

ODYSSEY ORACLE

GETTING POLITICAL

After reading about minorities and women who fought for the right to vote, many Odyssey students became more engaged in politics. Standing in the cold from midnight on, Derrick McCann was featured on Channel 15 news for being the "early bird" who was first in line for an Obama rally. Below see Derrick shaking the President's hand. Lolita Phillips got her whole family interested in voting and did volunteer work along with her nephews to get out the vote. They are pictured with Congressman-Elect Marc Pocan.



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WOMEN WITH THE COURAGE TO WRITE

Women who were told to be silent or who faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles found the courage to become powerful writers. Odyssey students responded to works by Alice Walker, Emily Dickinson, and Nila NorthSun (row 1), Lorna Dee Cervantes, Kate Chopin, and Maya Angelou (row 2), and the Brontë sisters and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (row 3).



MAYA ANGELOU



The title itself speaks volumes to me: “I Rise.” No matter what situation or circumstance we as women or minorities go through, there is nothing that we cannot bear, even with the burden of society telling us we are not good enough and that we should be ashamed, embarrassed, or fearful of being heard. Our silence should no longer be silent. We as a culture will be heard, and our opinions will be taken into consideration. Maya Angelou wrote this poem to send out a message of hope and encouragement so that we understand that just because we may feel like we are going through hell, we can get through it. We can rise above it with a positive state of mind and a witty sense of humor. We can make it through the tough times. **Fantasia House**



Maya Angelou wrote about how she rises each time she faces difficulties and how she overcomes the obstacles that she faces on a daily basis. She continues to rise. She realizes the importance of history and her ancestors. She talks about how she carries herself to the world as if she is rich. Despite all the trials and tribulations she has been through, she still manages to prevail in many different ways, with knowledge, hope, and strength. She is a black woman who is questioning the white race, telling them no matter what they attempt to do or in whatever way they hurt her, she will overcome. She will overcome despite the history of slavery and oppression. The poem shows her pain, emotions, confidence, pride, and inspiration. **Nancy Wambua**



This poem describes a woman’s strength and the height of her success when she overcomes negativity and discouragement. “You may write me down in history, with your bitter, twisted lies . . . Still I rise.” As women we are degraded, belittled, and

Still I Rise

You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I’ll rise . . .
Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave,
I am the dream and the hope of the slave.
I rise
I rise
I rise

categorized in boxes. . . . I personally love this poem. I grew up reading this poem, which helped me through my difficulties as a woman. I wasn’t the typical girl. I wasn’t popular, with a great body and long hair. I had a lot of insecurities and was depressed due to being in a dispiriting home. I had to grow up very quickly. Reading poems got me through it, especially my favorite poet, Maya Angelou. **Britney Sinclair**



I loved Maya Angelou’s “I Rise.” . . . She explains how one can be “rich” in spirit and not necessarily with money. She points out the history of the black woman and how many have been cruel to her, but she continues to rise despite her past. Despite the plight of the slave and what her ancestors have passed on, she will continue to rise. **Mary Millon**



I love this poem because it gives me confidence and makes me feel powerful as a woman. I feel this poem is telling me and every other woman and man that we are not weak. We are not something—we are someone. We will always rise no matter what people think of us or how they treat us. . . . She is telling us we will rise because that’s what we do: we rise through pain, sorrow, anger, and happiness. That’s why I know I will rise. **Amber Turner**

THE BRONTË SISTERS

Women are supposed to be very calm generally; but women feel just as men feel; they need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer; and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making puddings and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex.

—Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*

they were men, thinking no one would take women writers seriously. After overcoming and beating the odds, their stories were published and became bestsellers. . . . I feel what is sad about this story is the talented sisters did not get a chance to see how loved and appreciated they were. They all passed at an early age (29, 30, 38), but today their legacy lives on. **Derrick McCann**



. . . The Brontë sisters broke out of the stereotype that women were not to aspire to be creative or strong. They allowed their creative ideas to flow, and they showed their strength by refusing to give up even when their writings did

not produce the results they expected. Charlotte Brontë took the opportunity to let people know that women feel the same feelings that men experience and have a need to be creative, not shackled to hard labor. I was happy to see others stand up for who they are and for their rights. I especially love the fact that the Brontë sisters fooled the system that was put in place to hold them down. **Munroe Whitlock**



The article about the Brontës is a wonderful story of three sisters who came up in a time when women weren't allowed to display thoughts, talents, and expressive feelings. A very strong sister trio vividly expressed their love for each other, a love that always had been there but was solidified by the passing of their mother. The three sisters shared a talent that was to be kept a secret because of the empowerment of men and their ignorant mentalities. Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë used a very humble weapon, the "mighty pen," to start the most covert battle as rebels who wanted to prove that women could be great writers. The very clever system that was used called pen names not only showed wit but also put a spotlight on the talent of women writers. This is a story of three heroic female writers, a trio of artists.

Tosumba Welch



It is such a great story to read and reflect about powerful women who overcame in life at an early age in a time when women's voices were muted and not heard. . . . Charlotte, Emily, and Anne Brontë all wrote poems, put them into a

book, and sent them to a publishing company as if



LORNA DEE CERVANTES

Refugee Ship

Like wet cornstarch, I slide
past my grandmother's eyes. . . .
Mama raised me without language.
I'm orphaned from my Spanish name.
The words are foreign, stumbling
on my tongue. I see in the mirror
my reflection: bronzed skin, black hair.

I feel I am a captive
aboard the refugee ship.
The ship that will never dock.
El barco que nunca atraca.



In "Refugee Ship," Lorna Dee Cervantes confronts her experiences as an identity crisis. She talks about being isolated from two cultures: American and Mexican. In the first stanza, she compares herself to "wet cornstarch," sliding past her grandmother, not able to be part of the tradition or heritage that her grandmother represents. . . In the second stanza, she says she was "orphaned" from her Spanish heritage. Her lack of language leads directly to a lack of identity. . . . In the last stanza she admits that she feels she is "a captive aboard the refugee ship / The ship that will never dock." She is in a permanent transitional stage between two places, never reaching her ultimate destination. I feel like I am in the same ship because being a foreigner in this country, I feel lost sometimes. **Jovite Rayaisse**

KATE CHOPIN



In Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour," Mrs. Mallard experiences a series of emotions upon hearing about the death of her husband. Initially it appears that she's overwhelmed with grief but ultimately relief from a form of bondage represented by her husband.

To me, this became clear when Mrs. Mallard "said it over . . . free, free, free. . . . And yet she loved him—sometimes." The revelation that her husband is still alive proves too much to take, and she dies from shock, though the author tells us, "They said she died of heart disease—of the joy that kills." . . . I enjoyed this story! I was surprised by the story's climax. **James Morgan**

. . . There would be no one to live for during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.

—Kate Chopin's "*The Story of an Hour*"

EMILY DICKINSON



I read the article about Emily Dickinson's poems. She believed in exploring and speaking her imagination through her poems. A small poem from this article stuck out to me and moved me with its words. She speaks about how if she can stop pain from happening in any way, shape, or form, it will make her life better. She chooses to not live in vain by helping others, and that is something I truly believe in. **Akilah Freeman**

If I can stop one Heart from breaking
I shall not live in vain
If I can ease one Life the Aching
Or cool one Pain
Or help one fainting Robin
Unto his Nest again
I shall not live in Vain



In this poem Emily Dickinson was talking about how useful we can be if we help others. To help others makes us complete and happy, feeling good about ourselves. Do one good thing or help another one. It's not that hard to do, and it

gives our life more quality. I like her poems and the strong words she uses like "heart breaking," "cool one pain," "live in vain." I felt all those words.
Tanatnan Chaipang

SOR JUANA INÉS DE LA CRUZ



Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz expressed discontent about how the world judges her as a writer. Her passion for writing fulfilled her thoughts and enriched her; therefore, she was a role model for many women. The purpose of this particular poem was to persuade male readers who were against feminists. Despite her society's opposition, her accomplishments were considerable, even though education was forbidden for women. **Angelica Cuahuey**

I like Sor Juana Inés! She probably got persecuted a lot in those days for having the courage or nerve to write when at the time women were



treated like second class citizens. They were supposed to be seen and not heard, used as ornaments, not anything "worthy" of the world seeing. I don't understand how any human being can think that they are better than any other. . . .

