

Should you participate in this internet argument?

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Uniqueness (Yes to all)

- Are you necessary to the conversation?
 - Do you provide a unique voice to the conversation?
 - Will you provide arguments or viewpoints that are unique from what other participants have or will likely provide?
 - Will your absence cause the conversation to suffer?
 - Do you need to be or should you be the person to make the argument that you want to make?
- Will your participation in the conversation be productive?
- Will others in the conversation engage your points and not ignore them?

Quality (Yes to all)

- Does it matter to you if the other participants are sincere?
 - If yes:
 - * Can you tell if they are sincere? If not, can you find out before engaging?
 - * Are the participants sincere?
 - If no, answer yes for either subpoint:
 - * Will this conversation satisfy your performative or educational goals for an audience?
 - * Will this conversation help you organize, clarify, or strengthen your own thinking about the subject?

- Will your participation in the conversation leave room for other voices to participate?
- Will you and at least some of the participants engage the substance of the conversation over other issues such as presentation style, tone, grammar, or spelling?
- Will you and at least some of the participants either avoid tangents or only engage in useful tangents?
- Will you and at least some of the participants avoid engaging in negative practices such as ad hominem attacks, deceit, claiming victory in minutiae, or other practices that intend to inflame participants?
- Will detrimental logical fallacies be few and engaged in appropriately?

Opportunity Costs (Yes to all)

- Is this the most important, valuable, or satisfying thing you could be reasonably doing with your time? This is necessarily subjective and just a check that you want and should be engaging in the conversation.
- Are you able to exit the conversation once it has run its course instead of becoming trapped by tangents, minutiae, or other kinds of distractions?
- Are you likely able to avoid personal harm and not bring harm to others by participating in this debate? This includes, but not limited to, social and reputational harm.

Impact (Yes to at least one)

- Will the result of the conversation lead to some type of action or change?
- Will the participants of the conversation be likely to change their minds because of this conversation?
- Will non-participants view the conversation and be influenced by it?
- Will this conversation help you organize, clarify, or strengthen your own thinking about the subject?
- Will you derive utility from the conversation compared to other activities, regardless of the outcome of the conversation?
- Does your participation involve a community that you are a member of or you wish to be a member of and engaging in the conversation positively influences your social standing in that community (social capital, bonding, perceived status, etc.)?