

Public Forum Online Chat
January 8, 2008
Hosts: Tim Averill (MA), Jason Kline (NC)
Moderated by Tyler Billman (NFL)

08/01/2008 18:34:25 <tyler> Good evening and welcome to the Public Forum online chat! The official chat time is at 7 pm CST. Students and coaches, get your questions ready!

08/01/2008 18:42:10 <NoahYoder> Can anyone give me some tips for pf?

08/01/2008 18:42:34 <TimAverill> Hello everyone. Will this fit as an answer to Noah? I.

Brainstorm the topic: The whole team (lab), including coaches, PFD'ers, and even speechies and parents take a shot at the topic together jotting down every idea without any comments or criticism. The idea is to get the broadest possible range of ideas and interpretations that we can have productive research and also anticipate the ideas that other teams may throw at us. Next step:II. Create the evidence share: Each debater on the team creates a one-page evidence share presenting the best material that he/she was able to find on the topic. The evidence share will include full citations, the exact quotations selected, and a few words of analysis about why this source was selected and specifically how it might be used in the debate. It's helpful to label it
PRO

08/01/2008 18:47:50 <tyler> Noah, to keep this chat under control, please send me your questions using the private message function

08/01/2008 18:48:03 <NoahYoder> ok

08/01/2008 18:49:12 <TimAverill> We are doing Civil disobedience, but I am sending (I'll wait for the rest) the steps we use as a team to prepare a topic. Sadly, there is a limit to how much I can send at one time.

08/01/2008 18:56:34 <klineje1> I think the resolution is pretty balanced, but I also think it leads to WAY too many definition arguments that PFD is not equipped to handle with the length of speeches

08/01/2008 18:56:52 <klineje1> I would say that the field there was pretty tough

08/01/2008 18:56:58 <klineje1> in PFD more than LD

18:57:30 <Jonathan Peele> Without giving away the franchise, it's really key to get past the flawed arguments that either the majority or the civil disobedient gets to define justice. Both concepts are wrong

18:58:34 <klineje1> yes, well, the concept of defining justice is so important and not discussed enough

08/01/2008 19:00:26 <tyler> Good evening and welcome to tonight's chat

08/01/2008 19:00:43 <klineje1> hello

08/01/2008 19:00:45 <teags> hello

08/01/2008 19:00:49 <tyler> We will be in discussion on the current resolution as well as public forum in general

08/01/2008 19:00:54 <NoahYoder> hello

08/01/2008 19:01:27 <tyler> This is very important - we ask our chat members to refrain from profanity or otherwise inappropriate language

08/01/2008 19:01:35 <klineje1> well shoot!

08/01/2008 19:01:51 <tyler> If anyone chooses to use this language, they will be removed from the chat.

08/01/2008 19:02:23 <teags> so this is my first time in one of these chats. Do we just ask questions and talk it out?

08/01/2008 19:02:46 <tyler> Questions go to me, using the Private message function

08/01/2008 19:02:46 <klineje1> I think you ask **tyler** questions

08/01/2008 19:02:54 <tyler> I will dispense the questions to our panel

08/01/2008 19:03:16 <tyler> Tonight's panel consists of Tim Averill, coach of Waring School in Massachusetts and also Jason Kline, coach of Myers Park HS in North Carolina and new father.

08/01/2008 19:03:47 <smartcookie4665> congrats, Mr. Kline!

08/01/2008 19:03:55 <crab> congrats Jason

08/01/2008 19:04:10 <tyler> To use private message, click my name on the right side bar

08/01/2008 19:04:22 <teags> thanks 🍌

08/01/2008 19:04:23 <klineje1> thanks

08/01/2008 19:04:35 <klineje1> did I do something good?

08/01/2008 19:04:42 <tyler> You will see a blue link that says private message. Click it and it will take you to a room at the top of the screen.

08/01/2008 19:05:32 <tyler> This first question comes from Teags: what would be a good definition of democracy for the negative?

08/01/2008 19:06:07 <tyler> Just a reminder, the current topic is as follows: In a democracy, civil disobedience is an appropriate weapon in the fight for justice.