Carrie Llerena Sesma

What Interest Have You, World, in Persecuting Me?

What interest have you, World, in persecuting me?
Wherein do I offend you, when all I want
Is to give beauty to my mind
And not my mind to beautiful things?
I do not care for goods or treasures;
and so am always more content
To endow my thoughts with riches
Rather than riches with my thoughts . . .

NILA NORTHSUN

the way and the way things are

You told your daughters
Marry white men
Told them they would have
Nicer houses
Fancy cars
Pretty clothes

Could live in the city
Gramma your daughters did
They couldn't speak Indian anymore
How could we grandchildren learn
There are no rabbits to skin
In the city
We have no gramma there to
Teach us the ways.



In "the way and the way things are," Nila NorthSun says her Indian grandma told her daughters to marry white men because they would have nicer things in life. But once they did, they lost sight of who they were and where they came from, leading the grandchildren to be

clueless about their true heritage. White men are not the only ethnic background with nice houses, fancy cars, pretty clothes, and city life. Through education and hard work, anybody can have nice things in life.

Shalonda Hilliard-Jones



This poem by Nila NorthSun speaks to women of another race (Indian) and lower class seeking or being encouraged to seek upper class white men. They're being taught this as a means of survival. The women follow what they're told, and this results in a loss of culture.

Tradition slowly fades as the generations grow in mixed breeds. This poem caught my attention

because I see this within the community and sadly had this same type of mind frame when I was younger. . . . I too wanted to marry a white man to provide a better life. Thank goodness I had a mother who showed me differently through her own actions and encouragement. **Patrice Smith**



Through this poem Nila NorthSun is speaking of what it's like to lose one's traditions and even heritage. Even though her "Gramma" wants a better life for her children, I don't believe she is realizing at what cost. Not only her daughters but future generations as well are going to feel the impact. . . . It

saddens me to know that we have been taught to be so ashamed of who we are and where we come from that we don't want to pass those lessons along to our children. I'm a true believer that you can't know where you are going if you don't know where you come from. My parents made sure that I know where I come from, and I am doing the same for both my daughter and my granddaughter. **Jasmine Banks**



ALICE WALKER



Alice Walker's poem "Women" gives the account of strength our mothers, grandmothers, and Big Mamas (great or great-great grandmothers) have, which in turn gives us the thought that we are strong, too, given where we come from. . . . There is a saying, "Behind every good man is a good woman." My question: why does the woman have to be behind the man? A more truthful statement is "Beside every good man is a good woman." The change of one word makes a difference. I am thankful for this poem by Alice Walker. This poem got the message to the public about the strength of the woman, specifically the black woman in America. **Sharisse Hancock**



Alice Walker's "Women" shows that women sacrificed themselves for their children's education. . . . This poem seems hard, even harsh, but strong at the same time and beautiful. To me it's a poem of courage and survival. **Dominique Haskins**



Alice Walker tells us how her mother's generation was strong and determined to fight for her education. I could relate to this poem. As a woman with a daughter, I would do anything I

Women

They were women then
My mama's generation
Husky of voice—stout of
Step
With fists as well as
Hands
How they battered down
Doors . . .
To discover books
Desks
A place for us
How they knew what we
Must know
Without knowing a page
Of it
Themselves

had to in order to make sure she was able to get an education, to make sure she was treated fairly. I want my daughter to have more than I did growing up. I want her to know she can be whatever she wants as long as she works hard.

El-Rasheedah Wilson



The women described in this poem unknowingly paved the way for our generations of women. It describes how they stood tall

and were firm and direct. They could stand toe to toe and still do housework. Without knowing it, they wrote the pages in the books we now live.

Michelle Whitman



ORACLE OVATIONS



I enjoyed reading our Oracle of November 7, 2012, and I finished reading it right after I came home from class.

Everybody always has great and interesting stories to tell. It seems as if everyone is doing a lot better with writing or I'm doing better with reading. I hope it's both. ☺

Tanatnan Chaipang



One of the best things I like about the Odyssey class is the Oracles because students write and receive feedback. Also, reading the Oracles is like a short review and a summary about the subjects covered in class.

