**Opposing Debates**

**Objective:** Students will gain a better understanding of *Critical Thinking* through the use of debate and consideration of differing perspectives. According to Christopher Cascio, “A major aspect of critical thinking is considering opposing viewpoints.” The following activity will require you and your partner to do just that.

**Task 1:** Read the topics below and determine whether you agree or disagree with each statement. On a sheet of paper, write agree, disagree, or undetermined for each number. **Note:** Please be honest, otherwise, your success rate in subsequent activities will greatly depreciate.

**Task 2**: Students will choose, or in some cases, be assigned to research one topic below, and to accumulate a minimum of 2 arguments – including data – for and against the issue. In the end, you should have a total of 4 scholarly journals – two for and two against. (See research requirements) **Note:** Your data should not merely support your own opinion, but also provide background knowledge of the opinions that are opposite of your own. **Note:** Information from your research will be shared – in brief – with the class, thus a typed outline of your findings must be included in your Task 2 packet.

**Task 3**: This task will be announced after the class completes Task 1. **(Due September 16th)**

**Task 4:** This task will be announced after the completion and discussion of Task 3. **(Due September 23rd)**

**Topics:**

1. Premarital sex is detrimental for individuals and for society.
2. The second amendment (your right to bear arms) is outdated and needs to be amended.
3. Abortion should be legal; it’s a woman’s right because it is her body.
4. Having a child outside of marriage is wrong.
5. Homosexuals should be allowed to marry – in any state. Thus, a federal law should be passed that amends the constitution so it is legal in every state.
6. People are born gay; it is not a choice.
7. Marijuana should be legal in all states – for medical AND recreational usage.
8. Prostitution should be legalized – but regulated.
9. Capital punishment deters crime, thus it is morally acceptable.
10. Religion does not cause war; people cause war.
11. Interracial, interreligious, or multiethnic marriages are good for society globally.
12. Israel is occupying the Gaza Strip and oppressing the Palestinian people.
13. Radical Islam is justified in its terrorist attacks globally.
14. It is appropriate to build a mosque at the site of the World Trade Center attack.
15. The borders of countries are meaningless and should be abolished.
16. The borders of countries allow nations to retain sovereignty and should be upheld and protected.
17. Human activity is a substantial reason for global climate change (once known as global warming).
18. The words, “…under God…” should be removed from the pledge of allegiance.
19. Capitalism is a superior economic system than Socialism or Communism.
20. Professional athletes in the NFL and NBA are arrested more frequently than other major sports.

**Research Requirements:**

1. All research must be cited in MLA format, attached to, outlined, and incorporated in Task 3.
2. All submitted written work must be in MLA format, 12-poinit Times New-Roman font.
3. Data: Statistics that support your and opposing opinions.
4. All internet research must originate from scholarly articles, essays, scholarly websites, or newspaper articles.
   1. **Personal blogs, Wikipedia, Ask.com, etc. are inappropriate and will not be accepted**.
5. Usage of our libraries database is highly suggested.
6. For a start, you can find many topics from the list above at: <http://www.procon.org/debate-topics.php> or you can try <http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate>