

Trigger Warning Theory

Interpretation:

Before their speech, debaters must disclose if their speech discusses non-graphic or graphic potentially triggering subject matters, *as well as offer to alter their speeches* to remove this content. In other words, read a trigger warning.

Violation:

They discussed ___ in their speech without reading a trigger warning.

Standards:

The Sole Standard is Safety:

Trigger warnings keep survivors or those potentially triggered by these topics safe and comfortable.

Innocent Lives Foundation (**I.L.F.**), 2020. "Importance of Trigger Warnings."

<https://www.innocentlivesfoundation.org/importance-of-trigger-warnings/>

While each of these symptoms is equally awful, we wanted to offer you a way you could help survivors cope with everyday life. Trigger warnings are simple ways to help survivors avoid reliving the event, reduce distress, and allow them to prepare themselves mentally. The American Psychological Association shares that vivid memories of trauma are more distressing if they happen without any warning than if the survivor intentionally thinks about their trauma. Instead, unprompted triggering information can cause a host of other issues from mental health disorders like panic attacks, difficulty sleeping, and more. Trigger warnings are respectful ways to communicate about deeply personal issues while refraining from delegitimizing someone's experience. This does not mean that you must avoid the topic altogether—it simply means that you should address the topic with nuance. People argue that trigger warnings do not allow the survivor to heal from the PTSD, and this article does not dispute this claim. Rather, trigger warnings acknowledge and respect that people must deal with their trauma when they are ready; therefore, it does not force them to deal with their triggers if they are not ready. Ultimately, it is up to the survivor to decide when they are ready to deal with their PTSD. Like the American Psychological Association said, memories of trauma are worse without warning.

Making someone upset or unsafe in round is not only unethical, but it undermines the educational factor of debate by reducing the focus on round content.

Voters:

Vote on Education:

Education is the only portable skill in debate, and is the sole reason programs fund the activity.

Also on Fairness:

Content without trigger warnings runs the risk of preventing a team from debating to their fullest potential.

Drop the Debater (3 Reasons):

1: A vote for us encourages a positive model of debate in which no one is at risk of reliving traumatizing events. Wins and losses dictate the direction of the activity, so teams losing for bad practice incentivises change.

2: Drop-the-argument becomes drop-the-debater, since none of their arguments had any trigger warning.

3: Once the safety of a round is undermined, it can't be undone.

Judge intervention is bad, so default competing interpretations.

(R.V.I.)

This shell is not a *reverse voting issue*, meaning that they can't gain offense on an R.V.I. or a counter-interpretation for one reason.

A) R.V.I.'s chill theory. If we lose just for being wrong, no one would ever risk checking back against abuse. This type of abuse is most critical to check back against, since it can have post-round implications.