Angelica Cuahuey



All of the poems and essays in the Oracle are so amazing. I always look forward to seeing what everyone has written. We seem to all get along, and everyone seems ready to get it poppin' and learn. We're all together as one in this class and seem to be supportive of each

other. **Dominique Haskins**



"Know No Difference" by Michelle Whitman is beautiful. It explains that we all feel, think, and do things in a similar way. We all feel pain, experience love, happiness, sadness, and even fear at some point in our lives. It shows that there is sunshine after the rain. This poem touched me because these are things we don't

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ODYSSEY ORACLE BEING DRAMATIC

Here are a few excerpts from thank you letters to Professor Baron Kelly for guiding the class in vocal exercises and in scenes from Shakespeare, Lorraine Hansberry, and August Wilson.



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By doing those exercises, I was facing a fear, a fear of my feelings, a fear of not feeling right or comfortable. As the night flew by, those feelings were gone. Thanks from the bottom of my heart.
LoKita Phillips



Dear Baron Kelly, Thanks for teaching me a lot on how to breathe, how to read and express the words so that they reflect the story's meaning. I have taken and learned a lot from the experience. All I can really say is thanks a lot and I really enjoyed acting—an experience to remember.
Akilah Freeman

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usually share with people. The trials and tribulations we face can be a testimony. Michelle's testimony helped someone reading it, like me. **Sharisse Hancock**



Sharisse Hancock's story about music touched me. I was inspired that she started playing piano at six years old. When I was six

years old, I was somewhere playing with my wrestling toy figures. Sharisse was ahead of her class and was experienced in music by the time she was 15, having already mastered the

clarinet and saxophone. My goal today is to learn how to play my acoustic guitar. My older friend and mentor Eddie Quinn passed. They found him in his home dead, the same place where he was teaching me to play. Reading Sharisse's story, I felt his spirit. . . .

Derrick McCann



I was and am enthused by Carrie Llerena Sesma's response to music. This woman, sister, friend captured the poetic essence of music—its gift of emotion, rhythm, and ability to create action, especially the action of the heart. She asked where our heartbeat is when the

music of life isn't playing. **James Morgan**



Fantasia House's story has made me smile with surprise. I never thought of her as a drummer. I think that's the coolest—when women do things that are mostly heard of for men. It takes a lot of coordination to be a drummer. To be able

to play your feelings must be extra special. She mentioned being a drummer for church when she gets the nerve up. I don't see this as a goal she can't reach. She should make it a reality. **Angela Jordan-Jackson**



Ms. Fantasia House is a percussionist; she too learned to play by ear. (I learned piano the same way; my father played his bass while I learned.) I too understand the feeling of not taking full advantage of one's talents, placing them on the back burner and thinking of what

could have been. But Ms. House still has the dedication and drive inside her. I concur with her: once she finds the courage to step back into that realm, she will overcome those boundaries! I wish her well! **China Moon Crowell**

Michelle Whitman's poem about music truly touched



me because I can relate on so many levels. When she says "It's that sound that gives me a jumpstart," I smile and nod in agreement. Music helps me get going, especially in the mornings or on a

sluggish day. Music encourages me to move faster on the treadmill or slow down at the end of the day.

Patrice Smith



I have chosen to respond to Lewis Black's Madison Symphony Orchestra Review. The pride I felt reading Lewis's review first and foremost was for his courage. This was his first time to the symphony. Not only was he the first to

raise his hand high in class for the tickets but his true courage came entering the "unknown" without someone who had previously been there to walk him through it. I love the fact that he is able to admit in his piece how they "felt a little out of place." Even

that didn't stop him because they were able to walk through the Overture Center as if they "owned the place." From the beginning of the class when he received the tickets to this article, Lewis is a living breathing subject in today's "Allegory of the Cave."

