TRANSCRIPT

About transcripts: These transcripts are automatically created by *Microsoft365 Online*, using the 'Transcription' feature – they are not perfect and errors may occur in the text. There is some light editing and formatting by the dokeo podcast, however, errors may still occur; and you are advise to compare against the podcast episode itself, which can be found here.

Transcripts of Episodes, even with just a light format and edit can take 2-3 hours; please be kind.

Any concerns or for clarifications please email the show: dokeo@edconroy.co.uk.

EPISODE ONE: THE MEANING OF PEACE & PACIFISM (PART ONE)

ED CONROY WITH PROFESSOR ANDREW FIALA

Hannah:	This is Episode One of the Dokeo Podcast with Edmund Conroy. Find out more on our website at dokeo.edconroy.co.uk

OPENING THEME

Professor Fiala:	Hello
Ed Conroy:	Hello. Good morning to you, it's evening for me.

Ed Conroy: Hello there. Welcome. My name is Ed Conroy. I am the host for the Dokeo Podcast. And in the first of two episodes are to debut episodes, I am discussing peace and pacifism with Professor Andrew Fiala. Our Professor Fiala was former chair of philosophy of Fresno State University in California, and is still the director of the university's ethics center. He has also been an associate professor at the University of Wisconsin. He is widely published, having authored such volumes as *Transformative Pacifism* in 2018 *Against Religions, Wars and States* in 2013, *The Just War Myth* in 2008, and *Practical Pacifism* in 2004, as well as some 50 plus academic papers. He's also given over 80 academic conference presentations. Professor Fianna was president of the CPP that's the concern philosophers for peace, and is the first ever ethicist in residence at the Lyons Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. He has also been treasurer and webmaster for the Society for philosophy in the contemporary world. You can find out more about Professor Fiala by reading him at his own website, Andrew fiala.com. And of course, there's always our website where you'll be able to find out some more information. That's dokeo.edconroy.co.uk. Well, thank you for joining me for the first ever episode of the dokeo podcast. And here is part one of my conversation with Professor Andrew Fiala.

END OF OPENING THEME

Ed Conroy: You're based at Fresno State University in California is that yes, that's right, Fresno State we're in Central California,

close to the mountains close to the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Okay. And you've written quite widely on the subject of today, which is pacifism and peace or peace and pacifism. As questions go. I mean, I've got quite a few questions for you today. I hope that there'll be intelligent questions, I have tried to read a little of your work, whether that's journal articles, or books, I searched through my university library, I just literally had to type in the phrase 'philosophy of peace and pacifism', and all your stuff came up.

Professor Fiala: Oh, good.

Ed Conroy: So you'll be pleased to know that the University of Stirling has quite a few of your your works, including a couple of your books.

INTERLUDE

Hannah: You're listening to Episode One of the dokeo podcast with Edmund Conroy and Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter at @dokeopodcast.

QUESTION ONE

Ed Conroy: One of the big discussions we're going to have really is about war, it is the obvious one when we're talking about peaceful talk about war. And I guess, when you're trying to define things, and obviously, this is very much an introduction to a lot of people to the philosophy of peace and pacifism. I guess the question I have to start with is what is war?

Professor Fiala: What is war? Okay, that's a good place to start. Yeah, thank you, again, for inviting me for this conversation. This

whole topic is complicated and difficult, as you know, and the the terminology is loose and confusing. So even that question, what is war? That I mean, we could spend an hour and a half or five or a lifetime trying to figure that out? Exactly. And as you probably know, the word war gets turned into a metaphor. So you can have a war against crime and a war against drugs and a war against racism. So these, you know, this, what philosophers do is we we take concepts, we pull them apart, we dissect them, we try to put them back together. We make arguments, I just warn you upfront, it's, it's difficult to confuse. So that's the beauty of philosophy. And, you know, so like, we can start with a preliminary definition of war, which is organized political violence. That's kind of a standard go to definition implies a couple things. It has to be organized meaning it's it's not just your you know, I can't declare war on you can't declare war on me. Gangs don't really engage in war, even though we talk about gang warfare, right? Generally, you know, in in the philosophical literature on this war is going to be about it's going to be organized by political entities, like states. But you know, there are sub national groups that could engage in something that seems like more like an ongoing terrorist campaign. Obviously complicated, right. So connected with even the question of political What counts is political, you know, so, you know, typically it's interstate conflict where where we're fighting about borders, about power and influence, sometimes about resources, right? You can imagine wars that erupt over oil wells, or access to fisheries or rivers or

