

Books about debating rarely treat the last three categories—values, value hierarchies, and value categories—as evidence. Still, they are essential forms of evidence when debating propositions that require evaluation. In addition, as evaluation is central to argumentation and debate, these categories are also important.

In summary, evidence is the starting point of any argument. Debaters select evidence that the audience will find acceptable, then connect that evidence to their claim via a warrant. The categories of evidence we discussed in this chapter include facts, theories, presumptions, values, value hierarchies, and value categories. Much remains to be said about evidence in debate. How does the debater research evidence? How does the debater go about selecting evidence for an argument? How does a debater criticize and evaluate the quality of evidence? We will consider these and other important questions later in this book.



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN CHAPTER 4

- Evidence is the starting point of arguments.
- The two broadest categories of evidence are evidence based on reality and evidence based on preference.
- Evidence based on reality includes facts, theories, and presumptions.
- Facts are observed or potentially observable data.
- Theories are statements that explain other facts or predict the occurrence of events.
- Evidence based on preference includes values, value hierarchies, and value categories.
- Values are evidence based on an audience's preference.
- Value hierarchies are based on how values are arranged with respect to one another.
- Value categories arrange values into groups so that the category itself can be used as evidence.