

## Disputation II: The Green Movement is a threat to our Liberty

Dear Peucinian Society,

This week, we welcomed thirteen new associate members to the Peucinian Society. Their declamations elevated virtues including 'nudity of the spirit,' linguistic consciousness, and honesty. The most distinctive feature of the declamations was each new member's commitment to unrelenting introspection. So with this fresh blood, the Peucinian ship will sail onward.

Last week's disputation on the resolution: **The McKeen Center for the Common Good enriches Liberal Education at Bowdoin** passed with a vote of 11 yeas to 10 nays. Jamey Anderson argued for the soundness of the Center's goal of unifying Bowdoin around "reflective public engagement" and rejected the tension between community service and intellectual inquiry as false. Mr. Anderson recounted the way that his volunteering time in South America awakened him to a 'poverty of the spirit' and 'lack of pride in identity' in contemporary America. Jamey urged the Society to embrace the McKeen Center's goal of promoting an "active and engaged learning community" that could bring academic renewal to Bowdoin.

Smith argued that the McKeen Center was built in a church to create a new outlet for the longings of irreligious Bowdoin students. He argued that the "crisis of liberal education"-- the erosion of faith in redemptive truth and turn towards scientific specialisms-- was actually a consequence of the "Death of God." Smith rejected the McKeen Center as a shallow, utilitarian, and anti-intellectual response to this crisis and argued for a return to an important question: What goal or aspiration can unify liberal education in the wake of the "Death of God?" Smith contended that the McKeen Center creates a dangerous dichotomy between "the real world of service" and the ostensibly "false world of learning and ideas" and offers a distracting illusion of academic unity without actually creating a bridge between the collection of the loosely affiliated group of majors and specialists that is Bowdoin.

This week, the Society will have an opportunity to explore a different goal promising a genuine unification of our specialized culture-- the struggle to save the environment. The December 2009 Copenhagen Climate Conference enumerated ambitious aspirations to reduce global warming, limit pollution and deforestation, and bring together 170 countries to create an agreement that will go into effect after the expiration of the Kyoto Protocols in 2012. American environmentalists tend to argue that participation in the global green movement and the prevention of dangerous climate change is a precondition for any liberty humans could enjoy on earth. Critics and skeptics increasingly concede that nations should be more ecologically responsible but are concerned that indeed, the "green tree has red roots." They argue that the surge of environmentalism-- and the exaggeration of the crises the green movement claimed to address during the thawing of the Cold War was motivated by a will to create a new pretext for the "expansion of state direction over society" and the empowerment of a global bureaucracy that could hinder national sovereignty.

**Resolved: The Green Movement is a threat to our Liberty**

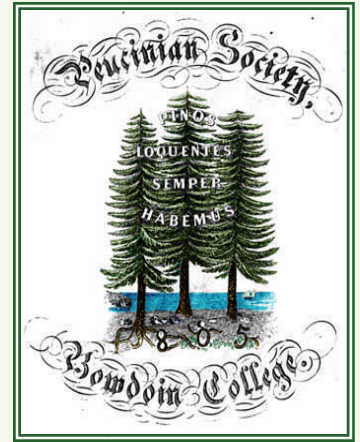
**Affirmative: Steve Robinson '11**

**Negative: Wesley Hartwell '11**

Thursday, February 11, 2010, Massachusetts Hall Faculty Room, 7:30 P.M.

Sincerely,

The Peucinian Society Council



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