whatever. But it's, it's even difficult to figure out where to draw the line, because, as you know, I mean, some people say everything's political, so organized political violence, well, that makes turns everything into war. And then the violence part organized political violence. This assumes we know what violence is. Turns out, it's very complicated. I mean, there's lots and lots of definitions and conceptual issues with regard to violence. Typically, the paradigm case involves harm, bloodshed, death, but people talk about psychological violence. We talked about cultural violence, you know, so I don't know if I made it muddy enough to begin with, but it's complicated to say the least.

Ed Conroy: No, no, that's that's a perfectly good answer. As a side note, it reminds me a little bit of, and I don't know whether you've ever seen it. The John Cusack film War Inc. No, which is all about wall becoming sponsored by corporations, which is an interesting concept of basically companies becoming bigger than states, which is a philosophical side route. I think we won't dive into that, because that that'll, that'll lead us down a rabbit hole. That will be difficult to get out.

INTERLUDE

Hannah: You're listening to Episode One of the dokeo podcast with Edmund Conroy and Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter at @dokeopodcast.

QUESTION TWO

Ed Conroy: I suppose, if we go with your I guess what you would call a working definition of war? I guess the question is the opposite of that. What is peace?

Professor Fiala: Yeah, so let's let's dig in there. If If war is organized political violence, then peace could be I'm making a joke here. disorganized non political non violence. It's only part of the job actually. Because let's start at the end. Non-violence, obviously connected to peace. Right? So if if war is violence, and peace is non violence, and in the literature on this, and you know, the terminology, the word non violence is hugely important. There's some scholars who, you know, I talked about pacifism, I'm, I'm willing to use the word pacifism. But some scholars don't like that word, they'd prefer to use the word non violence as the primary category. That term has a deep history. You know, Gandhi talked about Ahimsa, which is non violence in South Asian traditions. Again, complicated. What counts is non violence. A more positive version, by the way that we're non violence is kind of troubling, because it's negative, right? So it makes peace into something into an absence or lack like peace is the absence of war, basically, something like that. I prefer a more affirmative approach. Sometimes this is called positive peace. But it's not just about not doing violence. It's about actively supporting human beings, respecting their dignity, love, compassion, curiosity, wisdom, all of that stuff falls under the general category of peace and non violence. And I actually have argued a number of

places that peace, as opposed to war and violence pieces, like the default condition for human beings where both descriptively and normatively we mostly live in peace most of the time, right? Where we when we do our family life is peaceful. When we do social life, it's it's peaceful. When we're doing science and literature and art, it's peaceful. Violence is an aberration or a dysfunction that disrupts the ordinary peaceful background conditions of being human. So what that's what you know, I've gone back and forth with some of my colleagues about the terminology and well, I'll use the word non violence. I'm happy with that. I prefer something more affirmative and I think peace works that way. And then last, you know, kind of preliminary idea about this. In the ancient world. Peace was a goddess. So there was Roman and Greek goddess, you Renae is her name in Greek in Greek. Pax is her name in Latin. And she's a goddess and she represents good things. And you see that the word pax, it shows up in other languages like the word Shalom, like the word Salaam in Arabic. These concepts and terms are hugely important in our lives. In fact, there's a kind of common greeting, you know, and Jewish folks say Shalom, which means hello, it also means I love you and also means peace be unto you, and so on. So this is, again, my attempt to say that peace is a is the fundamental default condition of human flourishing.

INTERLUDE

Hannah: You're listening to Episode One of the dokeo podcast with Edmund Conroy and

Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter at @dokeopodcast.

QUESTION THREE

Ed Conroy: You've kind of already answered this, but I do kind of just want to see if there's more that we can dig out here with the the qualities of war and peace and how do we define those with reference to one another? Or can they be described as qualities in their own want, right? And how far do we push those qualities? We noticed you talked a lot about peace being on default. But I know that some on the more philosophically towards veganism, and vegetarianism would argue that humans are violent by nature, therefore, when we're we're violent towards animals, and we should actively not be violent towards animals, which includes not eating them are not going to get into the big argument there. But I think that's a that's an aside issue that is also often woven into this idea of peace and war and non violence and violence. And so, yeah, so what are the qualities of peace and war? Let's start there, I suppose.

Professor Fiala: Yeah. Well, I mean, here's a here's a, an approach to this. I wrote my dissertation on Hegel, the German philosopher who talks about dialectic, Hegel's got an approach to concepts that it shows the interconnectedness of concepts. That idea goes all the way back to Plato and Socrates and the Greeks dialectics very important. So with that, put that term on the table dialectic, what I mean by dialectic is that there's an interplay and an interchange among concepts. You can't just define a concept in isolation by

itself. And I think that's where your question is going, that peace is defined in opposition to war, and we understand war in opposition to peace. Obviously true. Just like the terminology, violence and non violence, right, these non violence is literally the negation of violence. So your question is asking, I think, can we define the qualities of peace in isolation, without the dialectical entanglement of these other concepts? It's very, very difficult. And here's one reason it's difficult is life is just complicated. So, like you said, the vegan vegetarian example is huge, right? You cannot live without killing some other beings. Even if it's plant, you know, beans and cucumbers or whatever you I mean, ultimately, life is a process that involves death. And we all are gonna die ourselves. I mean, everything's interconnected. Okay. That being said, What would peace look like, as best we can non dialectically I mean, we can say again, it's the absence of violence is the absence of hate. It's the absence of cruelty. It's the absence of hostility and enmity, we can do those dialectical definitions, but let's bring in some other words that are kind of synonyms with for peace. Well, love is one. Love, not possessive love, but sort of Christians would call it agapic love. Love that is like the brotherly love, the God level Love. We could bring in a term like compassion. This is more from a Buddhist South Asian tradition, right? Where compassion has to extend to all sentient beings, we're concerned about their suffering. In Buddhism, there's this wonderful idea of the four and measurable goods. And these four goods include love, compassion, equanimity,

which is a little bit strange, in that ballpark, and sympathetic joy. I love that idea of sympathetic joy. This is being able to take pleasure in other people's happiness. that's crucial to peace. Right? So it like if there were peace if peace broke out, we would find ourselves engaged in loving relationships, we would have compassion for the suffering, we would take joy and other people's happiness. And then that equanimity part, this, this idea of equanimity can be translated into tranquility, serenity, all of those words are another word other words for peace, right? The Greeks talked a lot about the Greek term ataraxia, which is translated as serenity, also dialectically translated as non disturbance, right. So again, we run back on this problem, like what is serenity. Well, to be serene is to not be disturbed, and we get the dialectical problem. Um, you know, we're, we're playing a game of synonyms here now, right? All of these things, compassion, love, etc. They all fall under an umbrella. And I like this idea of how we philosophers talk about family resemblance terminology or umbrella terms. Concepts are located and organized, like by Venn diagrams, if that makes sense to you, right? There's they overlap and synonyms function that way, but it's it's edifying, right, when we can think of how the sentiment synonyms line up, we start to get a picture. Is it perfect? No. Is it dialectical? Yeah. Because all on the outside of the connected concepts, there's all the other concepts that those concepts are not.Okay, I'm gonna stop. I'm not I don't know, if I'm confusing you or helping?

Ed Conroy: No, no, it's fine. It's I think it's, there's a big tradition. Well, there's a big argument that used to be said a lot. Again, this philosophy with that it never came to any conclusions. And I think I think being fair about that and saying, Yeah, sometimes we don't have a conclusion, we have an ongoing conversation, to try and try and work these things out. Because as you said, they're complicated. So I think I think you've been you've been helpful because you've given us a border picture.

