

# The 2008/09

# CORE FILES

# Research Guide

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**Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase alternative energy incentives in the United States.**

## Step One: Media Literacy

Policy debate rewards competitors who are knowledgeable about current events. Debaters and their coaches should expect the topic to change throughout the season in response to current events.

Fortunately, keeping up with current events is also a great way for beginning debaters to learn research skills, which are among the most important tools they can take away from their debating experience. The information in this section will explain the easiest ways for beginning debaters to follow current events, analyze their implications for debate rounds, and recognize reliable versus unreliable sources.

### Newspapers

Watching the national news will give debaters a superficial idea of what is going on in the world, which is better than nothing. Watching the local news will give debaters a superficial idea of what is going on in the local dog show circuit, which is probably not better than nothing. Watching CNN will provide some in-depth information and analysis of important issues, but viewers cannot choose their content: they must wait until the topics that interest them make an appearance. In short, there is simply no way to get the benefits of reading the newspaper without reading the newspaper.

Newspaper articles cover issues in more depth than most news programs, and readers can choose to focus on the articles that are of most interest to them. Newspapers vary in quality, but most UDL's are located in large cities, which means that the major paper in the home city of most UDL debaters will be a pretty good source of information.

Fortunately for those who do not have home delivery of their city's major paper, do not live in a city with an especially good newspaper, or simply want to diversify their sources (always a good idea), most of the best newspapers in the country can be read for free online at the following websites:

**The New York Times:** <http://www.nytimes.com/>  
**The Los Angeles Times:** <http://www.latimes.com/>  
**The Washington Post:** <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>  
**The Chicago Tribune:** <http://www.chicagotribune.com/>  
**The Dallas Morning News:** <http://www.dallasnews.com/>

Many papers also make one or two weeks' worth of archives available for free online. To access these archives, or in some cases even to read the day's news,

visitors may have to register. For all of the papers listed above, this is completely free, and in most cases, the registered e-mail address will not receive unwanted advertisements or solicitations. In other words, it is well worth it to take a moment or two to register and gain access to all of this valuable, free information. Registering with the New York Times even gives users the option of having the day's headlines e-mailed to them every morning, an opportunity that debaters ought to exploit.

## Diversity

Although they are well-regarded for their standards of journalistic integrity and objectivity, all of the above papers are sometimes accused of presenting a slightly liberal slant on the news. Those seeking to balance their research with a newspaper considered to be somewhat more conservative can visit The Washington Times at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/>. The Wall Street Journal is also considered a highly reputable paper with a conservative slant, but it is not available for free online.

Another way for debaters to diversify the perspective that they get on the news is to read papers from other countries, many of which are also available for free online. Some of the best British papers are

**The Guardian:** <http://www.guardian.co.uk/>

**The Financial Times:** <http://news.ft.com/home/us>

Debaters will also benefit from keeping up with news in major energy-producing and -consuming nations. For English-language news from Russia, see

**Pravda:** <http://english.pravda.ru/>

**The St. Petersburg Times:** <http://www.sptimes.ru/>

**The Moscow Times:** <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/index.htm>

From China, there's the **Xinhua News Agency:** <http://www.chinaview.cn/>.

However, this is a government-run newspaper that is not necessarily reliable on all issues. The Straits Times (<http://www.straitstimes.com/>), based out of Singapore, generally covers East Asia, including China, fairly well.

Top Indian newspapers published in English include **The Times of India** (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>), **The Hindustan Times** (<http://hindustantimes.com/>), and **The Hindu** (<http://www.hindu.com/>).

## Interest Groups

Newspapers, even those described as having a liberal or conservative slant, strive to present objective, unopinionated accounts of the facts. While it is very helpful for debaters to know the facts about what is going on in the world, they are ultimately interested in arguments. Debaters need to know more than just what is happening; they need to know what people think about what is happening, and what those people are proposing to do about it.

One source of opinions on the news is the editorial pages of newspapers. In addition to featuring commentary by their own editorial staff, major newspapers such as the ones listed here often attract opinion pieces by leading experts and policymakers. These can prove especially valuable to debaters.

