

*Any member of the SCC may and should raise a **Point of Order** to call the Chair's attention to a breach of the Standing Rules rules or to a breach of the Rules of Decorum described below. The Chair must rule on such Points of Order and enforce the rules.*

Decorum in Debate

see *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th ed.), pp 391-393

CONFINE REMARKS TO THE MERITS OF THE PENDING QUESTION.

In debate a member's remarks must be germane to the question before the assembly—that is, his statements must have bearing on whether the pending motion should be adopted.

REFRAIN FROM ATTACKING A MEMBER'S MOTIVES.

When a question is pending, a member can condemn the nature or likely consequences of the proposed measure in strong terms, but must avoid personalities, and under no circumstances can a speaker attack or question the motives of another member. The measure, not the member, is the subject of debate. If a member disagrees with a statement by another in regard to an event that both witnessed, he cannot state in debate that the other's statement "is false." But he might say, "I believe that the member is mistaken." The moment the chair hears such words as "fraud," "liar," or "lie" used about a member in debate, the Chair is obliged to act immediately and decisively to correct the matter and prevent its repetition.

ADDRESS ALL REMARKS THROUGH THE CHAIR.

Members of an assembly cannot address one another directly, but must address all remarks through the chair. If, while a member is speaking in debate, another member wishes to address a question to the speaker - which the speaker may permit or not as desired, but which is taken out of the speaker's time if permitted - the member desiring to ask the question should rise and address the chair, proceeding as a "*Request for Information*".

AVOID THE USE OF MEMBERS' NAMES.

As much as possible, the use of members' names should be avoided in debate. It is better to describe a member in some other way, as by saying, "the member who spoke last," or, "the maker of this motion" or "the representative of the _____ Caucus who spoke earlier." The officers of the society should always be referred to by their official titles.

BE SEATED DURING AN INTERRUPTION BY THE CHAIR.

If at any time the presiding officer rises to make a ruling, give information, or otherwise speak within his privilege, any member who is speaking should be seated (or should step back slightly if he is standing at a microphone some distance from a seat) until the presiding officer has finished. At that time the member can resume his speech, unless he is denied the right as a disciplinary measure.

REFRAIN FROM DISTURBING THE ASSEMBLY.

During debate, remarks by the presiding officer to the assembly, and during voting, no member is permitted to disturb the assembly by whispering, walking across the floor, speaking on the phone, playing music or in any other way. [The key words here are disturb the assembly.]