

**AUGUST 2016**

---

**G4S: DOPING  
IN SPORT**

---

**ADAM RAWCLIFFE**

**MOTION:**

**“WE SHOULD  
PERMIT THE USE  
OF PERFORMANCE  
ENHANCING DRUGS  
IN SPORT”**

**DEBATING MATTERS  
TOPIC  
GUIDES**

[www.debatingmatters.com](http://www.debatingmatters.com)

**DEBATING || BEYOND  
MATTERS || BARS**

## **ABOUT DEBATING MATTERS**

Debating Matters because ideas matter. This is the premise of the Institute of Ideas Debating Matters Competition for sixth form students which emphasises substance, not just style, and the importance of taking ideas seriously. Debating Matters presents schools with an innovative and engaging approach to debating, where the real-world debates and a challenging format, including panel judges who engage with the students, appeal to students from a wide range of backgrounds, including schools with a long tradition of debating and those with none.

# **A PROJECT BY**

**Institute of Ideas**



**Debating Matters Beyond Bars takes our challenging schools debating competition format into HMP Birmingham.**

Teams of prisoners will engage each other in debate on a series of contemporary social, political, biomedical and cultural debates, encouraging inmates to think about the world around them, beyond bars.

When Debating Matters was launched in schools in 2003, it was intended as antidote to a belief that young people were unable to argue and discuss some of society's most contentious social and political questions.

Debating Matters Beyond Bars will encourage prisoners to research and argue about the ethical rights and wrongs of the big issues facing society, using reasoned, well evidenced argument which we hope it will be an important addition to Birmingham's educational work.

This project is an exciting opportunity to demonstrate that debate can flourish in unexpected places and that no idea should be beyond critical discussion or contest.

# CONTENTS

**Introduction**

**Key terms**

**The Doping in sport debate in context**

**Essential reading**

**Backgrounders**

**Organisations**

**Audio/Visual**

**In the news**

## KEY TERMS

[Anabolic Steroid](#)

[Doping](#)

[Erythropoietin \(EPO\)](#)

[Gene doping](#)

[Performance Enhancement](#)

# INTRODUCTION

1 of 6

# NOTES

1  
1  
2  
4  
5  
5  
6  
6

In February this year, five time Grand-Slam tennis champion Maria Sharapova tested positive for prohibited substance meldonium, and was banned from all competition for two years as a result [Ref: [BBC Sport](#)]. As well as this, in what has been a turbulent few months in the debate on doping in sport, Russian athletes were given a blanket ban from this summer’s Rio Olympic Games, after the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) published a damning report on Russian sport – claiming that: “Russia operated a state-sponsored doping programme for four years” [Ref: [BBC News](#)]. However, this ruling was controversially overturned in July by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) [Ref: [CNN](#)], leaving Russian athletes free to compete unless their sporting federations said that they couldn’t [Ref: [Telegraph](#)]. Famously, these events follow the lengthy case of former seven-time winner of the Tour de France Lance Armstrong, who finally admitted the consistent use of performance enhancing drugs (PEDs) throughout his career, and being the ringleader of what has been described as “the most sophisticated, professionalised and successful doping program that sport had ever seen” [Ref: [BBC Sport](#)]. In 2013 ‘the blackest day in Australian sport’ followed a report from the Australian Crime Commission which reported widespread use of performance enhancing drugs in Australia, particularly in the Australian Football League [Ref: [Sydney Morning Herald](#)]. And evidence suggests that of 21 podium finishers in the Tour de France 1999-2005, 20 are suspected or proven to have used banned substances [Ref: [Practical Ethics Blog](#)]. Despite publicising itself as ‘the toughest Olympics ever’ on drug cheats, 107 athletes tested positive to doping prior to London 2012, and numerous athletes who passed tests throughout the games have since tested positive - including the Russian swimmer Yulia Efimova, and Jamaican sprinters Asafa Powell and Sherone Simpson [Ref: [aeon](#)]. This has led many commentators to question the ability of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to control the use of illegal aids in sport [Ref: [Huffington Post](#)], and has prompted debate about whether doping in sport is in fact ethically wrong, or simply a means for athletes to excel.