INTERLUDE

Hannah: You're listening to Episode One of the dokeo podcast with Edmund Conroy and Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter at @dokeopodcast.

QUESTION FOUR

Ed Conroy: So moving slightly on still the same kind of topic of war and peace. You wrote, and it wasn't in the introduction, I can't say I've finished the book, I will sit down and do that. But in the introduction to one of your books, you mentioned, and I'm guessing maybe it was more of a mention than a dive into the topic that living in a peaceful society might give rise to things such as greed. And I suppose we could add in things like corruption, and especially in the West, perhaps from my say entitlement, whilst warfare have had positive impacts on developments within society. And I guess there's a couple of questions here. Is there a middle ground between war and peace? Do countries that are famously neutral? And don't have an army such as Switzerland have any benefits that

countries such as the UK and US don't have? And yet, could you just talk about that as a general kind of concept?

Professor Fiala: Yeah. So is there a middle place between peace and war? Um, but let's let's let's think about this from the standpoint that I'm going to call consequentialist. So one, moral theory, one general approach to thinking about good things and bad things to think about the consequences they produce? I think that's where you got that my remark about the war can produce good outcomes. There are some who will argue, well, obviously, some will like say, well, we need war to defend human rights. We need war to defend innocent people from assault, right? Yes, that's probably needed in the world that we live in right now. Where there are, you know, people with guns who can Marotta us, right? We know that's an issue. But a further point that can be made is war drives, technological development. Word drives political development, mean revolutions stimulate constitutions, right? I mean, they're, you know, there's violence has played a role in history of civilization for 3000 years. 5000 word years. I don't know how long you want to trace this back. And then you know, we build chariots. So now we develop technology, and then we build tanks and then we build airplanes and radar. And you know, I mean, this technology argument is interesting. What about the goods of peace on the other consequentialist goods at peace? Well, I think it's entirely possible we can invent airplanes without war. I think the techno technology argument is, is it's useful, but it's a kind of, after the fact post hoc rationalization, right? We, we could have

developed carts with wheels that were not chariots, because we just know that carts with wheels are useful, right? So I think the same technologies could be developed by piece as by war. I also been back to this other argument about defending the innocent and defending human rights. Now this gets this is deeper, right? This gets really complicated, and some people are gonna say, you, the only way we can defend ourselves is through violence, right? violence must be opposed by violence. And here is then where you need to study all of the practitioners and advocates of non violence and, and the problem is that that story about violence, being used to fight violence is so powerful popular, I don't know how else to describe it, like widespread and popular if people can't even imagine that you could defend yourself non violent. I know, there's probably on your list of questions to talk about. So maybe I'm jumping the gun. But there is there's actually important literature on how organized non violence can work. And behind all that we can get into that in a moment if you like. But behind all that, is the idea of preventing violence in advance, which takes us back to the goods of peace, right? Why does violence occur? Where does it come from? Well, it comes from unhappiness from dysfunction from a lack of social support from from broken societies, in societies Now, going back to Switzerland, I knew I'm rambling about coming back to where I was, in societies that are peaceful and whole, where people are loved and respected and feel connected. There's less violence, there's there's data that that show this right that it's it's

social dysfunction that produces violence, and it's organic, peaceful, communal life, that tends to defuse violence. So what are the goods of peace? Like what's the what's the value of it well, dialectically attend when there's more peace or love more harmony, it tends to reduce violence. And it also produces all those social goods that we like, friendship, family science, literature, poetry, etc. Again, some of that stuff comes from war and violence, because there's great poetry that comes out of war. But that's not that's not the ideal. Wouldn't it be better to have poetry that's written that comes out of peace and out of war? I don't know. I'm blathering on here. I'll stop and throw back over to you.

Ed Conroy: No, no, I think that's lovely. I think that's what's a good way to look at it. Oh, you've touched on things I was gonna raise. And I will raise them again a bit later. Specifically, I think when we come to conversations are surrounding just the concept of just war.

INTERLUDE

Hannah: You're listening to Episode One of the dokeo podcast with Edmund Conroy and Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter at @dokeopodcast.