Debaters can also find opinionated analysis of the news on the websites of interest groups and think tanks. These organizations focus on lobbying the government on issues of importance to their members. While some are explicitly liberal or conservative, many at least claim to be non-partisan. This is *not* the same as being objective. Members of these organizations likely have strong opinions on the issues they address in their writing and are not afraid to voice them. A member of the American Civil Liberties Union, for example, may be a liberal or a conservative (though the former is more likely), but in any event is likely to be strongly opposed to any attempt by the government to violate civil liberties. As long as debaters keep such biases in mind, these interest groups are a valuable source for researching arguments about current events and how the government ought to respond to them.

The following groups largely support the Affirmative side of the topic:

**Progressive Policy Institute:** <http://www.ppionline.org/>  
**Nuclear Energy Institute:** <http://www.nei.org/>  
**American Coalition for Ethanol:** <http://www.ethanol.org/>  
**Union of Concerned Scientists:** <http://www.ucsusa.org/>

The following groups largely support the Negative side of the topic:

**Cato Institute:** <http://www.cato.org/>  
**Heritage Foundation:** <http://www.heritage.org/>  
**American Enterprise Institute:** <http://www.aei.org/>  
**World Coal Institute:** <http://www.worldcoal.org/>  
**Citizens' Alliance for Responsible Energy:** <http://www.responsibleenergy.org/>

## Government Sources

Policy debate revolves around the policymaking process, and where better to get information about this process than from the policymaking bodies themselves? These resources may not be ideal for day-to-day news, as the information they provide is largely unfiltered. That is, while newspapers selectively report the most important and interesting business of government, government websites often contain detailed information about even relatively trivial happenings. But when something important does happen in the halls of the Supreme Court or on the floor of Congress, debaters can get all the primary information they need, including floor speeches, the full text of legislation, and the full opinions of Supreme Court justices, from the websites associated with these institutions.

**Congress:** <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

**The Supreme Court:** <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/>

**The President:** <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

**US Department of Energy:** <http://www.doe.gov/>

**US Department of State:** <http://www.state.gov/>

**US Department of Agriculture:** <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdhome>

Each year, the **Congressional Research Service** is supposed to compile many government documents related to the year's topic in a document just for high school debaters. This hasn't been published for the 2008-09 topic yet, but when it is, it will be available at

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/serialset/cdocuments/debatetopic.html>.

International organizations and agreements that deal with climate change and alternative energy will be useful as well. Consider the following sources:

**United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change:**

<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

**Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries:**

<http://www.opec.org/home/>

**Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change:** <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

**Kyoto Protocol:** [http://unfccc.int/kyoto\\_protocol/items/2830.php](http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php)

## Reliability

Just because a source has an agenda does not mean that source is unreliable. As long as the author makes a legitimate attempt to get the facts right and makes clear that her opinions are opinions, then she can be considered a reliable source. But there is no shortage of truly unreliable information out there, especially on the internet. Some sources distort the facts to better support their arguments, in an attempt to be funny, or just because they did not do very good research themselves. There are some simple things debaters can do to avoid mistakenly

using such bad information (and debaters should never deliberately use bad information!):

**-Get a second opinion.** If anything seems suspicious, readers can “fact check” a claim with a source that they know to be reliable. For example, a debater who finds a website that claims the current President is actually an alien from outer space impersonating George W. Bush can try to find an article in a reliable source, such as one of the newspapers listed above, that corroborates this story. The President being replaced by a space alien is a big story, so if the New York Times has not mentioned it, it probably did not happen.

**-Look for other mistakes.** If the source cites a “fact” that a debater knows to be wrong, she should consider the entire source to be highly suspect. Other mistakes also cast doubt on a source’s credibility. For example, an author who is not careful enough to avoid simple grammar and spelling mistakes has probably not researched her facts very carefully either.