# THE DOPING IN SPORT DEBATE IN CONTEXT

2 of 6

NOTES

## What are Performance enhancing drugs, and are they safe?

The use of artificial substances or methods to enhance athletic performance dates back as far as the 776 BC Olympics, according to some commentators, where athletes would use cola plants and even eat sheep's testicles in an effort to increase performance [Ref: [Observer](#)]. Manipulation of the body, through training, diet and the use of equipment, has always been an accepted part of athletic activity. The World Anti Doping Agency (WADA), in its 2015 Code, places strict restrictions upon substances that meet two of the following criteria: (1) they are a danger to health; (2) they lead to performance enhancement; or (3) their use is contrary to the spirit of sport [Ref: [WADA](#)]. Those opposed to doping point to the health risks associated with performance enhancing drugs, noting that anabolic steroids can cause infertility, liver abnormalities, tumours and numerous psychiatric disorders [Ref: [USADA](#)]. For example the hormone erythropoietin (EPO) thickens the blood, increasing the risk of clotting, strokes and heart failure; and some users stop being able to produce red blood cells and can become dependent on it [Ref: [Telegraph](#)]. After a Cycling Independent Reform Commission report found that "doping in amateur cycling is becoming endemic", many now fear that amateur athletes, following the example set by professionals, will fall victim to the same health problems [Ref: [BBC Sport](#)]. There are even suggestions that child athletes in Russia are being encouraged to take performance enhancing drugs [Ref: [Guardian](#)].

## Is performance enhancement a bad thing?

According to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), and anti-doping commentators, performance enhancing drugs devalue athletic achievement which they define as "the pursuit of human excellence through the dedicated perfection of each person's natural talents" [Ref: [WADA](#)]. However, enhancement can take many forms; biological, technological and chemical, many of which are permitted in sport – baseball players are permitted to have laser eye surgery to improve their eyesight, as well as ligament transplants to aid pitching speed and reduce injury [Ref: [New Yorker](#)], and enhancements like wearable technology only serve to distance us further from our natural limits [Ref: [Law in Sport](#)]. For some, such as writer Radley Balko, the concept of enhancement is fundamental to the pursuit of excellence in sport: "Ingenuity, innovation, nutrition, and knowledge about what makes us faster and stronger, has always been a part of the game" [Ref: [Huffington Post](#)]. After all, sports people train, alter their diets and take supplements so as to turn the athlete "into an improved version of his natural self" [Ref: [New Yorker](#)]. If this is the case, then why do we object to sports people using performance enhancing drugs to do this? Are performance enhancing drugs a victim of "an accident of language" which gives them a false connection with drugs like crack cocaine and heroin [Ref: [CNN](#)]? For those opposed to performance enhancing drugs the distinction isn't a technical one, but ethical in nature - as one commentator points out, "the moral offence lies in the diminishing of the very idea of sport as a contest of merit and fair play" [Ref: [CS Monitor](#)]. But perhaps more profoundly, some suggest whilst lamenting the decline of sportsmanship, that if we were to permit the use of performance enhancing drugs, the

## THE DOPING IN SPORT DEBATE IN CONTEXT CONTINUED...

3 of 6

NOTES

effect would be corrosive for us more broadly, because: “Sports have always been the repository of a culture’s values, mirroring and shaping society” [Ref: [City Journal](#)].

### The ethics of doping – would it undermine the ‘spirit of sport’?

Those critical of the use of performance enhancing drugs worry that the ‘all or nothing’ culture pervasive in professional sport, in which: “Second place is first loser” [Ref: [Telegraph](#)] drives the need for sportsmen to continually seek ways of coming out on top. They argue that doping undermines sportsmanship more generally, and deprives athletes of a level playing field if some choose to take drugs and others do not [Ref: [Huffington Post](#)].

An unforeseen consequence of this, they suggest, could be that permitting the use of performance enhancing drugs would only advantage rich countries who would be able to fund more advanced doping programs – further entrenching unfairness [Ref: [Outside Online](#)]. However, it is worth noting that some performance enhancing drugs are relatively cheap - a cyclist can buy enough EPO to last a season for just £1,000 when a set of carbon fibre wheels costs £2,000 or more [Ref: [BBC Sport](#)].