QUESTION FIVE

Ed Conroy: I wanted to raise one which is a little bit more left filled. But of course related to this. And I'm, I'm a theology graduate. So I'm not raising it from the theology perspective on this one, but I've titled it the problem of evil. So a lot of this I

have to be fair, a lot of this is referencing your introduction to '*Public War, Private Conscience*', your book. You describe acts and perhaps touch on evil as a description of someone or something. But I wondered if we have a universal working definition of evil and or the quality of what it means to be evil.

Professor Fiala: Ed, you have excellent questions. you're digging deep here. Thank you, hum? You're thinking of evil as as a metaphysical thing, like a presence is up? Is that where we go?

Ed Conroy: I guess I mean, I'm raising it. Yeah, I'm wondering what is we often we we will we will describe an act as evil. We will describe someone or something as being evil, but we're referring to act and I just I guess I wonder is there a? What does it mean to be evil? What does it mean to be evil? Yeah.

Professor Fiala: Well, I mean, you know, again, like a consequentialist approach to this evil is connected to harm. So when things harm us, they're evil. But this is not a useful answer. Because then you ask, Well, what counts as harm? Right? So it's just like a game of synonyms, again, from evil, we move to harm. It turns out, you know, when you when you look at the literature on this, it gets really fuzzy thing. I mean, the, the definitions kind of fade in, you know, into the mists as it were. There's a problem with Socrates confronted anyway. In addition, I think to harm and, you know, the reason it's difficult to define harm is because not everyone agrees on what is harmful. Right. So I mean, think of a like a real world example, circumcision, for example, right? Some people will say

that circumcision is actually good for the male or the female, like cultures, practices, others will argue that it's harmful, right? So there's cultural relativity in a lot of this. Another interesting and important concepts with regard to defining evil and harm has to do with autonomy, and respect for persons. So one could argue that a fundamentally, the most important thing is a violation of someone's autonomy. This is, I would say, a more deontological approach to this useful philosophical terminology. If our if our autonomy is being violated. In other words, if we're being harmed against our will, then that is a kind of evil, right? Again, this is only one view. So other people will say autonomy, who cares? It doesn't matter, right? There's not not everyone's on board with the autonomy argument. Think back to the circumcision example. I'm sorry to go there again, but we do it to children. So there is no presumption of autonomy, right? parents make these choices for their children without considering the autonomy of the child. So this happens a lot of a lot of the time, okay. The metaphysical issue, and you know, this as a theology student, right. So, in the Christian tradition, typically evil is described as a deprivation or a negation or lack of God is a Gustin St. Agustin makes this famous claim. And there's a difficult theological problem, because if God is good, where the heck does evil come from? Right. Other traditions have different views on this, there's, you know, like a kind of Manichaean, quote, one of the influences on a Gustin again, a Manichaean view says the good and evil are sort of CO mutual principles in

the universe. And it's always like this, yin and yang to bring in another tradition, between good and evil. Where am I going with this? I'm not sure that remind me of the question again, I'm just rambling on about good and evil.

Ed Conroy: So I mean, the original question was, do we have a universal working definition of evil and all the quality of what it means to be evil? I think your answer, we can kind of say, No, we don't. But we each have our own view on that. And I think it kind of leads nicely to our next question.

INTERLUDE

Hannah: You're listening to Episode One of the dokeo podcast with Edmund Conroy and Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter at @dokeopodcast.

QUESTION SIX

Ed Conroy: This question is as a purely logical question, everyone listening will turn off. So children are often seen as kind of the poor unfortunate blighted by war. So do you think that the weight given to arguments surrounding the use and abuse of children in war over and above concerns for the rest of the citizens citizenry is simply based on their youth their inexperience their inability to be involved civically in the decisions that lead to and prolong war? Or is this something even more deep seated going on? When we hold children up is almost the worst and highest? Evil form? casualty of war?