**-Look for qualifications.** Most articles will give the author’s qualifications at the beginning or the end of the piece. If the author is an expert *in the field that her article discusses*, then she is probably reliable. However, a highly qualified lawyer analyzing statistics may not be the most reliable source, not because she is an unintelligent person, but because she may not be trained in how to analyze statistics (then again, maybe she is, but if the article is about statistics and the author’s background in statistics is not mentioned in her qualifications, then she probably does not have much of a background in statistics.)

**-When in doubt, throw it out.** Debaters can always make arguments in their own words. The purpose of evidence is to add the weight of expert opinion to these arguments. Evidence from questionable sources, then, is not very valuable, because there is no weight behind it. The argument may still be true, but the debater might as well make it in her own words as read a piece of evidence from a questionable source. In a worst case scenario, debaters could even lose a round based on unethical use of evidence if they are citing false “facts” from unreliable sources. Thus, it is best simply to avoid using sources whose credibility is in doubt.

## Stories to Watch

Although almost every major news story could affect a debate in some way, it is especially important for debaters to keep an eye on certain stories. While others will undoubtedly appear throughout the season, there are many issues related to public health and/or Sub-Saharan Africa that are already making headlines every day and will continue to do so:

**Presidential Election-** The upcoming presidential election will provide fodder for disadvantages in many debate circuits. Debaters should have up-to-date information on how each of the candidates is doing and what his top priorities will be if he is elected. Energy policy proposals will of course be of particular interest. McCain has supported off-shore oil drilling and the construction of new nuclear plants, while Obama favors investment in renewable energy and an emphasis on fuel efficiency.

**Presidential Popularity, Political Capital, and Agenda-** In many debate circuits, disadvantages relating to the popularity and political strength, or capital, of the President are part of most Negative strategies. Thus, debaters must be aware of the items currently on the President's agenda. With Democrats now in control of Congress and his final term as president coming to an end, Bush will be looking to push his agenda largely through executive orders and regulations. Debaters will need to know the arguments for and against items on his agenda as well as the likelihood of their passing in the status quo.

They will also need to be aware of initiatives proposed by the new president when he takes office in January. The first 100 days of a president's term have historically been his best window of opportunity to push through new policies, and a lot of the political science literature that provides the links and internal links for politics debates is specific to these first 100 days.

**War in Iraq-** Iraq looms large over virtually everything the US does these days. Developments in the war will affect everything from the price of oil to the US' soft power to the popularity of President Bush.

**Iran-** As an oil exporting nation and a major player in Middle East politics, Iran could influence this year's topic, especially if the US or Israel attacks them.

**Russia-** Russia has a new prime minister, Dmitry Medvedev. Medvedev formerly chaired the board of Gazprom, an energy corporation whose supplies of oil and natural gas are second only to those of Saudi Arabia. Medvedev's policies will influence both Russia's economy and the price of oil and other energy commodities around the world.

**Domestic Oil Production-** With gasoline prices at an all-time high, there is increased interest in expanding domestic production of oil. President Bush has renewed his push for drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), while Republican presidential candidate John McCain has proposed lifting the ban on offshore oil drilling.

**Energy Prices-** The prices of oil and coal influence not only the Russian Economy and Coal disadvantages but also the Harms for certain cases. For instance, if the

price of oil remains high, there may not be as much need for the government to create incentives for biofuels. Expensive gas will be its own incentive to find an alternative.



## Step Two: Background Reading

It takes more than knowledge of current events, Harms areas, and Disadvantage links to do well at debate. Understanding the arguments that win debate rounds requires understanding the history and context of many topics. A number of these topics are listed below, along with questions about each topic and some resources to help debaters get started on their research. In this exercise, debaters should research answers to each of the questions, but instead of simply writing the answer, they should "cut" a piece of evidence that contains the answer, remembering to provide a full citation for each "card".

### Global Warming

1. Why is global warming dangerous for humanity?
2. What is the primary greenhouse gas that human activity releases into the atmosphere?
3. How does energy production contribute to global warming?
4. What is the Kyoto Protocol?

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"What is Climate Change?" *United Nations Environment Programme*. Accessed 4 Aug 2008. <<http://www.unep.org/Themes/climatechange/whatis/index.asp>>.

