

Dearest Peucinians,

Last week we convened in the Halloween spirit for a session of prose and poetry reading in Chase Barn. From chilling tales of the inhumanity of torture to well-worn fairy tales both ridiculous and disturbing, it is my sincere hope that all those in attendance departed a little bit more inspired than they arrived – or, at least, a little bit more afraid.

This week we return to our regular business with the following disputation —

Resolved: Fiction is more enlightening than non-fiction.

Affirmative: Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol '16

Negative: François-Marie Arouet '16

That both fiction and non-fiction each offer us truths is no question, but what are their respective natures and values? Are the truths provided by fictional works more intimate and, in being so, more informative of the human experience, an understanding of ourselves, and our relationships with other human beings? Does fiction through its fanciful poeticism offer us truths of the sort that non-fiction never could? Or does non-fiction, in revealing to us that which actually has been and is, necessarily offer us a more valuable perspective of human affairs and, consequently, a better-informed conception of the self? Furthermore, is fiction often dishonest in either its substance or method? If so, does this dishonesty detract from its capacity to enlighten, or add to it?

Which has most enlightened you in your life – fiction, or non-fiction?

Join us at **7:29pm this evening (Thursday, November 7th)** on the **third floor of Massachusetts Hall** to assist us in wrestling with these

vital questions. Come courageous.

Yours in all branches of literature,

Adam Smith and Allan Bloom