

Debaters should argue that the language critique chills meaningful dialogue. Consider the following statement from Edward Lucas in the June 9, 1991, issue of *The Independent*:

The fear that certain words and opinions will bring an unjustified charge of racism chills the intellectual climate. Even at conservative, prosperous Princeton, a survey found between a half and two thirds of undergraduates did not feel they could speak freely in the classroom. What bothers me is that this has become an alternative to critical thought, said Paul Starr, a sociologist at Princeton. With respect to race and gender, there is a climate which inhibits free discussion. (p. 13)

Morris Wolfe, writing in the January 31, 1991, issue of *The Globe and Mail*, likened the language critique to George Orwell's thought police:

Thought Police, who want it all now, seem worried about every -ism but dogmatism. Their moral terrorism seems indistinguishable from the tactics of a Meir Kahane or a Louis Farrakhan. I find especially offensive the manipulation of students by their faculty and fellow students. As one American professor puts it, You have to let students say the most outrageous and stupid things. To get people to think and talk, to question their own ideas, you don't regulate their speech.

There's far more intolerance these days among the educated than among the uneducated. Isn't it supposed to be the other way around? The tyranny of politically correct thinking is a scary thing.

HOW DO YOU ANSWER A CRITIQUE?

When critiques are used, three essential elements come into play:

1. Framework
2. Link
3. Implications

The *framework* for analysis determines the role that the critique should play in policy debate; these arguments are designed to determine the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the critique as a debate argument. Critique opponents should argue that the critique is an illegitimate debate argument.

Link arguments attempt to determine whether the critique has anything to do with the advocacy of the opposing team. In many instances a critique is simply an indictment of the present system, leaving it unclear what the argument has to do with a particular affirmative case.

Implication arguments compare the impact of the critique to other arguments in the round. Even if the critique is true (an ironic term given that most postmodern critiques