

The Final Round¹

January 2007

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Connecticut Debate Association

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January 20, 2007

Resolved: In the United States, the keeping of animals in zoos should be banned.

A Note about the Notes

I've reproduced my flow chart for the final round below augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. Others may have slightly different versions. I'm sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, at points, "That's not what I said!" I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight that what a judge hears may not be what they say 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 contention "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 was between Glastonbury (Christopher Snyder and Philip Polychroniu) on the Affirmative and Joel Barlow (Isaac May and Jason Kaplan) on the Negative. The debate was won by Joel Barlow.

1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) Definition: "Zoo" is a place that derives income from showcasing animals
- d) A1²: Long-term captivity is harmful.
 - i) The mating and social needs of the animals are not met
 - (1) This results in abnormal behavior

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² "A1" indicates the Affirmative's first contention, "N2" the Negative's second contention and so forth.

- ii) It causes the capture and harm of wild animals
 - (1) This damages the ecosystem
 - iii) Animals are harmed directly
 - (1) Wings are clipped, water for aquatic animals is of poor quality
 - e) A2: Zoo's focus on money, not care
 - i) Commercial firms driven by profit motive
 - ii) Low attendance would lead to a loss, so zoos seek exotic animals
 - iii) Revenue goes to cosmetics and amenities that will please visitors
 - f) Zoos provide entertainment not education
 - i) Plaques have little information and studies show they are rarely read
 - ii) Better forms of education exist
 - (1) Viewing animals in their habitats by safari, whale watching, Audubon societies
 - (2) Technical advance permit viewing by TV and internet, or virtual environments
 - iii) Zoos are artificial
- 2) Cross-Ex of the First Affirmative**
- a) Do zoos contribute some of their revenue for conservation? Yes
 - b) Do zoos play any other conservation purpose? It isn't their main purpose.
 - c) Doesn't whale watching disrupt mating habits? Never gone whale watching.
 - d) Doesn't bird watching disrupt egg laying? It's not the same as disrupting their habitat.
 - e) Zoos are institutions that get money for letting people see animals? They showcase the animals.
 - f) Is the Affirmative against captivity for all animals? We are against long term captivity in zoos
 - g) And it's okay to keep animals captive in other situations? We have no position on that.
- 3) First Negative Constructive**
- a) Introduction
 - b) Statement of Resolution
 - c) Opening Statement: The Bronx Zoo is a glorious, modern facility
 - i) Provides education, conservation and entertainment
 - ii) Entertainment is important to preservation
 - d) N1: We cannot morally or legally get rid of zoos
 - i) if, on the one hand, you insist zoos are bad
 - ii) you must, on the other hand, believe circuses, farms, slaughterhouses are bad
 - iii) It's inconsistent to insist on eliminating one and not the other
 - e) N2: Zoos are good for the community
 - i) People like zoos, over 100 million visitors annually,
 - ii) \$1 billion in revenue, 50,000 employees
 - iii) Bronx and National Zoos are major tourist attractions
 - iv) Zoos are part of the culture
 - v) Zoos are supervised and regulated, not purely for profit
 - f) N3: Zoos provide good conservation programs that save species
 - i) Over \$100 million per year contributed for conservation

- ii) Breeding programs help save gorillas and pandas
 - iii) Zoos provide better education when people see animals in person
 - iv) Zoos connect people directly to the conservation effort
- 4) Cross-ex of the First Negative**
- a) Has the Affirmative argued that zoos are immoral? The Affirmative refused to answer the question
 - b) No answer implies an argument? The Negative believes the Affirmative was unsure what to say.
 - c) Why should the Affirmative answer if it has no position on the issue? If it had a position, it would argue it; failure to argue means it's unwilling.
 - d) How can we prevent the injustices without banning zoos? They are Federally regulated, as the case of the "Me Too" Zoo in the Midwest shows
 - e) Doesn't the government approve? No it regulates conditions.
 - f) So the abuses are approved? Zoos are regulated so the abuses do not persist
- 5) Second Affirmative Constructive**
- a) A1: Zoos harm animals physically and mentally
 - i) Their needs are ignored and normal behavior eliminated, leading to "zoo-chosis"
 - ii) This abuse is immoral
 - b) A2: Renovation to zoos is cosmetic
 - i) It's intended to attract visitors and make money, not help animals
 - c) A3: Information cards in zoos offer little information
 - i) Visitors don't interact with or appreciate the animals
 - ii) Modern technology—internet zoology courses, live feeds and TV specials teach more
 - iii) Entertainment is wrong if it leads to abuse.
 - d) N1: Moral issue isn't the elimination of zoos but elimination of bad treatment in zoos
 - i) Circuses and slaughterhouses are not relevant to this debate
 - e) N2: Jobs provided by zoos don't compensate for torture of animals
 - f) N3: Conservation efforts happen elsewhere, not at zoos.
- 6) Cross-ex of the Second Affirmative**
- a) Do you have any source for animal abuse in zoos other than the PETA³ article? We believe that article reflects zoos today.
 - b) Isn't PETA a biased source? The information presented is correct.
 - c) The Affirmative wants to end animal abuse? The abuse in zoos is not good.
 - d) So you want to end it? Yes
 - e) So zoos are not immoral? They lead to animal abuse, which is immoral.
 - f) Is the Dept. of Environmental Protection aligned with the American Zoological Association? No.
 - g) I've been to zoos and haven't seen the cages and abuses cited by PETA. Why? What you saw did not reflect the national environment in zoos.
 - h) Are zoos underfunded? They have funds, but they don't use them primarily for the animals.
 - i) Does negating the resolution entail supporting the status quo? Yes

³ PETA is "People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals," an animal rights group.