19:06:47 <Jonathan Peele> There's some evidence from the state department that limits democracies to states that have minimum protections for human rights and free speech

08/01/2008 19:06:55 <TimAverill> The definition should be fair to both sides and assumes a government with mechanisms to influence the making of law. To me, without democracy, there is limited CON ground

08/01/2008 19:07:06 <klineje1> I would say that you don't want to start your case off by trying to limit what democracy is...sure, by definition, there are few if ANY real democracies, but this resolution, which is meant to be relevant.

08/01/2008 19:07:07 <Jonathan Peele> I saw that work well in several rounds I judged at Laird Lewis

19:07:30 <klineje1> I think trying to limit democracy or the application of it is likely to annoy a judge

08/01/2008 19:07:49 <teags> So we shouldn't try to say that we never have had a democracy?

08/01/2008 19:07:59 <klineje1> I wouldn't

19:07:30 <klineje1> I think trying to limit democracy or the application of it is likely to annoy a judge

19:08:25 <TimAverill> I agree. But we wanted it to be clear that we were not dealing with a tyranny or dictatorship.

08/01/2008 19:08:28 <mike14620> Though I can say that I more or less saw that presented this weekend

19:09:26 <teags> But by saying that we don't have a democracy, you can say that we have a dictatorship, and that is when CD would be an appropriate weapon in the fight for justice

08/01/2008 19:09:51 <smartcookie4665> that wouldn't be topical to the resolution

19:10:03 <TimAverill> To me that's obfuscation.

08/01/2008 19:10:24 <teags> ok.

19:10:32 <mike14620> I think the assumption has to be that democracy can exist and so can civil disobedience in a democracy; the debate is not about whether civil disobedience can exist in a democracy, it is whether it is appropriate.

08/01/2008 19:10:43 <teags> Because we were debating in class today, and that's the route the negative took. I was on aff.

19:12:01 <smartcookie4665> But by saying that we don't have a democracy, you can say that we have a dictatorship that doesn't follow logically just b/c something isn't a democracy, it doesn't mean its a tyranny.

19:12:51 <TimAverill> I find this part of the discussion to be straying from the topic.

08/01/2008 19:13:02 <teags> ok.

08/01/2008 19:13:14 <tyler> This next question comes from smart cookie: With topic selection, how much research goes into determining topics to make sure their balanced?

08/01/2008 19:14:33 <TimAverill> We try to research both sides of topics to be sure that the literature is evenly divided and credible. The committee works each month to discover topics and we consider what the NFL community sends to us. The best suggestions come with some cites for us to examine.

19:15:56 <crab> I think the committee does an excellent job with this!

08/01/2008 19:16:14 <tyler> As Tim says, you can submit topics for consideration

19:16:44 <TimAverill> We work hard on the topics, and with the exception of the CD topic, they were initiated by us. THE GREAT DEBATERS movie was the inspiration for January.

19:17:37 <teags> Oh! my partner and I saw the movie and tried to maybe pick up some info to help us with the resolution

19:18:18 <TimAverill> I wish that more debaters and coaches submitted topics with rationales. We try to keep them very current. We try to begin the year with a topic that novices can manage effectively.

08/01/2008 19:19:03 <smartcookie4665> That makes sense. Fairness doctrine was really specific.

19:19:12 <TimAverill> We are just beginning the March deliberations. And if you have suggestions, use the NFL website and they will come to me as chair and be given the other members, including Jason Kline who may be back soon.

19:20:33 <smartcookie4665> the econ slant of the past two years just seems to favor the older debaters w/ an econ class under their belt.

08/01/2008 19:21:11 <crab> all debaters would be well served to take an econ class.

08/01/2008 19:21:27 <TimAverill> I personally would love to see more topics from popular culture, the arts, and literature. How would that strike those of you who do PFD?

08/01/2008 19:21:31 <mike14620> all people would be well served to take an econ class

08/01/2008 19:21:54 <CitizenGenet> I would heavily advise against pop culture topics, speaking as a now four-year PF debater.

08/01/2008 19:22:00 <crab> Great idea and areas Tim.

08/01/2008 19:22:00 <teags> I think that would be interesting.

08/01/2008 19:22:17 <Jonathan Peele> I don't want to see us doing tabloid-esque type stuff

08/01/2008 19:22:21 <smartcookie4665> hmmm...I think a comparison of arts class funding prioritization (much like 2005 Nats) over math/science courses. Although clearly teachers would be biased 🤔

08/01/2008 19:22:31 <mike14620> Well, the question I'd raise about those issues is how much real debate could be generated; I'm worried that there would be inadequate clash

08/01/2008 19:22:34 <TimAverill> One pop culture topic we had was on the NBA dress code. Did you debate that?