Professor Fiala: Yeah, I yeah. That's a good, good question. I understand it. I think where you're coming from is people will say, well, the worst thing about war is that innocent children are killed. Right and Notice that the predicate they're innocent, innocent children are killed. There's a presumption that children didn't do anything to cause the evil that's visited upon them. Right? They're innocent. Why does that matter? So back to this definition of, of evil with regard to autonomy, right? When people's autonomy is violated, that's evil. Now, one could harm someone and violate their autonomy in a situation where they deserve to be harmed. We call that punishment, right? When you harm someone, and they've done something to deserve that harm, we even lock them in prison and take away their autonomy. But we think it's deserved, right? with children who are innocent, the story goes that they don't deserve the harm that's visited upon them. So I think there's a deontological kind of moral claim that's implicit in that worry about innocent children. Another approach to this, I'd say, a more consequentialist approach, is it the kids never got a chance to grow up and be happy. So it's about their youth, it's about the fact that, you know, when a five year old dies, it seems much more tragic than when a 55 year old dies. And this has to do with a consequentialist measurement of the value of life. Again, not everyone will necessarily want to go in this direction. Because you could say, well, you know, that 55 year old is Albert Einstein or whatever, it's a deep tragedy of Mozart, it's a tragedy. But generally, I think the reason children are brought

into the argument is it's because they have a whole life to live, that's been taken away. And it's Furthermore, it's not just about life, bear existence. It's about the goods of life that are lost, right? So this is another problem with war. It not only does it kill people, but it means them. It leaves them psychologically scarred and damaged. It destroys the infrastructure and families and schools and economies that support robust, flourishing life. Right. So I think, you know, people throw that well, what about the innocent children? They're thinking all of that, right, that even if they survive the war, they they're going to be suffering from traumatic, you know, post traumatic stress, and their schools will be destroyed, and the environment will be left polluted, and so on, so forth. Is that helping a little bit with your question?

Ed Conroy: Yeah? Yeah, I mean, it is a question I, I would probably have thought along the same lines, probably not quite as deep as you have. But it's a question worth asking.

INTERLUDE

Hannah: You're listening to Episode One of the dokeo podcast with Edmund Conroy and Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter at @dokeopodcast.

QUESTION SEVEN

Ed Conroy: This next question, again, is, it's, our culture or the UK culture, I assume in some respects, Western culture in general, including the US has certain questions that aren't asked a lot. One is,

why do we hold children up to such a pedestal? We wouldn't ask that question. It's just assumed, you know, to a degree. This next one is another one of those questions that as Western societies, we perhaps don't ask enough. I am going to start by saying this question involves me mentioning, although I don't think I've actually written this. Oh yes I do. Reuters news agency, which has a very specific position on this. So you talk somewhat in your preface on 'Public War, Private Conscience', about terrorists. Now, from a Western perspective, we can often come under criticism for using that word to describe others. Generally, it is others it is not of our national boundaries. We would rarely describe those the same way. So we'd rarely describe people within our boundaries within our national boundaries as being terrorists, those from within, it's usually from without. So from a journalistic perspective, I'm I'm quite persuaded by Reuters argument. Reuters news agency says that when we reporting news, we shouldn't describe as journalists we shouldn't describe someone as a terrorist, or even events as terrorist events, essentially, to take the adage one man's terrorist is another man's war hero or freedom fighter? So how do we reconcile this in our language and our thought, especially when we begin to ask questions about Western imperialism, and how what we might call something a terrorist, couldn't be deed be considered a legitimate act of protest. Now, I am not saying that I can. I agree that they can be viewed that way. But I think of the troubles in Northern Ireland as a classic example. And historically what is now the Republic of Ireland as well. So