"Global Warming Frequently Asked Questions" *National Climatic Data Center*. May 8, 2008. <<http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/globalwarming.html>>.

### Oil

1. What are fossil fuels? List some examples.
2. Which nations export the most oil?
3. What is Peak Oil?

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Chicago, Illinois 60604  
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Chughtai, Osman and Shannon, David. Fossil Fuels. Accessed 4 Aug 2008.  
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"Peak Oil Primer." Energy Bulletin. 17 July 2008.  
<<http://www.energybulletin.net/primer>>.

Central Intelligence Agency. "Rank Order- Oil- Exports." 24 July 2008.  
<<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2176rank.html>>.

## Economics

1. How does increased **supply** affect the price of oil or coal? How does increased **demand** affect these prices?
2. How do oil and coal prices affect the production of alternative energy?
3. How can the US federal government use taxes to encourage the use of alternative energy?

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<[http://fuelfocus.nrcan.gc.ca/fact\\_sheets/oilmarket\\_e.cfm](http://fuelfocus.nrcan.gc.ca/fact_sheets/oilmarket_e.cfm)>.

Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development. "Can Taxes on Energy Work?" OECD Observer. Dec 2006.  
<[http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/2100/Can\\_taxes\\_on\\_energy\\_work\\_.html](http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/2100/Can_taxes_on_energy_work_.html)>.

## Nuclear Power

1. What is the raw material from which nuclear energy is derived?
2. What happened at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant?
3. What is nuclear waste?
4. What is the significance of Yucca Mountain?

Brain, Marshall. "How Nuclear Power Works." *How Stuff Works*. Accessed 5 Aug 2008. <<http://www.howstuffworks.com/nuclear-power.htm>>.

Institute for Energy and Environmental Research. "If Not Yucca Mountain, Then What?" Dec 2001. <<http://www.ieer.org/fctsheets/yuccaalt.html>>.

"Nuclear power." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 3 Aug 2008, 14:28 UTC. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 5 Aug 2008 <[http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nuclear\\_power&oldid=229587829](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nuclear_power&oldid=229587829)>.

## Step Three: Improving the Core Files

The Core Files are not perfect, and even if they were, there would still be some value to updating them with independent research. More important than the strength of an argument in its own right is the depth of a debater's understanding of that argument. No matter how well a debater may understand an argument researched by someone else, she will always be more familiar with those that she found herself. Researching forces debaters to go through a very valuable process of thinking about their evidence in context and learning the warrants for their arguments inside and out. This portion of the Research Guide will help students to recognize ways that they can improve upon existing Core Files arguments with independent research.

### More Recent Evidence

Some arguments are very time-dependent. That is, they are true at some times but not at others. The claim, "The President's popularity is at an all-time high" may be true this week, but by next week his poll numbers may have dropped. The claim, "Torture is immoral," may be true or false, but in any case its truth is not time-dependent. If torture is wrong now, then it was wrong a month ago and five hundred years ago.

A debater reading months-old evidence about the President's popularity is wasting her time. Thus, it is important for debaters to identify time-dependent arguments in their files so that they can update them before competitions. As a general rule, arguments that describe the *status quo*, such as Uniqueness and Inherency, are most likely to be time-dependent.

Following are some examples of time-dependent arguments from the Core Files:

**Russian Economy Disadvantage Uniqueness-** To win this argument, the Negative must prove both that oil prices are high now and that Russia's economy is doing well now. Either of these items could change at any time, and both are vulnerable to Affirmative teams with more recent non-uniqueness evidence. Thus, debaters who rely on this argument would do well to find up-to-date evidence about oil prices and the state of Russia's economy before competitions.

**Coal Disadvantage Uniqueness-** Like the price of oil, the price of coal and the health of the US coal industry could change quickly. Negative debaters should always be prepared with recent evidence to support their claim that high coal prices are keeping the industry afloat.

**Cap-and-Trade American Leadership Harms-** The Hamre evidence from the 1AC argues that the US has made unpopular decisions and is not perceived as a

“team player” internationally. However, this may well change over the course of the year. A controversial new policy action by the US, for example an attack against Iran, might create so much resentment that the plan could not overcome it. On the other hand, an announcement to withdraw troops from Iraq could boost the US’ credibility and eliminate the need for the plan, at least with regard to this Harms scenario.

