

Dear friends and fellow Peucinians,

Last week we wrestled with the question of how science and its method effects the way in which we as humans view and interact with nature, specifically as regards nature's beauty. We heard two exceptional orations from the esteemed Poe and Heisenberg, each offering accounts of wherein nature's beauty might lie. Ultimately, we decided that science did not detract from nature's beauty, though many questions remain unresolved.

This week we turn our sights from beauty to justice. We will question and probe democratic government's frequent claim to the correct understanding of justice and what implications this claim might have for a nation's responsibility in international affairs. This week we consider:

**RESOLVED: DEMOCRACIES OUGHT TO ENFORCE JUSTICE BEYOND THEIR BORDERS.**

**AFFIRMATIVE: VOLTAIRE '16**  
**NEGATIVE: ISAIAH BERLIN '14**

If we believe that democratic principles, based on our natural rights as human beings, best engender justice, oughtn't a democracy then enforce those principles where they are violated not only within its borders, but also outside? If a democracy stands for more than simply rule of law, mustn't at least the most heinous acts of tyrants be thwarted by the nations that love liberty and exalt human dignity? Furthermore, shouldn't democracies, which uphold politics through rational discourse and majoritarian legislation, enforce those duly enacted international criminal statutes when they are flouted by regimes of terror?

Or, should democracies be more cautious about laying exclusive claim to justice? To be sure, we cannot know what justice is beyond an absolute doubt - we cannot prove a code of justice with scientific certainty. Indeed, in enforcing justice, a democracy might not only expend its own resources and the lives of its citizens in aiding peoples completely alien from its own, but it may also commit acts of injustice itself, however well-intentioned that democracy might be. No fundamental responsibility to human beings outside of the social contract was ever outlined in the works of political science and philosophy from which liberal republicanism was born.

So join us, Thursday night at 7:30 pm on the third floor of Massachusetts

Hall, to discuss and debate this ever-important resolution.

Yours truly,

Allan Bloom