

The Final Round¹

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Osterweis Tournament

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This House would abolish superdelegates.

A Note about the Notes

These are my notes from the final round of Osterweis 2016. They are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what they said or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each argument t “flowed” across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It’s close to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

The Final Round

The final round of Osterweis 2016 was between the AITE team of Stephanie Walsh and Dan Silverstein on Government and the AITE/St.Luke’s team of Daniel Berger and Bill Memon in Opposition. The debate was won by the Government.

1) Prime Minister Constructive

- a) We interpret the motion in the obvious way, and will argue to eliminate superdelegates in the Democratic and Republican party conventions.
- b) Introduction
- c) Statement of the motion
- d) Two possible outcomes: superdelegates vote the same way as voters in the primaries, or they vote differently.
- e) G1²: Superdelegates follow public opinion
 - i) Then they are useless, don’t affect the outcome
 - ii) Harms the process by suggestion obstruction or confusion
 - (1) This could reduce voter participation
 - iii) They are seen to represent the party over the people
 - (1) Vote for establishment candidates
 - (2) Increase polarization
- f) G2: Superdelegates vote against public opinion
 - i) Why bother to have a primary?
 - ii) In a democracy we should all be equal: one person one vote

POI: Why can’t the loser run in the general election?

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² G1 is the first Government contention, O2 the second Opposition contention, and so forth.

Third-party candidates have usually been unsuccessful

- iii) In this case superdelegates are counterproductive
 - (1) Even if they think they are doing what is best for the party
 - (2) Voters will rebel, feel robbed, vote against candidate in election
 - (3) It sets elites against popular opinion

2) Leader of the Opposition Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) Opp then Gov
- c) O1: Superdelegates fulfill the purpose of the primary to get the best candidate
 - i) A party does not include all people
 - ii) Superdelegates are party leaders
 - iii) A candidate that doesn't like the result can start their own party
 - iv) This leads to best candidate for the party
- d) O2: Superdelegates prevent the rise of populism
 - i) Founding Fathers were against direct elections, warned of mob rule
 - (1) E.g. the uneducated, the xenophobic

POI: Didn't the Founding Fathers also say "all men are created equal"?

They can have an equal say, just through another party

- e) G1: Opp's position is actually more democratic
 - i) Superdelegates are consistent with what the Founding Fathers did
- POI: Did the Founding Fathers know about political parties?**
 - By the 1880's they knew**
 - ii) If there is clearly a difference in candidates, loser should run separately
 - (1) E.g. Clinton and Sanders, Sanders could be elected as independent
- f) G2: The party members who don't like the result can run independently

3) Member of Government Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) Opp's main suggestion is for loser to leave and run as independent
 - i) This is impractical as no third-party candidate has ever won.
- c) O1: Political parties should be driven by the people
 - i) That means they should follow the primary vote
- d) O2: In POI on Founding Fathers Opp said 1980!
 - i) In fact George Washington was aware of parties and didn't like them
 - ii) Superdelegates sway the results or create roadblocks for others
- POI: Should party nominate a xenophobe or racist if they are popular?**
 - Yes, if that is what the public decides.**
- e) G1: as we have noted, independent and third-party candidates are not effective
- f) G2: Swaying the vote is bad for our core democratic values
 - i) And it's unconstitutional

4) Member of the Opposition Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) Opp then Gov
- c) O1: Purpose of party is to get a group of people with similar beliefs
 - i) Prop up a candidate in the general election
 - ii) Average voters won't or can't analyze policy in detail

- iii) Party superdelegates carry out set of shared values, do the hardwork of policy analysis
- d) O2: Trump is xenophobic, biased and anti-feminist
 - i) The majority can infringe on the minority's rights
 - ii) Superdelegates carry party's values, protect minorities

POI: Doesn't' the rise of two anti-establishment candidates indicate a problem?

Yes. The Republicans have a xenophobic populist and Sanders plans would fail

- e) G1: Establishment candidates show common values
 - i) They unify the party and get more general support
- f) G2: Superdelegates support more qualified candidates
 - i) They don't oppress minorities

5) Leader of Opposition Rebuttal

- a) What if a xenophobic candidate wins primaries?
 - i) Gov says they should get the nomination
 - ii) This candidate would spew racism to the US and abroad
 - iii) This would be disasterous for policy
- b) Third parties are an option
 - i) Even if they fail to win, voters can still compare candidates
 - ii) They would have to know policies and politics to get party nomination
 - iii) E.g., in 2008 Obama won due to superdelegates
- c) Founding Fathers had similar ideas in mind with the Electoral College

6) Prime Minister Rebuttal

- a) Which sides position best represents the will of the people?
- b) Opp says we need most qualified candidate
 - i) G1: people and superdelegates agree, get same candidate
 - ii) G2: if superdelegate choice wins nomination, they won't be popular and will lose the election
 - iii) Or the party will split, as Opp recommends third-party run
 - (1) Minority candidate wins the election
- c) Best choice is to get rid of the superdelegates and have a clean primary process.