

*Minimize harm claims. You might not be able to deny that harm exists, but you can show that the extent of the harm is exaggerated. Your objective is to lower the amount of the harm to something your disadvantages can outweigh.*

*Think outside the box on inherency. Negative teams often make the mistake of arguing that the present system is already doing most of what the affirmative plan proposes to do. This is seldom a winning strategy. Consider an affirmative plan proposing to abandon the funding of abstinence-based HIV/AIDS prevention programs in sub-Saharan Africa in favor of condom-based programs. The negative strategy is to win the debate with a politics disadvantage claiming that the Republican right wing would backlash if the policy of promoting abstinence were to be abandoned. The first negative speaker presents an inherency argument claiming the federal government already extensively promotes condom distribution programs in sub-Saharan Africa. This is an exceptionally unwise inherency argument because it proves the disadvantage is untrue. If the Republican right wing were going to use condom distribution as the basis for a backlash, it should already be happening.*

*Negative debaters should avoid inherency arguments based on showing that the affirmative plan is mostly already being done. This type of inherency argument won't win the debate by itself because of the difference between mostly and completely. The affirmative team can always show that its plan goes a little beyond the present system. This type of inherency argument serves only to kill the potential of disadvantages. If the plan has already been mostly adopted, how can the negative persuasively argue that really bad things would happen if the plan were to be completely adopted?*

*The tendency of inherency arguments to destroy disadvantages causes many negative teams to avoid inherency arguments altogether. This is an unfortunate reaction. A better strategy is to present inherency arguments showing that some present system mechanism wholly unlike the affirmative plan is solving the affirmative harm. In the foregoing condom example, the negative can argue that non-U.S. agencies—such as the Global Fund and the World Health Organization—are aggressively promoting condom distribution programs in sub-Saharan Africa. This inherency argument solves the affirmative harm without triggering the right-wing backlash disadvantage.*

*Challenge solvency claims: Solvency is one of the weakest links in any affirmative case. Solvency attacks fall into one or more of the following categories: insufficient evidence, counter-causality, and workability.*

*The insufficiency of evidence is the most common defect of affirmative solvency claims. Debaters, whether affirmative or negative, have a burden of proof to present evidence in support of their claims. If a debater makes a claim but fails to support it with evidence, the opposing team can refute the argument by simply pointing out the*