

Dear Peucinians,

Welcome back to the frozen North from what I hope was a relaxing and enjoyable break. We will be convening this week for the first disputation of this semester to discuss:

**RESOLVED: 'TIS BETTER TO LAUGH THAN TO CRY.**

**AFFIRMATIVE: Adam Smith '14**

**NEGATIVE: Αἴας (the Great) '16**

This debate will focus on the merits and demerits offered by both comedy and tragedy as modes by which we produce art and modes through which we view the world. Ought we to greet the world and our fellows with a grin, smiling in the face of uncertainty and treating matters of purported seriousness with levity? Does a comedic worldview make us happier and more alert to the farce unfolding around us? Can laughter assuage the futility of the human condition? Do comedies offer us a more accurate picture of life on Earth?

Or, does comedy, the constant undercutting of seriousness, lead to an absence of purpose and ultimately to the crisis of nihilism? Does the tragic mode actually ennoble human achievement and human struggling? Does it bring us closer to and force us to confront the hardships inherent in life? Does tragedy grant us a more honest and purpose-driven life?

Please join us to address these and other questions this Thursday, the 30th, at 7:30 pm sharp on the Third Floor of Massachusetts Hall.

Sincerely,

Allan Bloom