# SHELL

**A-Interpretation:** “Ought to be” does not imply “ought to do,” but rather, is not agent-implicating. **Hattiangadi[[1]](#footnote-1):**

Third, the statement that ‘rich’ ought not to be applied to poor people does not imply that you (or I, or anyone else) ought not to apply ‘rich’ to poor people. The reason is that **‘ought to be’ is not**, in general, **‘agent-implicating**,**’** (Humberstone 1971)**.** For example, **consider the statement that there ought to be no suffering. Who is ascribed an obligation in this statement?** Not the sufferers. **To say that there ought to be no suffering is not to say that the sufferers ought to** pull themselves together and **stop** suffering**.** Indeed, **no agent is indicated in the statement – though the statement contains the word ‘ought’, it does not ascribe an obligation to anyone.** Moreover, it is not clear that anyone can bring it about that there is no suffering, even if it is true that there ought to be no suffering. Since ‘ought to do’ implies ‘can,’ and ‘ought to be’ does not, ‘ought to be’ does not imply ‘ought to do’ (Humberstone 1971). However, **since ‘ought to be's’ are not agent-implicating, nothing about what a particular agent ought** (not) or may (not) **do can be derived directly from them.** Hence, even if ‘rich’ ought not to be applied to poor people, it does not follow that you, or I, or anyone else, ought not to apply ‘rich’ to poor people**.**

**B- Violation:** The aff reads a plan specifying that the government will take an action to ban handguns. As Hattiangadi contextualizes, however, such a statement can’t affirm an “ought to be” statement, as such statements don’t ascribe obligations to individual actors but rather make statements about the state of the world.

**C- Standards:**

1. **Resolutional Consistency**: **A)** Plans require an agent to implement the plan, but the resolution has no agent since the “government” isn’t in the resolution. If the resolution were to be evaluated with a specific actor in mind it would have specified a context from which we could evaluate. **B)** The resolution is written in the passive voice. If the framers intended for banning handguns to be acted upon by someone, it would have been in the active voice, saying “ought to ban” rather than “ought to be banned”. **Resolutional Consistency** is key to fairness since it controls our ability to predict how the resolution will be interpreted and is key to education since it’s the way we actually are supposed to write in the real world.
2. **Ground**:Most topics specify either an actor or an action, meaning there’s always an implicit check on aff spec since regardless of what the aff chooses the neg can indict the given action’s effectiveness or the given actor’s competence. This topic specifies neither, since “being banned” is just a state of affairs and not an action itself; this means plans let the aff doubly specify both an actor and action where the ground flows almost exclusively one way, killing the neg’s ability to engage substantively. Ground is key since it dictates our ability to argue and win. **At worst,** plans don’t textually affirm. If I have a box full of blue marbles and one red marble, and I pull out the red marble, that doesn’t justify the statement that “this box only has red marbles.” Proving one example of the resolution isn’t sufficient to prove the resolution’s truth.

**D-Voter**: Fairness is a **voter** because unfair arguments arbitrarily skew your evaluation of the round and it precedes substance because it frames its evaluation. Drop the debater **a)** to set a precedent for the best norms of debate, **b)** to deter future abuse, **c)** to rectify time lost running theory, and **d)** the round has been irreversibly skewed so we can’t return to substance fairly. **At worst,** drop the arg means reject all aff offense **a)** my shell is about the entire aff advocacy being abusive, not just a particular argument, so you reject all aff arguments since even turns to the NC will still link into their advocacy, **b)** my shell criticizes an omission that the aff made so dropping the argument can only mean rejecting their advocacy because the aff cant compensate by reading a new text in the 1ar in the same way that they can cross an argument off the flow if its abusive. Use **competing interps** because **a)** what is reasonably fair is arbitrary and **b)** reasonability encourages debaters to get away with increasingly unfair strategies through defense on theory. And, don’t vote on the RVI **a)** both debaters have the burden of being fair, and no one deserves to win for just meeting that burden, **b)** to prevent the deterrence of legitimate theory, **c)** to prevent abusive debaters from winning with huge scripts, and **d)** the aff has the burden of being topical so winning a counter interp only shows that he met the burden.

# AT NO DEFINITION

Extend the interp. This is NOT a theoretical claim, but rather the Hattiangadi card is both a ***DEFINITION*** and a contextualization of what “ought to be” means as a term of art. Extend Hattiangadi – “ought to be” statements are not agent implicating, as they don’t ascribe any sort of action to anyone. The example in the card is really good – just like how saying “there ought to be no suffering” doesn’t confer an obligation on people to stop suffering, saying “handguns ought to be banned” doesn’t confer an obligation on anyone to ban handguns.

