

PART I

ARGUMENTATION FOR DEBATERS

Discovering the World through Debate prepares debaters to engage in Karl Popper debate, but it also provides a wider understanding of argumentation principles used in other debate formats. Part One provides a useful introduction to argumentation principles critical to all debaters and sets important foundations for the skills presented in Part II and Part III.

Part One consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 situates Karl Popper debate squarely within the public sphere. After briefly discussing how the personal and technical spheres inform the public sphere, it describes important features of public debate and explains the relationship between these features and Karl Popper debate.

Chapter 2 introduces the structure of argument using the concepts of *claims*, *evidence*, *warrant*, and *reservations*—terms borrowed from British scholar Stephen Toulmin.¹ After introducing Toulmin’s basic model of argument, we show how that model can be modified using examples of simple, convergent, and independent argument structures.

Chapter 3 focuses on claims and propositions. We reject the tradition of dividing claims into the familiar categories of fact, value, and policy and introduce a new category system that is more useful for debaters: definition, description, relationship, and evaluation. Chapter 3 is concluded with a discussion of how values are central to all kinds of claims and propositions.

Chapter 4 lays out our system for categorizing evidence. Contrary to the way “evidence” has traditionally been used in debate, we adopt a system that is more consistent with the work of Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca,² two Belgian scholars, who see evidence (what they call the “starting points of argument”) as including not only descriptive or factual evidence but values as well. Following the concepts but not the language of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, we sort evidence into six groups: facts, theories, presumptions, values, value hierarchies, and value categories.

Chapter 5 examines the concept Toulmin labeled “warrants.” We see warrants as the means used by debaters to move from evidence to claim. Chapter 5 makes no pretense of including all kinds of warrants. Our discussion is limited to example, analogy, causality, authority, principle, incompatibility, and dissociation.

Finally, Chapter 6 introduces the idea of the quality of arguments. While the previous five chapters described various argument structures along with their components, this chapter begins a discussion of how arguments can be logically assessed. In Chapter 6, we