

Yale Debate Association

Issue 5

2008-2009 Season

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Yale wins Nationals, North American Championships

The Yale Debate Association ended its 2008-2009 season with a bang. At the national championship tournament, Andrew Rohrbach (TC '09) and Grant May (SY '10) dominated the field en route to a 10-0 record and the national title. Andrew was also recognized as the tournament's top speaker. In January, Grant and Andrew swept through the North American tournament, beating McGill University in the final round. Grant and Andrew are the first team in recent memory to win both the North American Parliamentary Debate Championship and the National Championship in the same year.

The YDA's success extended far beyond that team, however. The collective competitive success of the team this year earned us the national "Club of the Year" award. Yale qualified more debaters for the national tournament than any other university. Debaters from across the board debated deep into elimination rounds at competitive tournaments. Habib Moody (ES '10) and James Luccarelli (BR '10) broke at Nationals, and Steven Kryger (SM '10) and Tess Reed (CC '10) broke at the North American Championships. Rosa Po (BK '09) and Haley Nix (SM '09) broke at both the North American championships and Nationals.

Right: Yale's delegation to the national championship tournament poses with the title trophy. National champions Grant May and Andrew Rohrbach kneel in the front.



YDA Celebrates Hundredth Birthday, Hosts Centennial Reunion

On October 17th and 18th, the YDA hosted its Centennial, celebrating its 100th year of existence. More than 80 alumni from the class of 1949 through the class of 2007 came back to Yale to celebrate the YDA's rich history. The event sought to balance central programming with downtime to meet and converse with fellow alumni. The celebration featured an intergenerational debate with alumni Akhil Reed Amar ('80), David Frum ('82), Jake Sullivan ('98) and Tim Willenken ('03). It also featured a tribute to legendary coach Rollin Osterweis and our late alumnus William F. Buckley, Jr. ('50).

The Centennial emphasized the history of the YDA. Current members of the team presented on the present state of the YDA and participated in a shortened demonstration debate. Throughout the day, alumni could visit a memorabilia display that included samples of the YDA's archives: team photos from 1908 to 1966, old debate contracts, old awards, newspaper articles on the YDA and lecture notes from Professor Rollin Osterweis' famous History of American Oratory Class.

The team also presented three well-attended panels. One of the panels weighed in on the Obama v. McCain debates, another presented public speaking insights gained after Yale, and a third discussed using debate in unconventional contexts.

The event also featured many opportunities for alumni to socialize. Alumni toasted at the famous Mory's Temple Bar, enjoyed downtime throughout the day, and cocktails and French dinner at Union League.



Above: Centennial Director Erin Miller (SY '09)

Below: The Yale team in the 1960's, with Rollin Osterweis in the back row on the far left

80 Alumni in attendance

7 Decades spanned by attendees

2 Days of fun

100 Years of tradition



Source: Manuscripts & Archives, Yale University Library
Produced for reference use only. (mssa.img.7213)

YALE DEBATE

YDA Debates Howard University, Fills Woolsey Hall

Yale Daily News publicizes event to Yale community

It was an event styled after the 2007 movie “The Great Debaters”: A troupe of debaters from a historically black college came north to take on a national debate giant. But this time, the stakes were lower and the teams different — whereas Harvard and Wiley faced off in the movie, Yale took on Howard University on March 28th in Woolsey Hall.

“The Great Debate,” sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Yale Debate Association, featured teams of debaters from the two schools dueling over questions about race and equality in America. Howard students, who drove up for the debate, New Haven public school students and Connecticut NAACP members filled a sell-out crowd at Woolsey Hall, which also included a handful of Yale students and the entire Yale debate team.

The debate opened by asking whether a “high-quality education” — a term that was the subject of fierce debate throughout — should be a constitutional right. Yale took the podium first, supporting the proposition by arguing that full participation in American democracy, including the ability to run for office, necessitates a college degree. Howard’s team countered by arguing against governmental education mandates and pointing out the subjectivity of the term “high-quality.”

The audience, until that point most visibly applauding the Howard team, first broke into cheers for the Yale side when Yale debater Sabrina Ali ’11 responded, claiming “whichever you prefer, Yale University or Howard University, is better than no education at all!”

The debate then moved to a question of discrimination: Should federal bailout money go to banks and firms in which some individuals had demonstrated racially discriminating lending practices?

