

INTRODUCTION TO BIG SKY BRIEFS

Welcome to the eighth year of Big Sky Briefs! These three volumes represent our efforts to combine the best of research oriented handbooks and teaching tools in the same product. Our materials are guaranteed to be cut for this topic, in the months and days before the season begins, guaranteeing that you will have the most relevant, most thought-provoking research available on the topic. Whether it is for education, competition, or both, we believe that Big Sky Briefs will benefit your program, and we appreciate your support.

The role of handbooks is not without controversy. Some coaches feel that the material limits student exploration and discovery, while others contend that handbook evidence is rarely useful. In our view, the best debate handbooks open doors for students, by providing source material, useful models, and fodder for those early practice rounds at the start of the season. Novice debaters can find the material helpful as they struggle with terms and concepts, and more experienced debaters can use handbooks to fill in research gaps as they acquaint themselves with the topic. No one should expect any debate handbook to carry them through a season of competition—one of the critical skills that debaters must acquire is independent research, and an effective handbook will facilitate and encourage that.

Our goal is to be the most user-friendly and responsive publishers of debate handbooks. Please feel free to contact us with questions, complaints, even praise! Our web site, <http://www.bigskydebate.com> will continue to feature information about the topic all season, research resources, and forums for discussion—for both coaches and students. Please feel free to drop Don (dpogreba@bigskydebate.com) or Jason (jneiffer@bigskydebate.com) an e-mail at any time.

Many thanks to the people who helped make this project possible. Our summer staffer Audrey Dufrechou made invaluable contributions. Finally, the biggest thanks go out to you, the customers who have chosen (once again) to purchase Big Sky Debate materials.

Enjoy the books and good luck to all of you this season! Thanks for being a part of something that is very exciting for us.

-- Pogie and Norm

Big Sky Debate
P.O. Box #7031
Helena, Montana 59604
(406) 202-2761

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