. Advocates must hire lawyers, battle up through the district courts, and perhaps wait years before the Supreme Court will hear their case. Even if the environmental movement would win their case, Rosenberg's *Hollow Hope* provides compelling evidence that it will take decades before the ruling will truly change society.

The impact is about global environmental problems, such as deforestation and global warming. Both of these could have disastrous effects if environmental advocates decide to pick an ineffective way of remedying them.

The affirmative claims that court victories will motivate the environmental movement. Seeing major court victories convinces more people to join the movement and contribute both money and time to battling environmental problems.

Topicality – Housing First

Thesis

Social services are counseling about a social need. The plan provides housing, which is a commodity, not counseling. This means the plan is non-topical or extra-topical. Allowing the affirmative to include commodities would erode the limits on affirmative ground and make the topic too unpredictable for the negative.

Interpretation

There are many definitions of social services. Many of them include provision of benefits such as education, housing etc. The most limiting one is used in this violation – social services are counseling, or as the Babylon’s Dictionary evidence says, “advising the community.”

This negative interpretation is reasonable. It would allow the affirmative to provide person-to-person counseling, care, therapy etc. It would allow the affirmative to counsel about homelessness, for example, how to qualify for federal vouchers.

Violation

The plan provides more than just counseling, it provides housing, which is not person-to-person. Part of the plan is topical, but part is not, so it is extra-topical.

Social services are not commodities they are types of assistance provided by people. Health care is a service provided by people. Mental health screening is a service provided by people.

The negative file has a couple of extension cards where people use the term Housing First in contrast with social services.

Standards

The resolution should be interpreted so that affirmative ground is limited. The affirmative interpretation, that provision of commodities - like housing – is a social service, would mean they could provide any individual product, from soap to milk.

The resolution should be interpreted to provide a division of negative ground. The affirmative should be limited to the ground of providing counseling and the negative should have the ground of providing money and material goods.

The resolution should be interpreted in a way so the negative can predict what the affirmative plan will do. This facilitates clash and encourages research. If it becomes topical for the affirmative to just provide any product, ex. peanut butter, then there is no limit to affirmative ground and the negative would never be able to be prepared.

Extra-topicality

Part of the affirmative plan is topical, but part of it is just the provision of a commodity – housing. If there are non-topical parts of the affirmative plan it creates insurmountable ground and fairness challenges to the negative. The affirmative can add non-topical parts to their plan to spike disadvantages. If they can't provide housing they will lose because there is an absolute housing shortage. Housing First won't work without more available housing.

Affirmative

The affirmative can read their own definitions of social services that include the provision of commodities. They can also say the plan does not directly provide housing; they only encourage private construction of housing through demand generated by the plan. There is no bright line between counseling and commodities – where does the practice of medicine fall? Doctors and psychologists are both counselors but also commodities.

The affirmative can read many cards that use Housing First in the context of providing social services. They can also argue that they provide more access to social services by providing stable housing for the poor. The resolution does not say the government has to provide federal social services, it says the government has to increase social services which they do inside the housing.

The affirmative can also say that the penalty for extra-topicality should be to sever the non-topical part of the plan, or the judge should just not consider it. If housing were taken out of the plan it would still be advantageous because of the supportive services and helping people get into the affordable housing that does now currently exist.

Topicality - Katrina

Thesis

A substantial increase in social services should be a large percentage contextually one example of a percentage is 25%. The affirmative plan is only directed at one city, which covers less than one percent of all those in poverty in the United States. Allowing one-city plans would create impossible limits and ground burdens for the negative.

Interpretation

The notion of a substantial increase depends on the context. A substantial increase in interest rates to the Federal Reserve Board might be one-quarter of one percent. A substantial increase in baseball attendance might be 10 percent. A substantial increase in a budget might be 90%. It all depends on the context.

The Huston evidence in the shell of this violation describes a 25% increase in a social service budget as a “substantial increase.” That seems like a reasonable interpretation – it doesn’t require the affirmative to be 50% or 90%.

Violation

The plan provides social services to the poor in New Orleans, which is far less than 25% of the poor. There are at least 37 million people in poverty and only 48,000 such people now in New Orleans. That is far less than one percent (1%=370,000) in this context.

This violation basically means that addressing one city is not topical.

Standards

The resolution should be interpreted so that affirmative ground is limited. Under the affirmative interpretation they could target their plan to any city or any relatively small group of people. This would make their ground virtually unlimited.

The resolution should be interpreted to provide a division of negative ground. By requiring their plan deal with at least 25% of the population of those in poverty in America it helps assure negative ground on disadvantages.

The resolution should be interpreted in a way so the negative can predict what the affirmative plan will do. This facilitates clash and encourages research.

Affirmative

The affirmative can say that “substantial” can be a qualitative term meaning “important” and the symbolic effect of the Katrina plan is enormous. They can also say that the negative interpretation makes the poor in New Orleans invisible. It penalizes them because so many were forced to leave or died because of the storm and aftermath. The affirmative can also say that 25% is just arbitrary and would rule out any single-social service affirmatives since no one social service would be 25% of the whole.

Topicality – Single Stop

Thesis

Increase means to make greater or larger. Increase modifies social services in the resolution, which means the affirmative must make social services greater or larger. The affirmative only makes it easier for people in poverty to access the currently existing social services; it does not increase the total of social services. All the affirmative does is remove a barrier. If the affirmative simply has to remove a barrier to social services they face great challenges in terms of grounds and predictable limits.

Interpretation

“Increase” means to become greater, larger, or bigger in amount. Social services are the material benefits and goods that are provided by the government to help those in poverty. The affirmative should have to increase the total amount of social services, not just remove barriers to the currently existing services.

Violation

The affirmative Single Stop does not increase the total number of social services; it only helps people get access to the ones that currently exist. It is the same thing as the government paying for cab money for people in poverty to drive to the doctor.

Standards

The resolution should be interpreted so that affirmative ground is limited. If all the affirmative has to do is remove a barrier to currently existing social services they don't have to commit to more resources, which makes their interpretation of the topic very broad.

The resolution should be interpreted to provide a division of negative ground. Making the affirmative expend more resources is the best way to protect the negative's ground. Removing barriers to existing social services would leave the negative little to say.

The resolution should be interpreted in a way so the negative can predict what the affirmative plan will do. This facilitates clash and encourages research. There are a large number of barriers that exist and are not well defined ahead of time. Social service programs are on the books so the negative can predict those. Barriers do not exist in any legal way now and are therefore not as predictable.

Affirmative

The affirmative has two independent strategies. They can argue that the plan directly offers a social service. The counseling at the Single Stop centers is itself a social service, and is person-to-person so it is distinguishable from providing a car.

This is the safest way to go on answering the argument, it also guards against an extra-T argument that some of the discussion at the Single Stop is not about other social services, but about things like jobs, tax credits etc. It's still a social service to the poor to counsel them and help them sign up for programs that will increase their incomes, even if those programs themselves are not social services.

Second, they can argue that increasing access to social services is topical. The current social services do not really exist because no one applies for them. They only become social services when activated. So the affirmative increases food stamps, housing vouchers, EITC etc.

Topicality - Education

(This is basically the same argument as the one vs. the Housing First affirmative, so see the discussion there. The only difference is there are different contextual cards that say education isn't a social service.)