Yale argued yes, Howard said no. Allowing banks to fail would harm the entire economy, Kryger and Jonathan Eng ’11 said, when only the individual perpetrators should be punished. Howard responded by saying that whole companies should be punished and that we cannot necessarily count on the government to crack on the individual predatory lenders.

The event’s welcome featured Ned Lamont, the 2006 Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate in Connecticut; Janette Dates, dean of Howard’s School of Communications; and Yale University Provost Peter Salovey. Before the debate, Scot Esdaile, president of the Connecticut NAACP State Conference, announced plans for a full competition between historically black colleges and Ivy League debate teams, set to take place next year.



Left: Scot Esdaile, Connecticut NAACP president, introduces Yale debaters (from left) Jon Eng (JE ’11), Sabrina Ali (ES ’11), Steven Kryger (SM ’10), and James Luccarelli (BR ’10) as well as the Howard contingent to their right

Thanks to YDN reporter Serrena Iyer for permission to reprint her article

Yale wins in head-to-head match against Ireland's Trinity College

In January, three members of the Yale team traveled to Ireland for a public debate against Trinity College, hosted by the Trinity College Student Economic Review. Jeff Geels (SY '09), Haley Nix (SM '09) and Nate Blevins (PC '12) headed to Dublin to debate the opposition side of the resolution "Boston or Berlin: This house believes that the European social model is superior." Trinity brought three debaters as well and the teams faced off in front of a prestigious panel of judges: the former editor of the Economist, an Irish Senator, several journalists, and the chairman of Ireland's Green Party.

The debate became a heated defense of the American "small government" model and the American Dream. The Trinity debaters charged that the American social system denies equality to the poor and allocates resources inefficiently;

they touted the advantages of strong social welfare programs, extensive vacation and maternity leave, and true social mobility.

But the Yale debaters replied with a passionate stand for the free market. Blevins noted that there are no incentives for people to do their best when they can earn almost as much by living off welfare, and provided statistics illustrating the unsustainable nature of the European welfare state. Nix defended equality of opportunity rather than outcome, quoting Barack Obama's assertion that "Greatness is never a given. It must be earned." After more than an hour of deliberation, the panel awarded the victory to Yale, citing the passion they showed for their arguments as well as the logic behind them. Geels and Blevins tied for top speaker.



Left: Yale debaters Haley Nix and Jeff Geels pose to the right of their Trinity counterparts

Right: Nate Blevins answers questions posed by a Trinity debater



Yale at the World Championships

Over winter break, six debaters and seven Yale judges set out for the World Championships in Cork, Ireland, where they debated subjects ranging from the desegregation of Irish religious schools to the partition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Two Yale teams advanced to elimination rounds, improving Yale's overall ranking to fourth in the world, the highest of any American university (Harvard and Princeton are not even in the top ten). After the tournament, many Yale debaters took advantage of the chance to travel around Europe before the second semester began.

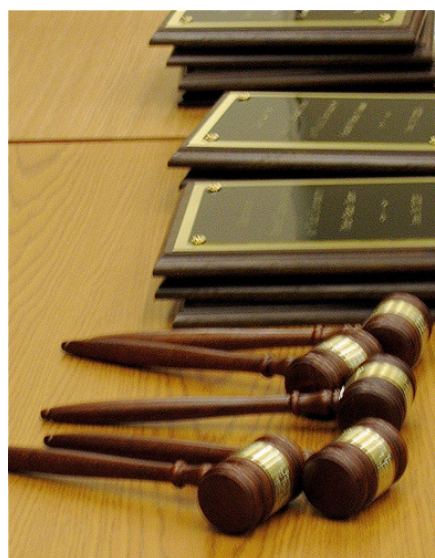


Above: The Yale debaters share a team dinner during the tournament.

Urban Debate League grows to over 100 students

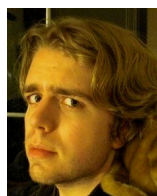
2009 has been a landmark year for the Urban Debate League, a YDA-affiliated organization that teaches debate to New Haven high school students. The UDL sends Yale students into local classrooms once a week to teach critical thinking and public speaking skills, bolster confidence, provide a gateway for learning about current events, and act as mentors and role models. Once a month, the students come to Yale for a free, three-round parliamentary debate tournament against their peers.

The season culminates with the Yale Debate Association's annual Osterweis Memorial Tournament, which draws students from dozens of Connecticut high schools in New Haven and beyond. This year's Osterweis tournament was run by Meng Jia Yang (PC '12), Nate Blevins (PC '12), and Colin Ross (BK '12); it featured four full rounds of debate for all competitors and a public final round.