**Nuclear Power Inherency-** Republican presidential candidate John McCain has advocated an expansion of nuclear power. He has specifically expressed concerns about on-site storage of nuclear waste. Though his proposed solution, to store waste in Yucca Mountain, is different from that of the plan, such a policy might still undermine the need for the plan. Especially if McCain wins the election, debaters should keep a close eye on federal action dealing with nuclear power.

### ***Where to Find It***

Cutting more recent evidence to support existing Core Files arguments is a natural extension of the basic research all debaters should be doing anyway to keep up with current events. That means that majority of this evidence can come directly from the newspaper or an update provided by an interest group website. At the very least, current events research should ‘tip off’ debaters to important arguments for which they will need to do a more targeted search. For more information on conducting current events research, see Step One of this guide.

### **More Reliable Source**

A second way to improve upon existing evidence is to find a better source who makes the same claim. In some cases, the source for an argument simply may not be an expert in relevant subject matter. One example is a journalist or staff writer for a newspaper. This individual is likely to be relatively intelligent and well-informed about the issue on which she is writing, but nonetheless her knowledge of the topic pales in comparison to someone who has spent her professional life studying it. In other words, evidence from an expert in terrorism that indicates another attack is inevitable would be more compelling, on balance, than the same argument made by a staff writer for the New York Times.

Bear in mind that other factors, such as the quality of the warrants used to support the claim, may still make the New York Times evidence on-balance better. However, all other things being equal, an expert source is preferable to a non-expert, or ‘lay person’, source.

Another factor to consider is a source’s potential bias. Evidence from an industry representative or lobbyist may be biased since it is the job of these individuals to advocate for policy that will benefit their industry.

It is important to recognize, however, that an opinion does not necessarily mean a bias. The Executive Director of the Nuclear Energy Institute is likely to argue strongly in favor of nuclear energy, but that does not mean he is motivated only by financial interests or that his arguments do not reflect his true opinions. More probably, he was already a strong believer in nuclear power, and that is why he took a job as head of the NEI.

Following are some examples of Core Files arguments that might benefit from evidence from a different source:

**Biofuels Oil Dependence Harms Negative-** The first piece of evidence in the Oil Dependence Harms 1NC Frontline comes from the US Department of Energy, which is part of the executive branch of government. In other words, the department works for President Bush. It is no surprise that one of its reports would state that the President's Biofuels Initiative is succeeding. A more objective author making the same claim would carry more weight.

**Russian Economy Disadvantage Answers-** Many of the Affirmative's sources for 2AC evidence are journalists presenting arguments about the state of Russia's economy and the harm done by high oil prices. Though these individuals may be well-informed, an economist who specializes in Russia would probably be more qualified to make these same claims.

**Coal Disadvantage Answers to Biodiversity Turn-** The Negative's answers to arguments about the environmental harms of mining come largely from industry sources. That is, they are quoting representatives of the coal industry who claim that coal mining does not harm biodiversity. It doesn't intrinsically make them wrong, but these sources are funded by coal companies to produce arguments like this. Independent geologists or environmentalists would be a more reliable source.

### ***Where to Find It***

Though far from perfect, print sources such as books, magazines, and newspapers are much more likely to be reliable than are internet sources. Most of these publications include an "About the Author" section at the beginning or end of the piece that detail the author's qualifications. Many also contain Endnotes or a Bibliography that references other works on the same topic. Debaters who are looking for a more qualified source that makes the same argument as a source they have now can check to see if the current author has cited any other sources that would be worth exploring.

Although websites are less likely to be professionally edited and fact-checked than are print sources, there are still plenty of reliable sources of information. The

safest bet is to stick with sources that have 'name recognition', such as CNN or the United Nations. Some internet sources may contain Endnotes or Bibliographies that reference other authors, but many websites also have a "Links" section that connects researchers to like-minded sources and organizations. If a debater is looking to find a more reliable source for an argument she got off of the internet, she should check to see which other sites the original author links on her website.