19:24:09 <mike14620> Disobedience is always appropriate

08/01/2008 19:24:17 <TimAverill> What areas do you debaters and coaches think have been neglected, if any?

08/01/2008 19:24:32 <tyler> Thanks Mike 🤔

08/01/2008 19:25:18 <smartcookie4665> International relations until this year (which I have no complaints) but actual legislation is always great to debate b/c it limits the debate easily

19:25:47 <TimAverill> On the new question, I think the resolution says it. If the PRO proves that CD is one of the appropriate weapons, they win. If the CON shows that we should avoid using it (regardless of its outcomes),

19:26:25 <CitizenGenet> I couldn't be more satisfied with this year's foreign policy resolutions. It's simply been the NBA dress code/athletic stipend/early admission topics which have generated the most complaint. Meaning, topics of those natures.

08/01/2008 19:26:58 <smartcookie4665> I definitely agree, citizen

08/01/2008 19:27:07 <mike14620> I ask because I saw con use the categorical imperative to shift the burden to the pro to show

08/01/2008 19:27:25 <TimAverill> Thanks. That's helpful. We have March, April, and Nationals still to do this year. Our CON used Kant as well today when they won, showing the categorical disruption of respect for law. Generally, I would say the topics which are most loved are those that are the most contentious, current, and possess the most resources for a worthwhile debate

19:29:30 <TimAverill> Good point. We look for topics that anyone with a computer and the internet can research fully. That is one of our charges as the wording committee.

08/01/2008 19:29:39 <smartcookie4665> about topics (since they're so important), I tend to see debate as prep for countless lawyers yet our legal-based topics tend to be neglected (ld's plea bargaining for example)

19:31:15 <TimAverill> We have had a legal topic suggested to us and it is under consideration (of course I cannot yet be specific).

08/01/2008 19:31:26 <tyler> Ok, next question from Lauren: I'm having a bit of trouble coming up with the main reason why civil disobedience should not be allowed. What is one thing I should try really hard to focus on?

19:32:18 <mike14620> Well, you start with that CD is illegal, then discuss alternative means of achieving change

08/01/2008 19:32:41 <teags> would it would a good idea to bring up the writers strike..and how it hasn't worked. Far enough that they've canceled the golden globes?

19:33:03 <mike14620> Civil disobedience is illegal because it is disruptive to society

08/01/2008 19:33:07 <TimAverill> Try the effect on the law itself of allowing each citizen to break it at will, ignoring the hours of deliberation that went into creating it. Also, it seems great as a concept but when the mob sees la

19:34:17 <mike14620> the difficulty I see with the mob argument is that PF ought to operate in the real world

19:34:49 <tyler> Teags - I think you could argue that CD isn't appropriate if it isn't effective
08/01/2008 19:34:50 <mike14620> and in a democracy, the mass chaos suggested by the mob
argument is unlikely
08/01/2008 19:34:56 <TimAverill> The mob acts based on seeing lawlessness. We used right to
life activists who keep young women from having legal abortions by taunting them and
19:35:01 <mike14620> Remember, you aren't arguing that CD should be legalized and a certain
majority portion of society will follow the law out of a certain amount of fear.
19:36:09 <TimAverill> My action as a civil disobedient will deprive the rights of others and
curtail their freedom of action. It will also disrupt the justice system.
19:36:30 <klineje1> I am back
08/01/2008 19:36:35 <klineje1> baby is calm (for now)
08/01/2008 19:36:49 <mike14620> the deprivation of the rights of others is a good argument
08/01/2008 19:36:51 <TimAverill> Did you use the binky?
08/01/2008 19:36:59 <klineje1> yep!
08/01/2008 19:38:32 <TimAverill> Jason, we've talked about topic selection and areas we need to
address. If you backread a little, see if you want to add.
08/01/2008 19:38:39 <mike14620> if you argue the rights issue, you need to establish that a/the
purpose of democratic government, is preservation of rights; thus laws exist to protect these rights
19:40:14 <laurenkeller27> Thanks...I'll try to emphasize that in my opening.
19:41:25 <klineje1> I got some feedback from judges this past weekend and a lot of them liked the
topic but they did not like the process students used to win...too complicated...I think a lot of
people took LD cases fro
08/01/2008 19:41:46 <TimAverill> I hope this helps. DEBATERS - In the movie, the coach wrote
the cases. I hated that! Do you write your own cases, and what does your coach do for you?
19:42:07 <smartcookie4665> We don't have a coach
08/01/2008 19:42:12 <smartcookie4665> we coach our novii...
08/01/2008 19:42:35 <teags> We all write our own cases.
08/01/2008 19:42:46 <laurenkeller27> Us too..
08/01/2008 19:42:51 <TimAverill> Good for you. I'll bet you learn a lot from coaching the novii