Yale Debate welcomes its novice class

In a particularly competitive audition year, the YDA accepted 16 out of more than 90 applicants. Hailing from all over the world, our new class is full of diversity in everything from their debating backgrounds to their favorite sports teams to their political views; nonetheless, they've come together over the course of the year through weekly "novice dinners," pick-up basketball games, and their consistent attendance at tournaments. Meet the class of 2012!


Nate Blevins (PC '12)

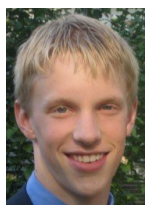
Kirtland, Ohio
Political Science

High school debate: Student Congress
Interests: politics, graphic design, pretending to be from foreign countries


Kate Falkenstien (SY '12)

Lawrence, Kansas
Neuropsychology

High school debate: Extemp
Interests: the Midwest, Mexican food, education policy


Jared Jones (BK '12)

Shaker Heights, Ohio
Political Science

High school debate: Public Forum
Interests: microfinance, public health, roller coasters, ninja training


Brian Levin (SM '11)

Chicago, Illinois
Political Science

High school debate: Model UN
Interests: tennis, skiing, photography, politics


Ian Panchevre (CC '12)

San Antonio, Texas
Cognitive Science

High school debate: Extemp
Interests: behavioral science, foreign affairs, Entourage

Naz El-Khatib (SY '12)

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Political Science and History

High school debate: Public Forum
Interests: Russian novels, the Los Angeles Lakers, discussion


Abeer Gulzar (TD '12)

Lahore, Pakistan
Undecided

High school debate: British Parliamentary
Interests: travelling the world


Edie Joseph (SM '12)

Gainesville, Florida
Religious Studies

High school debate: Public Forum
Interests: warm weather, Judaism, enjoying college life


Carmen Lu (SM '12)

Sydney, Australia
International Studies

High school debate: World Schools
Interests: travel, film, history, the stingray that killed Steve Irwin


Olivia Rogan (TD '12)

Dallas, Texas
Political Science

High school debate: Policy
Interests: political activism, Kappa Alpha Theta, skiing



**Colin Ross (BK '12)**

New York City
History

High school debate: Lincoln-Douglas
Interests: journalism, tennis, watching the Yankees in action

**Marc Wallach (CC '12)**

New York City
Political Science

High school debate: Lincoln-Douglas
Interests: playing guitar, following sports, listening to music

**Meng Jia Yang (PC '12)**

Vancouver, British Columbia
Economics

High school debate: Canadian parli
Interests: law, black and white photography, Asian calligraphy, Chinese food

Arjun Shenoy (DC '12)

Los Gatos, California
History

High school debate: Student Congress
Interests: martial arts, poetry, basketball, football

**Max Webster (PC '12)**

Nashville, Tennessee
Political Science

High school debate: Extemp
Interests: my Dachshunds, sustainable development, the New Orleans Saints

**Michael Zucker (CC '12)**

Deerfield, Illinois
International Studies

High school debate: Student Congress
Interests: reading, tennis, Calhoun intramural sports



Yale Novices by the Numbers

25 Tournaments attended by novices

88 Percent of tournaments where novices won awards

6 Top Speaker awards

6 Top Novice Team awards

9 Appearances in varsity outrounds by Yale novices

94 Percent of novices who won an award this year

3 National champions in their high school events

4 Semifinalists from Yale at season's first tournament

3 Novices ranked as national top ten novice speakers

6 Novices ranked as national top twenty novice speakers

The Yale IV welcomes international debaters

Late October 2008 brought the third annual Yale Inter-Varsity Tournament. Andrew Rohrbach (TC '09) served as chief adjudicator. The YDA played host to roughly 100 teams from across the world. Teams from as far away as England, Australia, and Romania competed fiercely in British Parliamentary Debate. The only tournament of its kind on the American circuit, the Yale IV attracts teams who are looking to get experience in the British Parliamentary style in which the World Championships are conducted. This style features four two-person teams rather than the two two-person teams that are common to North American debating formats.

The Yale IV gives American debaters the opportunity to debate with many of the best teams and judges from around the world in the British Parliamentary style. The IV has been

partly responsible for the resurgence of the United States at the 2008 World Championships, where 8 out of 32 teams advancing to elimination rounds were American – double the total from the year before the first Yale IV.