the heroes of the Republic today were labeled as terrorists and agitators by the ruling elite of the time. And I actually think there's a very funny, funny story, because I was I was on holiday in Dublin, a good few years ago, before all of Coronavirus, and before my children were born, which is a key element 'cause you don't go on holiday when you've got children. There was a story that was told to me by two late ladies in Dublin, while we were sitting in a cafe, my wife and I, and there's the story of the single the spire or the monument of light and Dublin's O'Connell Street. And what happened was, they used to be a statue of Nelson or the pillar of Nelson there. And in 1966, the Irish Republican Army went in and tried to blow it up. And they didn't do terrible much damage, or at least they damaged the the the pillar of Nelson, but not any other damage. Then the army came in and had to perform a controlled explosion to bring the rest of this pillar down. So the story goes that the army did more damage to the rest of O'Connell street than the IRA did. So it's a bit of a digression. I like the story, because I just think it's kind of funny. You know, in that context, who's who's the terrorist who's the army? But my question is people such as James Connelly, and Joseph Plunkett, his wife I don't know whether you'll know this, but grace Greg Gifford, the wife of Joseph Plunkett was the subject of a very famous song. These guys are heroes in Ireland today. But I think perspective helps us to the British, the Easter Rising in 1916, which included the taking over the Dublin's General Post Office was criminal, it was an act of terror. Connelly was actually executed

sitting down in a killam killer main ham gold jail. by firing Scott he was sitting as he hadn't recovered from his wings, and Plunkett died hours just before his execution in his prison cell. Plunkett was a journalist, and Connelly was a Scottish trade unionist and socialist reformer, who was part of the Irish Labour Party. So the question is all people ever actually terrorists? Or is it just a case of perspective? Is it wrong to call those who Rage Against kind of the tyranny of the nation state as terrorists? Yeah, no, that's a long way of saying, you know, are we using the word terrorist too lightly? I guess?

Professor Fiala: Yeah. No, great. That's a great question. Um, you know, I think you're right. I think Reuters is onto something there that we can't use that term lightly. Right. It needs to be used with care. And always with the recognition, as you just suggested that perspective matters. Right? One person's terrorist, another person's freedom fighter, you know, you've heard that a million times. There's some truth to that. And yet, I don't think the words useless, right. So if we can be careful with it, then we can use it. So let me let me try to give a definition that that's careful. And then then say why the peace nonviolence pacifist position will argue against terrorism in any case, right, whether it's by the state or by non-state actors. So like a typical definition of terrorism that you see this, like, law enforcement will use this kind of definition, that it's random. I think that's got to be part of it. Random violence. So violence, again, that has a political tone to it, or aim to influence political events. Now, I think those three things, it's random, it's

political, and it's violent, that already makes it complicated to figure out exactly what counts because your example of the statue blowing up a statue is that violent? You know, I mean, if no, humans are harmed, it's only quasi violent in a sense. I mean, you know, these some anarchists show up to protest, you know, when they break windows of a Starbucks or a Burger King or whatever, you know, is breaking a window violent? It's, it's an interesting and very complicated question there. You know. Some of the people that break things. There's no political agenda whatsoever, right. So there are, I actually know some of these people, in another life I used to. I knew some of the kind of skateboarder kind of punk rock folks, and if this sort of a glee in breaking things without a political issue. Is that terrorism well? Not according to that definition is not politically motivated, right? And then the random nature of it also is very important. Because I mean you hesitate to bring this up, but assassination is not really terrorism, right? It's that's a targeted act of political violence aimed at a particular person. With the idea that that person is responsible for something politically right. That is different targeted assassination is different from blowing up a bus. You are random kind of violence. You could imagine occurs in Israel or wherever, right. And I think what happens is the word terrorism just gets applied to all cases, right? Well, the vandal who breaking windows at Starbucks. That's terrorism in the assassin, and that's terrorism and basically becomes a term to describe those we don't.

Ed Conroy: Do we not have an issue with the use of random here? And I say that loosely, but I'm thinking of an event in American history, but we will come to that in just a second. But this use of random, if an event is planned in advanced, it's never truly random. So you know will bring up the big incident of 911 terrible events. The people who planned it know it was happening. Is there random? I guess from the victim's perspective it is but from. The perpetrator perspective. It's not that kind of I'll bring it up, but. And this is Interstate violence an the Bay of Pigs in American history. Was that not America acting as a terrorist in? Obviously it was for political reasons and I don't want to dig too much into it, but you know, this use of random you know from an American perspective, know from, no. From Castro's perspective, yes. Do you get what I mean?