08/01/2008 19:42:52 <tyler> Also - in the movie, the debaters had to prep their biggest round without a coach

08/01/2008 19:42:57 <CitizenGenet> everyone does their own work

08/01/2008 19:42:58 <klineje1> The number of students who have no coach amazes me!

19:43:08 <mike14620> I will second Jason's assertion that the cases presented were very LDish

08/01/2008 19:43:26 <TimAverill> I was pleased when this happened in the movie.

08/01/2008 19:43:37 <mike14620> I was waiting for some to assert that their value for the round was justice

08/01/2008 19:43:45 <tyler> Yes - Citizen Genet asked earlier why were debating an LD resolution in Public Forum

08/01/2008 19:44:13 <smartcookie4665> I like the infusion of LD-esque into a few (not all certainly) topics

08/01/2008 19:44:33 <tyler> This resolution does present a very rare opportunity to build on the momentum of this film

08/01/2008 19:44:38 <klineje1> I think the topic COULD be good for PFD, but it depends on how teams use it

08/01/2008 19:44:45 <smartcookie4665> this topic though is a bit pro oriented for lay judges

08/01/2008 19:45:44 <tyler> Civil disobedience is certainly ripped from the headlines, with the writers strike and all (as Teages mentioned earlier).

08/01/2008 19:45:46 <TimAverill> I agree Jason that the topic has made for good PFD debate. I had worried about the CON but lay judges today voted 70-25 for the con.

08/01/2008 19:46:20 <mike14620> That's pretty remarkable

08/01/2008 19:46:25 <klineje1> At Laird Lewis, it was 47% PRO through Octas

08/01/2008 19:46:34 <TimAverill> The writer's strike, with all respect, is not CD, as they break no law.

08/01/2008 19:46:41 <klineje1> So I would say it was pretty even

08/01/2008 19:47:05 <TimAverill> If teachers strike in MASS, that's CD.

08/01/2008 19:47:45 <CitizenGenet> Are strikes not protected by the law. Are strikes not protected by the law?

08/01/2008 19:47:56 <klineje1> honestly, I miss the credit topic 🍌

08/01/2008 19:48:08 <smartcookie4665> ew credit. lol.

19:48:16 <smartcookie4665> I miss lobbyists!

08/01/2008 19:48:41 <smartcookie4665> and soft partition

08/01/2008 19:48:43 <tyler> Good catch Tim

08/01/2008 19:48:50 <klineje1> depends on the state

08/01/2008 19:49:02 <tyler> Just checking to see if you were paying attention

08/01/2008 19:49:02 <klineje1> some states allow strikes, some don't

08/01/2008 19:49:02 <smartcookie4665> sc prohibits unions

08/01/2008 19:49:06 <crab> There are certain professions, depending on the state, that can't strike as it could cause major problems regarding health, safety, etc

08/01/2008 19:49:08 <TimAverill> Not public service employees - fire, police, and teachers. We have collective bargaining and binding arbitration. But sometimes we break the law and strike so that parents will see how bad the situation is and how strongly we feel. If I go to jail or get fined, the parents of my kids will rise up and demand a settlement.

19:49:33 <klineje1> in PA, teachers can strike, but only for so many days a year

08/01/2008 19:50:25 <klineje1> in North Carolina, there are no unions for teachers

08/01/2008 19:50:46 <crab> or as in the case of the air traffic controllers...under Reagan, you might be fired...

19:51:05 <klineje1> anyway

08/01/2008 19:51:13 <tyler> Okay, we have time for one or two more questions

08/01/2008 19:51:22 <tyler> This one comes from Mike 14620

08/01/2008 19:51:30 <tyler> When philosophy arguments are used, how much explanation of ideas is necessary given that judges ideally are lay judges?

