What is Oxford Style Debate?

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What is Debate?

- A communication process in which participants argue for and against a given topic
- A formal method of interactive & position representational argument
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Solution</strong></td>
<td>• Specific question</td>
<td>• To look for a solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do not look for a solution</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Choice</strong></td>
<td>• Two choices</td>
<td>• Many choices</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking rules</strong></td>
<td>• Strict rules of the order &amp; length of speaking</td>
<td>• Move freely with less formal rules</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Purpose of communication</strong></td>
<td>• To insist own position &amp; do not yield to the opponent</td>
<td>• To try to reach an agreement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The third party (audience/judge involvement)</td>
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‘Debate is that it is all about argument’?

- Logical argument & Factual argument

- To develop one’s ability to play from either position with equal ease

- To improve with knowledge & skill of its participants
A formal debating contest

- a rule-based competitive debate
- to discuss & decide on differences within a framework defining how they will interact

Informal debate = a common occurrence
Proposition

“for, ‘Affirmative’” ← “against, ‘Negative’”

Audience Judges
British Parliamentary debate

- Under rules derived from British parliamentary procedure
- The model of “debating”, focusing on rhetoric
- U.K. (The Oxford Union), Australia, India, APDA (Ivy League), etc.
Prime Minister’s Questions (PMQs)

- 30 minute session on a Wednesday
- The Leader of the Opposition: six supplementary questions
- The Leader of the third largest Party: two supplementary questions
British Parliamentary debate format
The Oxford Union Debate

- The world’s most prestigious debating society founded in 1823
- Freedom of speech
- A forum for debate & the discussion of controversial issues
  1. Malcolm X, black empowerment (1960s)
  2. Richard Nixon, Watergate admitted (1970s)
  3. Gerry Adams, IRA (1980s)
  4. O. J. Simpson, His criminal trial (1990s)
- Guest speakers
- less formalised
- Public speaking

- The Unions best Debaters against other debating societies
“This House believes~”

- No cross-examination

<Exit>: Voting
   Noes  Ayes
By Embracing Debate

- We improve our decision-making.
- We sharpen our arguments.
- We enfranchise minority opinions.
- We enliven our communication.
With its emphasis on critical thinking

- Rigorous self-examination
- Tolerance for divergent points of view
- Embodies the ideals of reasoned arguments
- Effective communication
- Independent research
- Efficient teamwork