

Disputation CCIII

September 12, 2019

Dear Peucinians,

Welcome! I hope your summers have proved fulfilling and restorative. We are about to embark on another year filled with conversation, questions, camaraderie, and wonder. As always, the contributions of both old hands and enthusiastic newcomers will be instrumental to the success of our mission. I cannot wait to see you all around the table as we launch into a constellation of new ideas.

This disputation brings two members of the Class of '22 to the podium for a greatly-anticipated duel of wits. Once we have heard their orations, it will be up to us to determine whether the sky's the limit.

RESOLVED: COLONIZE THE GALAXY

Affirmative: Count Leo Tolstoy '22

Negative: Patrick Bloniasz the Just '22

Contrary to the mechanics of gravity, the spirit of man is both propelled from the Earth and drawn into the vast expanse of space. All too soon, we shall be compelled to leave our fragile cradle for survival in the stars. Simultaneously, the void somehow cries out to our curiosity. It stokes our spirit of adventure. After all, the frontier is synonymous with opportunity: opportunity to innovate, to build a better world, and to look into ourselves with greater clarity. Not only is humanity inherently worthy of preservation – it would be utterly negligent to stymie its current progress by confining it to this world.

Yet, it is worth considering the changes space will require of us. Changes in the environment will necessitate changes in the human form. This tampering risks fundamentally damaging our minds, and might even come to deform our souls. If not even a glimmer of humanity is to be found in our space-faring descendants, can we say the species has truly “survived?” Continuity is not worth it for its own sake: it is better to live well, maturely accept death, and harmonize our idea of human perfection within the bounds of Mother Earth's beneficence. We have obligations to our celestial birthplace, and should honor her just as we would our own mother or a sacred hearth. Space is no home.

Is self-preservation a fundamental part of human nature? Could we stop the progress of science and technology, even if this is what we want? Whether you think it bolder to go or bolder to remain, I look forward to discussing this bountiful subject with you soon.

Thursday, September 12th, 7:45 PM

Massachusetts Hall, Third Floor

Semi-Formal Attire

I have attached an optional, short piece by the early twentieth century scientist and Marxist, J.B.S. Haldane. It is in no way necessary that you read this before joining us, but, if you have some time, you might find it thought provoking and very related to our subject.

Sincerely yours,



Gilgamesh

Pinos Loquentes Semper Habemus