Writer and author Malcolm Gladwell notes that some individuals “carry genes that put them far ahead of ordinary athletes”, and concludes that, “elite sport then, is a contest amongst wildly disparate groups of people, who approach the starting line with an uneven set of genetic endowments and natural advantages” [Ref: [New Yorker](#)]. Some people, for example, are blessed with far higher haemoglobin levels in their blood than normal, allowing them to excel at endurance sports [Ref: [New Yorker](#)] - so how should we view these individuals? Do their natural advantages

render competition unfair? Opponents counter that sport is the embodiment of the human will to achieve superhuman accomplishments through dedication and the sharpening of our natural talents [Ref: [aeon](#)]. Drug intervention, they argue, could reach a point where it is impossible to distinguish between the uniqueness of human achievement, and technological innovation - therefore, de-humanizing sport: “A race at 43km/h is not necessarily any more interesting than one at 39km/h but the amazement vanishes if the riders become computer game characters with infinite lives and endless energy re-ups” [Ref: [Inner Ring](#)]. How then should we view performance enhancing drugs in sport? Do they denigrate the spirit of fair competition, and dehumanise the sporting spectacle? Or is the will to overcome our natural limits what makes us human? As Professor Julian Savulescu states: “Doping expresses the spirit of sport. To be human is to be better. Humans are not like racehorses, flogged by the whip of the jockey: they are their own masters” [Ref: [aeon](#)].

## ESSENTIAL READING

[Doping and an Olympic crisis of idealism](#)

Louisa Thomas *New Yorker* 29 July 2016

[World anti doping code 2015](#)

WADA 1 January 2015

## FOR

[A doping Manifesto](#)

Julian Savulescu *Aeon* 11 June 2014

[Man and Superman](#)

Malcolm Gladwell *New Yorker* 9 September 2013

[It's time to allow doping in sport](#)

Ellis Cashmore *CNN* 24 October 2012

[Why sports would be better with doping](#)

Ian Steadman *Wired* 9 October 2012

## AGAINST

[Should performance enhancing drugs be legalised?](#)

*Inner Ring* 20 February 2013

[Why doping is banned in sport](#)

Tom Murray *Pittsburgh Gazette* 2 December 2012

[Should we allow doping in the Tour de France? Or all sports?](#)

Chris Cooper *New Republic* 29 June 2012

[Why athletes dope](#)

Michael Shermer *Huffington Post* 25 May 2012

## IN DEPTH

[Clean athletes, and Olympic glory lost in the doping era](#)

*New York Times* 1 August 2016

[The human race](#)

Steven Poole *Aeon* 7 November 2012

4 of 6

NOTES

## BACKGROUNDERS

5 of 6

NOTES

[Let's just be honest and allow drugs in sport](#)

James Kirkup *Telegraph* 4 June 2015

[How bad is distance running's doping problem?](#)

Peter Vigneron *Outside Online* 19 April 2015

[Wearable tech in sport: the legal implication for data collection](#)

Jonny Madill *Law in Sport* 9 April 2015

[Essendon Drugs saga: The blackest day in Australian sport has the greyest outcome](#)

Mark Kenny *Sydney Morning Herald* 1 April 2015

[Genetic doping is the next frontier of cheating in sports](#)

Joe DeLessio *New York Magazine* 31 March 2015

[Death or glory myth fuels EPO boom](#)

Jonathan Liew *Telegraph* 11 March 2015

[Drugs in sport part 1](#)

Marek Doyle *Huffington Post* 29 January 2013

[Lance Armstrong confession: in any sport, drugs are drugs](#)

*Christian Science Monitor* 17 January 2013

[Doping in sport isn't cheating, it's a natural progression](#)

Radley Balko *Huffington Post* 15 January 2013

[Armstrong case provides a window into our collective morality](#)

Dr Phil Skiba *Velo News* 2 November 2012

[Stop persecuting Armstrong: time for a doping amnesty in cycling](#)

Julian Savulescu & Bennett Foddy *University of Oxford*  
6 July 2012

[Drugs in sport: a brief history](#)