Jasmine Banks



Derrick McCann's story of his cave touched me because I felt where he was coming from. Being born and raised in Chicago and then moving to Madison was a big change. I only came to Madison when I was 22 years old. I had had enough of Chicago—all the drugs

and killings. It was time for me to make a change. My father was a police officer who after a while couldn't get past his drinking and became a user. It only seemed like fast money was the good money, so I fell into that life, only being with those who could take care of me and my needs. Today I have big dreams. I want more out of life and will work hard to get it. **El-Rasheedah Wilson**



I liked the essay "Why Are You So Dangerous?" by James Morgan. I think knowing yourself is dangerous to those who want to hold

you down. When you know where you come from, who you came from, what you are capable of, you can reach your potential and be

successful in all you do. In our society, many people are out for self, and there's so much competition that others don't want you to succeed. They want you ignorant. Ignorance can be bliss; what you don't know can't hurt you. When you learn what you've been missing, sometimes it hurts. . . . You can overcome when inspiration surfaces and you see your choices, options, and capabilities to change things with this knowledge. You become empowered and can do whatever you set out to do. . . . **Carrie Llerena Sesma**



The essay by James Morgan touched me quite a bit. I am someone who has seen firsthand how a system can label a black man dangerous and rob him of the freedom he deserves. I think back to working in one of Madison's halfway houses and watching as these young men who are trying to transition back into society are talked down to and degraded. It sometimes leads me to ask the question, just who really is the dangerous one? I witnessed staff destroying a transitioner's room after a random search and leaving it in shambles even after not finding anything. When that person would come in from work and ask why staff couldn't put their things back how they found them, staff threatened to write them up for talking back. No, you aren't dangerous: it's sometimes those with authority that are the most dangerous of all. **Michelle Whitman**



China Moon Crowell's "Becoming Frederick Douglass" response really moved me. Our people were Queens and Kings before coming to America. Everything in her response speaks to me, and the words are spoken as if coming from my own mouth. Honestly my thoughts couldn't have been worded any better. **Akilah Freeman**



I really enjoyed Tracey Cherry's "Becoming Frederick Douglass" piece. Because she is so quiet, this piece gave her a big voice on that subject. What great points she made, even using biblical knowledge. **Tosumba Welch**

The "Why Vote?" contest became the biggest part of my thinking since September 2012. We as a whole class were put to a challenge as to why vote. I think that voting became such a huge commitment for everyone in the class. I voted



for President for the first time in my life! I know for a fact that Odyssey had something to do with me voting. I made a difference in so many lives. My son voted. His girlfriend, both of my daughters, and my sisters all voted! **Lolita Phillips**



I liked Jasmine Banks's "Why Vote?" essay. She wrote a story about a person who was disabled and how he was happy that he voted. She helped him out and felt good afterwards that it had put a smile on his face. **Tracey Cherry**



When Tracey Cherry spoke of missing her grandmother because she had passed on and of having no real relationship with her grandfather, it brought tears to my eyes and an overwhelming sadness to me. As I sit here, I am jealous of Shalonda having her grandparents around. I am very close to my grandparents. I am fortunate and highly blessed to have both my grandparents still alive. They have helped to keep me the humble person that I am becoming. They have accomplished so very much and continue to reach back for all they can help to accomplish their goals. Service is key to anyone wanting anything positive in life. My grandparents are living in Atlanta, Georgia now after moving out of our "home" of more than 60 years in Tuskegee, Alabama. After growing up around family, I find not being around them daily is hard for me but at least I can pick up the phone and talk as I do daily. They would be right behind Shalonda's grandparents sitting and observing and being supportive to me and of help to Odyssey in any way they could. Education is of extreme importance to them. I love all of my family. **Eunice Conley**

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Review of James Ehmes's Violin Concert with the Madison Symphony Orchestra