***Even if*** you don't think this is true, it's a ***DEFINITION*** of what “ought to be” means, with theoretical reasons to prefer. The **only possible competitive** **counter-interp** on T is **another definition**, since only that can refute why we should accept my framing. For example, if the aff were to read a plan about banning machine guns, a 1ar counter-interp of “the aff may defend machine guns” does nothing to prove the topicality of the plan.

AT C/I: Policymaking OK

Even if you buy that his counter-interp could prove topicality, it’s not competitive anyway. All that my interp says is that any plan that **asserts an actor** is non-topical – I take no stance about what type of action the resolution is, though. He can defend the net benefits of a gun ban without having to assert an actor.

**Impacts:**

1. Disregard all offense to the counter-interpretation. Just like in a plan-counterplan debate, competition is necessary to evaluate the net benefits of the counter-interp.
2. Even if you evaluate counter-interp offense, the fact that it doesn’t contest the topicality of the plan mitigates all of their offense since all of their [*ground / predictability / real world / etc.*] claims aren’t topical aff ground anyway.
3. Evaluate my T offense first anyway:
	1. We only have 2 months to establish norms for the topic because after that it changes. Yet for theory we have an unlimited amount of time to establish norms. Thus, vote on T first in order to establish norms before a topic change.
	2. All arguments only function within the umbrella of the topic. We need to comprehend the scope of the topic before we can understand the nature of all arguments within the topic, like theory.
	3. T constrains theory because the fact that the aff was nontopical left me with no choice but to run an abusive strategy—don’t punish me for something the aff strat forced me to do

# AT C/I: “Resolved = Policy”

Extend Hattiangadi – “ought to be” statements are not agent implicating, as they don’t ascribe any sort of action to anyone. The example in the card is really good – just like how saying “there ought to be no suffering” doesn’t confer an obligation on people to stop suffering, saying “handguns ought to be banned” doesn’t confer an obligation on anyone to ban handguns.

The **counter-interp** isn’t competitive since it **literally defines a different word than the original interp**. Here’s how you should evaluate the clash on the interp level:

1. Prefer my interp since I define a term of art that’s actually in the resolution. “Resolved” is followed by a colon, which linguistically separates it from the actual substance of the topic.
2. Prefer my interp since I explicitly define a term of art in the resolution, whereas their counter-interp is just one word of the resolution without the context of the rest of it. Cross-apply the internal links from grammar as to why internal consistency in sentences is important.
3. Prefer my interp for purposes of topical education. “Resolved” precedes every topic; meaning that buying their interp implies we should exclusively debate policymaking all the time. My interp is a reason why this topic uniquely gives us the chance to learn about non-policy affs.
4. Vote neg since I co-opt the net benefits of the counter-interp. All that my interp says is that any plan that asserts an actor is non-topical – I take no stance about what type of action the resolution is, though. He can defend the net benefits of a gun ban without having to assert an actor.

# Resolutional Consistency First

**A)** The resolution is the most stable basis for prep since we have it preround, controls the internal link to predictability: everyone has access to interpretations of a fixed statement so it generates the most predictable limits which are key to our ability to equally prepare.

**B)** Key to resolvability: the judge assumes the resolution as a precondition for being able to evaluate our speeches and make a decision, resolvability first because its key for the judge to decide the round

**C)** The text of the resolution dictates what arguments we can and cant make, so it controls the internal link to all standards about how we divide ground. “Pigs fly” may be fair ground, but textuality constrains it

**D)** Theory is a way of resolving textual interpretations, but if he is not textual, he doesn’t meet the litmus test for evaluating theory debates so the rest of the theory layer is moot if he’s not textual – this is an independent voter

**E)** If he doesn’t have to defend the text of the resolution then there’s no stable basis for clash, arbitrary modifications mean I don’t know which parts he’ll defend. Clash is the biggest link to education since we get critical thinking skills by engaging each other’s arguments. Other education standards don’t matter since we can learn about philosophy or the topic or how policymaking works by reading newspapers and books

**F)** affirmative means Asserting that something is true or correct so if he hasn’t proven the resolution true he hasn’t affirmed and can’t be the better debater since he hasn’t done what is constituve of affirming meaning regardless of fairness and education you can’t vote for him since he wasn’t the better debater. Since the res is a sentence and sentences only have meaning as grammatical constructs he can’t prove the res true if he isn’t grammatical.

1. Some more thoughts on semantic oughts: a reply to Daniel Whiting

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Oxford Journal of Analysis (2009) 69 (1): 54-63.

http://analysis.oxfordjournals.org/content/69/1/54.full [↑](#footnote-ref-1)