*Observer* 8 February 2004

[Bring back sportsmanship](#)

Brian C. Anderson & Peter Reinharz *City Journal* 2000

[Effects of performance enhancing drugs](#)

*USADA.org*

## ORGANISATIONS

[United Kingdom Anti Doping](#)

[United States Anti Doping Agency](#)

[World Anti-Doping Agency](#)

## IN THE NEWS

[Rio Olympics 2016 plunged into chaos as IOC ruling on Russia ban delayed until 11th hour](#)

*Telegraph* 31 July 2016

[Doping scandals reduce interest in Olympics, says BBC survey](#)

*BBC News* 27 July 2016

[Olympics: No blanket ban on Russian athletes IOC says](#)

*CNN* 24 July 2016

[Russian state sponsored doping across majority of Olympic sports, claims report](#)

*BBC Sport* 18 July 2016

[Maria Sharapova will miss Rio Olympics as appeal against drugs ban is postponed](#)

*Telegraph* 11 July 2016

[Maria Sharapova banned for two years for failed rugs test but will appeal](#)

*BBC Sport* 8 June 2016

[Doping in sport: why are amateurs emulating the pros](#)

*BBC Sport* 15 May 2015

[Craig Chalmers says doping is very common in rugby in wake of son's ban](#)

*Guardian* 15 May 2015

[Doping not improving athletes performance, study finds](#)

*ABC News* 4 May 2015

[Justin Gatlin says Tyson Gay deserves second chance after doping ban](#)

*Guardian* 24 April 2015

[Russian child athletes are doping at school says sports minister](#)

*Guardian* 3 February 2015

[Armstrong says that he would still lie and cheat despite charges](#)

*International Business Times* 20 August 2014

[USADA label Armstrong a 'serial cheat'](#)

*BBC Sport* 11 October 2012

[London 2012 Olympics: athletes to face most advanced anti doping tests](#)

*Telegraph* 19 January 2012

6 of 6

NOTES

## AUDIO/VISUAL

[Out Loud, the case for doping](#)

*New Yorker* 1 September 2013

[Lance Armstrong finally admits doping on Oprah](#)

*Rolling Stone* 18 January 2013



## ADVICE FOR DEBATING MATTERS



### FOR DEBATERS

#### READ EVERYTHING .....

In the Topic Guide and in the news - not just your side of the argument either.

#### STATISTICS ARE GOOD BUT.....

Your opponents will have their own too. They'll support your points but they aren't a substitute for them.

#### BE BOLD

Get straight to the point but don't rush into things: make sure you aren't falling back on earlier assertions because interpreting a debate too narrowly might show a lack of understanding or confidence.

#### DON'T BACK DOWN

Try to take your case to its logical conclusion before trying to seem 'balanced' - your ability to challenge fundamental principles will be rewarded - even if you personally disagree with your arguments.

#### DON'T PANIC

Never assume you've lost because every question is an opportunity to explain what you know. Don't try to answer every question but don't avoid the tough ones either.

### FOR JUDGES

Judges are asked to consider whether debaters have been brave enough to address the difficult questions asked of them. Clever semantics might demonstrate an acrobatic mind but are also likely to hinder a serious discussion by changing the terms and parameters of the debate itself.

Whilst a team might demonstrate considerable knowledge and familiarity with the topic, evading difficult issues and failing to address the main substance of the debate misses the point of the competition. Judges are therefore encouraged to consider how far debaters have gone in defending their side of the motion, to what extent they have taken up the more challenging parts of the debate and how far the teams were able to respond to and challenge their opponents.

As one judge remarked *'These are not debates won simply by the rather technical rules of competitive debating. The challenge is to dig in to the real issues.'* This assessment seems to grasp the point and is worth bearing in mind when sitting on a judging panel.

**“WORLD REQUIRES  
THE CAPACITY  
TO MARSHALL  
CHALLENGING IDEAS  
AND ARGUMENTS”**

**LORD BOATENG, FORMER BRITISH HIGH  
COMMISSIONER TO SOUTH AFRICA**

**DEBATING MATTERS  
TOPIC  
GUIDES**

[www.debatingmatters.com](http://www.debatingmatters.com)