By Munroe Whitlock



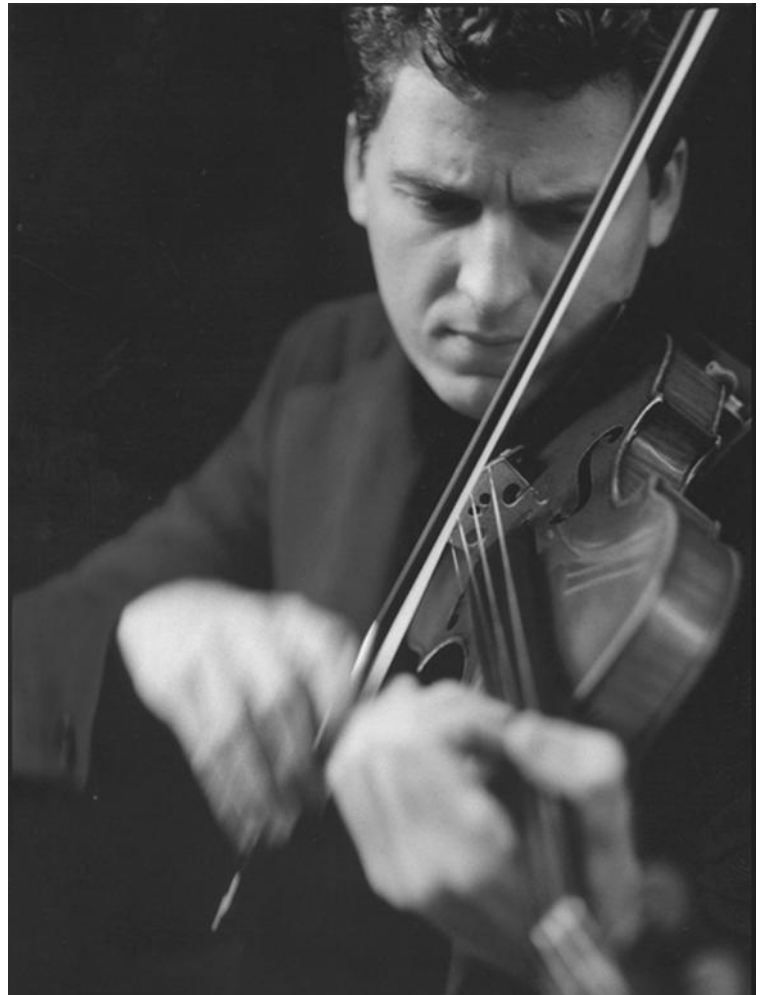
I decided to take my godson with me to see the Madison Symphony Orchestra featuring James Ehmes. We approached the Overture Center from the Mifflin Street direction and were able to see the marble and glass structure. We made note to each other of our approval of its beauty. We talked about the orchestra and the violin that would be the featured instrument of the evening. Jadon realized he would enjoy the concert because he plays the guitar and piano. While waiting for the concert to start, we stood in the second floor vestibule and looked out the larger-than-life windows to enjoy the view.

When we took our seats, Jadon described the ceiling as appearing like a rolling wave of water. We noticed that most of the attendees were my age or older.

The conductor entered the stage and the audience began to applaud. Jadon asked why the audience didn't applaud at the end of the first song. I told him I did not have the answer.

[Editor's note: in many classical pieces, there are several "movements" with pauses between them, and the audience doesn't clap so that there's no interruption in the mood of the whole piece.]

James Ehmes entered the stage and began to perform with the orchestra. It appeared to me that the orchestra performed differently with James than without. Jadon noticed that they not only stroked the violin bow but also plucked the strings, bouncing the bow to



create a sound that could never go without notice. When James Ehmes and the orchestra completed their selection, the audience went wild, shouting “Bravo! Bravo!”

During intermission Jadon and I went to have a soda. A number of people felt comfortable to approach Jadon to ask how he was enjoying the concert, to which he responded positively. One woman asked if he played an instrument, and he revealed to her the instruments he is learning to play.

After the intermission James Ehmes returned to play in his unique style of performing, with the orchestra producing solo performances from the wind, string, and percussion sections.

As we were leaving the Overture Center, people continued to approach Jadon, asking him about his experience. He told them that he had a good time and noticed that there were 35 violinists in the orchestra.

Thanks to donor Carroll Heideman for providing tickets to Odyssey students for this and other Madison Symphony Orchestra concerts.

What is the Word?

By James Morgan

What is the word: deaf.a.nition
4 where silence screams louder
than tranquility?

In this sheer diaphanous/smiles
come crashing upon con-crete shores
tri-angular.

What is the deaf.a.nition 4 words captured and
released in a fatalistic
cacophony of empty souls . . .

Yelling no-thing-to-echo in the abyss of tattered
minds; lost amidst celestial rays.

Listen. Is there a deaf.a.nition to ignite and
illuminate a deaf.a.nition
Of

a fatalisticdiaphanouscacophonyof/emptysoulscraghingwheresilencescreamslouderthantranquility. . .