- j) Do you have an example of a zoo that is underfunded? No.
- 7) Second Negative Constructive**
- a) A “zoo” implies captivity, parameters on where an animal can go.
 - i) By this definition Yellowstone is a zoo, as animals are kept in bounds
 - b) The Affirmative presents a 19th Century Victorian image of zoos as dank prisons
 - i) Zoos have changed into admirable institutions that care for the animals
 - ii) Affirmative doesn’t address zoos as they are today.
 - c) N1: The Affirmative refuses to address other issues of animal abuse that follow logically from their cases
 - d) The Negative can propose changes to fix problems short of adopting the resolution
 - e) PETA is a known biased source, with ideas like “canine Americans.”
 - f) “Zoo-chosis” is preventable with better regulations and supervision
 - i) Zoos could be watched as closely as schools are
 - ii) A1 and A2 don’t hold up if sufficient regulation and funds are in place
 - (1) The Indiana zoo that was closed shows supervision works
 - g) N3: Zoos have been successful in simulating animal habitats where they thrive
 - i) Zoos train over 40,000 teachers and spent \$143 million on educational improvements
 - ii) Zoos work through the DEP and AZA on condervation
 - iii) Overall, the benefits outweigh any harms
- 8) Cross-ex of Second Negative**
- a) Would the CDA provide a source that couldn’t be trusted? PETA misrepresents a lot of issues in the name of animal rights.
 - b) Don’t others contribute to education and conservation? Zoos provide the greatest
 - c) What evidence do you have? DEP and AZA
 - d) Doesn’t the government play a role in zoos? A small role
 - e) Couldn’t government money be spent on wildlife sanctuaries? This would eliminate the indispensable education done by zoos
 - f) Isn’t there less animal abuse in sanctuaries? Some zoos are better than others
 - g) Doesn’t our definition of zoos limit them to institutions that keep animals in captivity in order to showcase them? You can still see animals in wildlife preserves.
- 9) First Affirmative Rebuttal**
- a) Keeping animals in zoos should be banned
 - b) The Negative has tried to alter out definition of “zoo” late in debate
 - i) We defined it as an institution that made income from showcasing animals
 - c) The Negative says we have to advocate eliminating other forms of animal captivity
 - i) The Affirmative has no position on circuses and slaughterhouses as these are not relevant to the debate
 - d) Entertainment leads to harm of the animals, and is a moral issue
 - i) The Negative does not hove the same moral values here
 - e) N2: The money zoos raise for conservation could be raised by sanctuaries using the same fundraising channels that exist today.
 - i) Zoo supporters could shift their funding

- f) A1: The Negative questions PETA as a source, but agrees some abuse does happen
- g) A2: Negative says bad zoos are shut down
 - i) Federal regulations may not cover all zoos
- h) A3: We have show zoos provide little educational value, and this has not been addressed by the negative.

10) First Negative Rebuttal

- a) PETA is the Affirmative's only source for the harm of zoos
 - i) PETA has done some good things, perhaps
 - ii) PETA has a history of bias
 - (1) "Milk is evil, drink beer"
 - (2) "My Daddy is a killer for fishing."
- b) Zoos have been cleaned up in the modern era
 - i) Much as education has improved since the 19th Century
 - ii) Bad zoos have been fixed or shut down by Feds or AZA
- c) N3: The Affirmative agrees that zoos provide some funds for conservation
- d) N2: Has been ignored by the Affirmative
 - i) Zoos train teachers, even if the Affirmative claims they could be taught elsewhere
 - ii) Experience is important in learning
 - (1) You don't look at a vacation, you go on a vacation
 - (2) You need to see and experience nature and architecture
 - iii) Entertainment has value in education, as any teacher knows
 - iv) Seeing affects people's attitude towards conservation

11) Second Negative Rebuttal

- a) Captivity was undefined by the Affirmative
 - i) A reasonable interpretation includes Yellowstone
- b) N1: If we eliminate zoos, the logically we have to eliminate circuses, commercial farms, slaughterhouses
- c) N2: The Negative can argue for changes short of adopting the resolution
 - i) Better regulation, enforcement and funding can fix any problems with zoos
 - ii) N2 negates A1 and A2
 - iii) The wolves reintroduced into Yellowstone can't leave, so they are captives
- d) N3: Zoos are not largely negative
 - i) They provide good conservation efforts
 - ii) The impact of seeing is much greater than viewing on TV
 - iii) Zoos are amazing things

12) Second Affirmative Rebuttal

- a) The debate turns on two key points.
- b) Are zoos valid institutions?
 - i) There is much documented abuse of animals
 - ii) The animals are not surviving in their native habitat, leading to abnormal behavior
 - iii) The economic effect is a few jobs versus torture and abuse of millions of animals
 - iv) Zoos are unnecessary for conservation, which can be done other ways.

- c) Are zoos entertainment or education
 - i) Entertainment at a very high cost
 - ii) Negative does not have it's priorities in order
 - iii) Zoo study shows people are not learning
- d) N1: It's immoral to keep animals in zoos
 - i) Circuses and slaughterhouses are irrelevant to the resolution
 - ii) Zoos should be banned
- e) N2: Traveling to Europe on vacation is not a good analogy
 - i) Only the natural environment provides an authentic experience
- f) N3: Government regulation does not work.