19:51:45 <TimAverill> Right. Reagan showed the controllers that he could enforce the law regardless of the impact. Mike, I think that we assume the lay judges are smart people who have a lot of life experience. On CD, they have a life history that the students don't yet have.

19:53:28 <tyler> no prob

08/01/2008 19:53:35 <TimAverill> So I assume educated lay judges who will get the philosophy. The problem is that many debaters cannot explain the philosophy coherently.

19:53:51 <mike14620> But when you talk about Kant's categorical imperative or Locke's social contract, I think a lot of people who are decades removed from philosophy reading may need a bit of a refresher

19:54:10 <crab> Then refresh them

08/01/2008 19:54:22 <smartcookie4665> The philosophy combined with real world arguments are what make this topic good in PFD.

08/01/2008 19:54:33 <klineje1> Yeah

08/01/2008 19:54:37 <TimAverill> Possibly, but if you are a great debater, you can tell them what they need to remember.

19:55:13 <TimAverill> For example, Kant asks us to act in such a way that the world is better if everyone does what we are doing.

08/01/2008 19:55:17 <mike14620> I mean, my parents are both professionals, and between them spent 14 years in college, but I think if I assumed much of anything, they'd be lost

19:55:33 <klineje1> the problem, like I said, is that a lot of PFDrs were running LD cases

19:55:47 <mike14620> I think in LD, it is safer to assume more

19:55:54 <TimAverill> They might surprise you, especially if you talked to them as though they were bright and aware.

08/01/2008 19:55:58 <klineje1> I stressed keeping it simple with VERY good examples

08/01/2008 19:56:25 <crab> I agree Jason!

08/01/2008 19:56:50 <TimAverill> Right, a 4 minute speech has to be economical and clear. Much harder than an L-D speech to write well.

08/01/2008 19:56:50 <klineje1> well, I see what Mike is saying... but if you say Veil of Ignorance and the person has never heard of it, you are lost

19:57:18 <mike14620> It's not that they can't understand the ideas, but it is that they don't recognize what Kant's categorical imperative is; and in LD a quick, cursory mention is adequate; but in PF, you need to explain it

08/01/2008 19:57:29 <TimAverill> That's true. We need to explain the concept rather than spew the jargon

19:57:45 <mike14620> I heard this argument this weekend, without a statement of what the CI is, let alone elaboration

19:57:53 <klineje1> Stolen LD cases and I assume that team lost. These things should work themselves out.

08/01/2008 19:58:29 <tyler> ok, one last question

08/01/2008 19:58:34 <tyler> This one comes from Smart Cookie:

08/01/2008 19:58:48 <TimAverill> I want to thank all the participants for their comments before I am cut off.

08/01/2008 19:58:53 <crab> On behalf of the NFL Executive Board, I want to thank the panel for an excellent discussion!

08/01/2008 19:58:55 <tyler> Was the Russia threats topic inspired by Putin being TIME person of the year?

08/01/2008 19:59:13 <TimAverill> Thanks Don.

08/01/2008 19:59:23 <laurenkeller27> Thanks Everyone.

08/01/2008 19:59:26 <klineje1> good question

08/01/2008 19:59:28 <tyler> Okay, I think we are wrapping up.

08/01/2008 19:59:32 <tyler> Thanks to everyone.

08/01/2008 19:59:37 <smartcookie4665> 🍪

08/01/2008 19:59:38 <TimAverill> No, we predated TIME and felt that the topic was once again ripped from the headlines.

08/01/2008 19:59:40 <klineje1> huh?

08/01/2008 19:59:44 <smartcookie4665> thanks NFL board

08/01/2008 19:59:49 <klineje1> yeah

08/01/2008 19:59:51 <crab> thanks tyler...see you in Ripon soon

08/01/2008 19:59:53 <tyler> We may have another public forum chat closer to nationals.

08/01/2008 19:59:59 <klineje1> The topic sort of was an old one that had been bandied around for a while

08/01/2008 20:00:04 <klineje1> Everyone, keep on debating...

08/01/2008 20:00:13 <TimAverill> Hope so. This one was good.

20:00:17 <klineje1> Thanks Tyler for the work you do!

08/01/2008 20:00:21 <mike14620> good luck to everyone