Professor Fiala: Yeah I hear you on this. Again we got a problem of perspective and relativism that what appears to be random to one party may not be from the other perspective right so? Go back to 911 as an interesting example. The World Trade Centre. These two buildings were targeted. Is that random? Well, it could have been just as just a target of opportunity, right? The easiest building to fly a plane into in New York City, where those buildings they were the tallest built right? But did the World Trade Centre right? So this is a symbol of capitalism and global power. An al Qaeda has problems with global capitalism in the hands of Americans living in NYC, right? So? I mean, again, it depends on a matter of perspective. Yeah, so like let's think of a different example. I'm thinking of the breaking of

Windows at protests, right? Some of these skateboard punks. They target Starbucks not at random. They are opposed to global capitalism in the Starbucks, you know Starbucks everywhere, including in you know gentrification, gentrifying neighbourhood. You know they're targeting Starbucks deliberately. There are others who say break any window. You can find. It doesn't matter whether it's Starbucks or a black owned business or a game, lesbian friendly, but you know what I mean. They're going to break anything so. No, I think you're exactly right. This is this term itself also very, very complicated and heavily politicised. So one side is going to accuse the other of being a terrorist. and then let's go to like a really gruesome and paradigm example of state terrorism, the bay of pigs is an interesting one.The terra bombing used by United States, an American allies in many, many wars, the war in Europe. The war against Japan, the Vietnam War, where the purpose of the bombing is to just kill as many people as possible in cities. In order to destroy the will of the enemy to fight right its innocence random, but just drop bombs on cities it's not targeted. You're not targeting. Military installations are not targeting soldiers, you're just trying to kill people. I think that counts as a kind of terrorism. Under that definition. Now of course we don't, the mainstream doesn't accept that definition, right? And so we got right. So it's again a problem perspective and some, but I believe, and I think you are pointing in this direction too. I think that states can commit terrorism, so it's not only non-state

actors who can act as terrorists. States can also do this. And then back to my main thrust about peace and nonviolence. Do you see the problem? I mean, wouldn't it be better to solve our differences without terra bombing without blowing up buses and so on.

Ed Conroy: I agree

INTERLUDE

Hannah: You're listening to Episode One of the dokeo podcast with Edmund Conroy and Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter at @dokeopodcast.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Ed Conroy: This is a questionnaire that I ask everyone at the end. It's based on James Lipton's inside the Actors Studio questionnaire, which of course is based on Bernard Pivo's Apostrophe's I think was the name of the TV show in France, which is based on a guy called Marcel's. Something in the 1800s. So as a group of 10 questions, I've slightly edited them coz I think James Lipton's were a little bit rude and he was asking actors. But these are the questions that I have.

What is your favourite word?

Professor Fiala: Favourite word?

Ed Conroy: Yeah

Professor Fiala: At the moment, compassion.

Ed Conroy: What makes you saddest?

Professor Fiala: Unjustified suffering.

Ed Conroy: What sound and noise do you love?

Professor Fiala: Jazz music.

Ed Conroy: What is your favourite curse word?

Professor Fiala: Favourite curse word wow. I guess the F word is so useful.

Ed Conroy: What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?

Professor Fiala: Yeah, musician music.

INTERVIEW END

Hannah Conroy: This was episode one of the Dockyard podcast hosted by Edmund Conroy, interviewing Professor Andrew Fiala. Find us on Twitter @dokeopodcast or on our website at dokeo.edconroy.co.uk. And please don't forget to subscribe using your favourite podcast listening platform.

CLOSING THEME

Ed Conroy: Thank you very much for listening. That's all we have time for on today's show. Join me next time when I will finish that conversation with Professor Andrew Fiala on peace and pacifism. I've been Ed Conroy, and this is the dokeo podcast. Have a great rest of your week.

Hannah: Music was provided by FreePD.com under a Creative Commons license zero.

Additional voice over work by Hannah Conroy.

CLOSING THEME END

END OF EPISODE: ADVERTISEMENT

Hannah: If you would like to support the dokeo podcast then please visit our website shop to purchase merchandise or visit Patreon.com/dokeo to financially subscribe to the podcast. Your contribution alone could help the podcast make many more episodes.

END