The success of the IV has also created interesting opportunities for Yale debaters. Last year, Andrew Rohrbach (TC '09), Steven Kryger (SM '10) and alumnus Adam Chilton (ES '07) were asked to lead a workshop on British Parliamentary Debate in Romania. At the workshop, Andrew, Steven, and Adam taught the basics of British Parliamentary to students as well as professors looking to establish debate teams. Their trip was part of a national campaign to increase awareness about debate in Romania and received significant attention from the local media.

The Adams Cup brings resurgence of Yale intramural debate

The Yale Debate Association continued the tradition of promoting intramural debate on campus through the annual Adams Cup. The tournament pits the twelve residential colleges against each other in a spirited competition.

This year, the Adams Cup was directed by Ian Panchevre (CC '12), Arjun Shenoy (DC '12) and Max Webster (PC '12). With teams from all twelve colleges assembled, the tournament featured four preliminary rounds for all teams. The teams with the best records and speaker points had the opportunity of debating in the final round before Dean Gentry and Dean Miller.

At the end of this year's tournament, Berkeley College faced off against Timothy Dwight in the final round, with Timothy Dwight claiming the trophy in a close, heated round. The YDA looks forward to many years of competitive intramural debate at Yale.



Top left: Adams Cup champion Rek LeCounte (TD)

Top right: finalist Rahim Sayani (BK)



Left: finalist Isaac Bloch (BK)

Thousands of high school students converge for Yale's Invitational

The Yale Debate Association hosted its 16th annual High School Invitational last September. The tournament takes place as part of the National Forensic League (NFL) for high school students and features competition in over a dozen events ranging from dramatic interpretation and monologues to policy debate. This year, Yale hosted over 1,500 high school students from over one hundred schools. Teams came from twenty-one states and one Canadian province.

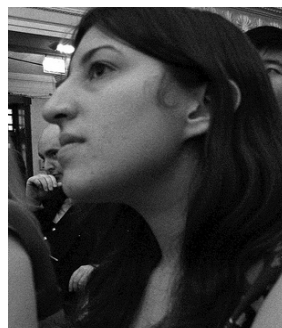
Since its inaugural year in 1992, the tournament has become one of the most prestigious high school competitions in the country. It also has gained a reputation as being one of the most balanced tournaments, ensuring that competitors across all events have an ability to compete at the highest level.

Every member of the team works at the tour-

namment, devoting all their time and energy to the success of our main annual fundraiser. The YDA began work six months before the tournament to ensure that everything ran smoothly, managing everything from concessions sales to hotel reservations to publicity. Preparations have already begun for the 2010 tournament next fall.

The High School Invitational is also an excellent opportunity for the team to work closely with the administration and the Yale community to provide high school students the opportunity to see the best of Yale. Thousands of high-schoolers get to see our campus and meet current students. New Haven public schools also volunteer to host rounds, since the tournament is too large to fit on Yale's campus.

Meet our 2008-2009 tournament directors



From top left: James Luccarelli (BR '10), Tess Reed (CC '10), Colin Ross (BK '12), Max Webster (PC '12), Ian Panchevre (CC '12), Arjun Shenoy (DC '12), Nate Blevins (PC '12), Mark Longhurst (MC '09), Shaina Wright (SY '10), and Mengjia Yang (PC '12)

The YDA Family

As much as the team cares about winning tournaments like Nationals and North-Ams, it also remains a circle of diverse yet tightly knit friends. Team members spend time together not only at weekend tournaments and in long car rides, but also at team social functions back home at Yale.

On Thursday nights, the team hosts its weekly of-ice hours, where members catch up with teammates and discuss debate topics and ideas.

The YDA also hosted its annual Christmas party, featuring a photo album of childhood holiday photos, debate-themed ornament designing, cookie baking and general merriment. Other activities included the Senior Banquet in May, team dinners at local restaurants, pick-up basketball games, and Mory's toasts.



Above: Tess Reed (CC '10), Jeff Geels (SY '09), and Haley Nix (SM '09) show their Christmas spirit.

Recent Alumni Experience Diverse Success

Class of 2008

Ex-YDA President **Josh Bone** has moved to Virginia and taken a one-year position in the chambers of Judge David S. Tatel of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals. **Ashali Singham** works at a public consulting firm in Philadelphia. **Jason Blau** now works as an analyst in the Boulder, CO office of Redstone Strategy Group, LLC, a strategy consulting firm. **Lauren Hallett**, has spent the past year on a Fulbright Scholarship in Perth, Australia.