## Different Warrants

Warrants, or the reasons that an author gives to support her claims, are the backbone of evidence. When they first begin their careers, many debaters prefer evidence that is highly rhetorical; that is, they love to read cards that make strongly worded claims. More sophisticated debaters recognize, however, that the best evidence is that which offers strong warrants to support the central claims. Debaters seeking to improve Core Files arguments, then, would do well to seek out evidence that contains different, stronger warrants than those they currently use.

Following are some examples of Core Files arguments that might benefit from evidence with different warrants:

**RPS Environmental Racism Harms-** The Barndt card is one of the most popular pieces of debate evidence because it contains some pretty flaming rhetoric linking racism to global destruction. It is, however, short on warrants, which is to say there is very little explanation of *how* racism will lead to global destruction. Debaters looking for an impact that can stand up to intense scrutiny may want to find one that is a bit smaller but more compelling. In this case, the claim in question is "Racism is bad," and the warrant being replaced is "Racism leads to global destruction." In other words, debaters are not likely to find another author who argues that racism leads to global destruction, but they should be able to find different reasons for why racism is bad.

**Biofuels Rural Economy Harms-** The Edmondson '08 evidence serves to connect the decline of the US agricultural sector to worldwide economic collapse. However, it says only that US agricultural trade makes important contributions to the world economy. It does not explicitly argue that problems with US agriculture would crash the global economy. The Edmondson evidence could be supplemented or even replaced by evidence that warrants this argument more clearly.

**Business Confidence Disadvantage Link-** The Murray evidence says that shifting away from fossil fuels would hurt economic growth, but it doesn't explicitly address businesses and business confidence explicitly. Evidence with more specific

warrants for how higher energy prices would influence business confidence would make the argument stronger.

### ***Where to Find It***

There is no easy answer to how to find evidence with better warrants than those in the Core Files. After all, if we had one, those arguments would already be in the Core Files! Some of the passages above contain suggestions about where to find evidence relevant to that particular topic. As a general rule, longer sources are more likely to contain multiple, strong warrants for their claims than are shorter ones. So, articles from academic journals will be more helpful than newspaper articles, and books may turn out to be the most helpful.

## Step Four: Researching a New Position

The most rewarding research projects are those where students conduct the whole process, from beginning to end, themselves and produce an entirely new argument of their own creation. Provided that the debater already has some basic research skills and does not undertake a project that is too complex, this does not have to be as difficult as it may sound.

This portion of the Research Guide will walk debaters through the creation of a new disadvantage modeled on the Russian Economy Disadvantage.

### Researching Saudi Arabian Oil

**Summary-** Notice that the Longmuir evidence that serves as a link for the Russian Economy Disadvantage is not specific to Russia. Longmuir talks broadly about the economic and political consequences of alternative energy for countries whose economies are built around oil production. Russia is just one scenario for how alternative energy could destabilize an oil producing country. Negatives could easily follow this model to create disadvantages about other major oil exporters such as Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, or Mexico. This section of the Research Guide will demonstrate how, using a Saudi Arabia scenario as an example.

**Uniqueness-** The Agence France Presse evidence from the Russian Economy Disadvantage 1NC Shell works just as well as uniqueness for a Saudi Arabia scenario. The argument is the same: oil prices will remain high in the status quo. For evidence about how this will specifically benefit the economy of Saudi Arabia, here is one possible source:

Bourland, Brad. "Oil Surge." *Saudi-US Relations Information Service*. May 9, 2008. <<http://www.saudi-us-relations.org/articles/2008/loi/080509-bourland-oil.html>>.

**Link-** The Longmuir evidence from the Russian Economy shell could function as a link, but there is no shortage of evidence about how the US oil market is critical to the health of Saudi Arabia's economy. This article says that decreasing demand in the US would enable Russia to overtake Saudi Arabia as the world's major oil supplier:

Morse, Edward and Richard, James. "The Battle for Energy Dominance." *Foreign Affairs*. March/April 2002. <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020301faessay7969-p10/edward-l-morse-james-richard/the-battle-for-energy-dominance.html>>.