Class of 2007

Ex-YDA President **Adam Chilton** has spent time touring the world and working at the Boston Consulting Group. He will enroll at Harvard Law School in the fall of '09. Fellow '07 graduates **Matthew Wansley** and **Dave Denton** are also at Harvard Law School, where Wansley will become a 3L, and Denton a 2L, in the fall of '09. **Dylan Gadek** is coaching debate in Phoenix, AZ, and **Ian Clowes** is now a commissioned officer serving in Iraq with the Army Corps of Engineers.

Class of 2006

Rory Gillis spent a year after graduation working with the former Chief Prosecutor at the ICTY in the Hague, and will be a 3L at Yale Law School in the fall. He currently serves as the YDA's coach. **Aaron Zelinsky** will also be a 3L at Yale Law School in the fall. Meanwhile, **Josh Johnson** graduated from Yale Law School this spring. **Sarah Marberg** currently works as a paralegal for the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., and **Ariel Schneller** is giving up his career as a professional poker player to enroll at Harvard Law in September. **Monica Mix** enters her third year at Yale Medical School in the fall.

Class of 2005

Josh Bendor is deferring from Yale Law to work at the Department of Education, following his work on the Obama Campaign. **Andrew Korn** is working as a financial consultant at Sageview Capital in Greenwich, CT. **Mikey Palmieri** will enter his third year at NYU Law in the fall of '09.

The New Executive Board

President: Grant May. Grant is a rising senior and a Political Science major in Saybrook College from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Grant is the 2009 National Champion and North American Champion, as well as a Worlds Semi-Finalist, and has reached elimination rounds at nearly every tournament he has attended during the regular season, winning Harvard, Smith, Wesleyan, Dartmouth and Clark. Prior to serving as President, Grant was the team's Treasurer and High School Tournament Director.

Director of Development: Habib Moody. Habib is a rising senior from New York in Ezra Stiles College majoring in Political Science. In the 2008-2009 season, he broke at all ten APDA tournaments he attended, including APDA Nationals, and with Grant, was runner-up for National Debate Team of the Year. Habib also serves as President of the Urban Debate League, a partner organization of the YDA that promotes debate in New Haven high schools.

Director of Membership: Steven Kryger. Steven is a rising

senior in Silliman College double majoring in Egyptology and Political Science from Winnipeg, Manitoba. Steven has reached elimination rounds at both the World Championships and the North American Championships (twice), along with a fifth-place speaker finish at the



prestigious Cambridge University Interschool Tournament. Previously, Steven was the Deputy Chief Adjudicator for the Yale IV. He looks forward to recruiting members from the class of 2013, the first new class of the team's second century.

Treasurer: Sabrina Ali. Sabrina is a rising junior from New York City and a member of Ezra Stiles College. In the

2008-2009 season, Sabrina was one of the most successful underclassmen debaters in the nation, breaking as one of the top seeds at the enormous Harvard tournament. Prior to serving as Treasurer, Sabrina played a major role in all of the YDA's major events in the past year, co-directing the Osterweis charity tournament in the spring of 2008. She looks forward to ensuring the present and future financial viability of the team.

Tournament Coordinator: Tess Reed. Tess is a rising senior in Calhoun College majoring in History from Charlotte, North Carolina. This year, Tess reached

elimination rounds at Harvard and North-Ams, and represented the YDA at the 2009 World Championships. She also served as the team's Equity Officer. After co-directing the 2007 High School Tournament and co-convening the 2008 Yale IV, Tess is excited about continuing the tradition of successful tournaments hosted by the YDA.

From all of us with the 2008-2009
Yale Debate Association,
thanks for your continued support!

Yale Debate Association
P.O. Box 205955
New Haven, CT 06520

www.yaledebate.org



We'd like to specially thank the following alumni for
their generous donations this past year:

John Chester Adams level (\$1000+)

Miles Gersh
Deborah Rhode

Triangulars level (\$500-\$999)

Adam Jed
Peter Rohrbach
Stephanie Vardavas
David Yergin

Championship level (\$25-\$499)

Raymond Agran
Jeff Bandman
Anthony Brett
Michael Calhoon
Marvin Chatinover
Adam Chilton

Jay Cox
Eric Fishman
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