This article argues that alternative fuels would displace Saudi Arabian oil:

Newman, Rick. "Why More Saudi Oil Could Harm American Consumers." *US News and World Report*. June 24, 2008.  
<<http://www.usnews.com/blogs/flowchart/2008/6/24/why-more-saudi-oil-could-harm-american-consumers.html>>.

**Impact-** There are many reasons why disrupting the Saudi Arabian economy could be bad. One possibility is to argue, as this article does, that Saudi oil is essential for the health of the world economy:

Glick, Caroline. "Defeating Oil." *JPost*. May 7, 2004.  
<<http://www.jr.co.il/articles/politics/defeating-oil.txt>>.

This is not in itself an impact, though. Negatives must go one step further and explain why a global economic collapse would be bad. The Bearden evidence which can be found on in the Biofuels 1AC on page 101 of the Core Files argues that such a collapse would result in human extinction.

## Answering Saudi Arabian Oil

**Summary-** An impact turn strategy is probably the easiest way to answer this disadvantage. There are many reasons why it is bad for the United States to be reliant on Saudi Arabian oil. The "Oil Dependence" Harms scenario in the Biofuels Affirmative Case does not usually mention Saudi Arabia specifically, but many of the arguments are applicable. It is a good source for inspiration. Below are some more ideas and some recommendations for further research to make the arguments more specific to Saudi Arabia.

**Uniqueness-** The Affirmative can argue that Saudi Arabia will not remain the major supplier of oil to the US regardless of whether the plan is passed. This article argues that Saudi Arabia's oil reserves may actually be declining in the status quo:

Heinberg, Richard. "Mideast at a Crossroads." *Life After the Oil Crash*. 2006.  
<<http://lifeaftertheoilcrash.net/OriginalArticles/Crossroads.html>>.

Recently, both Senator McCain and Senator Obama have indicated that they would support some amount of drilling for oil in US waters. If the US were to produce significant oil domestically in this way, it could offset imports from Saudi Arabia in the same way that alternative energy would. This means that the impacts of the Negative's disadvantage, if true, would occur even without the plan. Here is one article comparing the potential yield from offshore drilling to what the US imports from Saudi Arabia:

Lieberman, Ben. "Lifting the Offshore Drilling Ban." *The Heritage Foundation*. 14 July 2008.

<<http://www.heritage.org/Research/Energyandenvironment/wm1990.cfm>>.

**Link-** Since the goal here is to turn the impact and argue that dependence on Saudi Arabian oil is bad, the Affirmative must avoid turning the link by arguing that the plan would actually encourage the US to get more oil from Saudi Arabia. This would be a "double turn" contradiction.

The Affirmative can, however, make defensive arguments against the link by claiming that other factors will influence Saudi Arabia's oil exports more than the US. This evidence is already in the Core Files, as answers to the Russian Economy Disadvantage. The same arguments about how other countries like China and India will be more important than the US can be used to answer the link to this disadvantage.

**Impact-** This is the most important part of the answers, as it could turn the disadvantage into a round-winning argument for the Affirmative. Start by reading through the Oil Dependence Harms Scenario in the Biofuels 1AC. The arguments about how importing oil hinders the US in its foreign policy and encourages terrorism apply perfectly well to Saudi Arabia. Some of this evidence can and should be read as answers to a Saudi Arabian Oil Disadvantage.

This article, which also contains some useful Negative evidence, makes these same arguments in the context of Saudi Arabia:

Morse, Edward and Richard, James. "The Battle for Energy Dominance." *Foreign Affairs*. March/April 2002. <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20020301faessay7969-p10/edward-l-morse-james-richard/the-battle-for-energy-dominance.html>>.

And the Negative's own impact article also contains a passage that suggests alternative energy could prevent the impact by making Saudi Arabian oil less important to the global economy:

Glick, Caroline. "Defeating Oil." *JPost*. May 7, 2004.  
<<http://www.jr.co.il/articles/politics/defeating-oil.txt>>.