What's

the

WORD?



JUDGING THE JOURNEY



Through my experience in the Odyssey Project, I have met so many welcoming and open-hearted people. I have learned and seen so many things that I have never seen before. Odyssey has taught me commitment to something. It has brought me through a journey that I

will never regret taking. This journey is a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and I'm so happy and lucky that Emily gave me the opportunity to take this journey with my wonderful classmates and teachers. Everyone should have the chance to experience this class. You build a family. This class is somewhere you can run to and never be judged. The Odyssey is my family away from home. Every Wednesday I enjoy coming and hearing opinions, stories, and life.

Amber Turner



The teachers here enjoy teaching, are good at it, and do very well in engaging us! Everyone attends with great enthusiasm! When class gets challenging, don't worry because there's help and patience; the next week, we will work on it some more. Odyssey

wants everyone to be successful. It's made me think, listen, and learn things I didn't know (I thought I knew everything!). I definitely recommend trying Odyssey. It will change the way you view learning.

Carrie Llerena Sesma



Odyssey made me vote! Odyssey has encouraged me to push right on through my adversity. No matter how hard times look to me right now, I cannot quit!

Lolita Phillips

My experience has been eye opening to the past and encouraging for the future. I appreciate the Odyssey Project and all who helped to make it happen. The time and dedication to our understanding is priceless. The teachers go step by step, making sure we all



understand our assignments and readings. Odyssey builds hopes and dreams with the push of caring individuals who won't allow us to give up on ourselves. I have the confidence to know I can move forward with the will to be educated in every way. This is a journey to my freedom.

Patrice Smith



I'm enjoying coming to class. I have learned so much in the last two months. This class has given me strength, even though I was sick and going through some personal issues. Some of my classmates have gone through the same things I have

been through, and Emily has been great helping me catch up with work and helping when I have problems with homework. She and social work student Jacob give me that boost I need not to give up. I want to show my children that you can succeed in life, no matter what trials you go through.

Tracey Cherry



I am continuing to have epiphany moments. I realized truly for the first time what the Civil War was about. The teaching level of the Odyssey Program is very exciting to me. It feels good to really show my daughter and son that Momma

can still go to school like them. It has been all and all so far a beautiful awakening of my interest and spirit. I look forward to graduating with high expectations of continuing this Odyssey journey of life when class ends. Thanks, teachers!

Angela Jordan-Jackson



I expected this class to be easy because I confused the joy that others explained about their experience to easy and simple, but keeping up with the assignments and struggling to understand the content really helps me understand who I am as a

student. I now know how I need to study as I continue on as a student.

Munroe Whitlock



I have experienced so much in this class—so many stories and history from so many people from different walks of

life. This class has changed my life for the best, giving me the confidence and love I needed in life to one day make my goals and dreams come true. I would like others to know that this class will change you for the best and give you the hope and inspiration you need. This class has made me open my eyes and be more outgoing. I realize there are some good people in this world. My classmates inspire me, and my teachers really care. I feel important today. This is an important chapter in my life.

Derrick McCann



Odyssey is the utmost best experience. The diversity and the energy make being in the class a powerful pleasure. We need to have more people able to take this class, and we need more classes because once a week is not enough. It has changed me, my mind, and my vocabulary.

Lewis Black



Odyssey has been extremely empowering, enlightening, and liberating! If you are fortunate enough to get the opportunity, take it! The knowledge you will leave with (and we are still in the first semester) is priceless and life changing. The program has given me the tools along with my desire to not

only be the best that I can be but also to turn around and share my knowledge of learning with others.

Jasmine Banks

I have been having a Wednesday night delight. I



learn, I see, I eat, I hope, I read, I teach, and I hear. I learn something new every time I go to class. I learn something about me also. I'm a 54-year-old grandmother raising two bright, beautiful, and smart granddaughters.

They love to engage in seeing their grandmother doing something in life and knowing that I can achieve a degree. **Jovenus Price Pierce**



My Odyssey experience has been all encompassing. The staff who direct this project are fascinating people who are caring, supportive, and REAL! My fellow students are inquisitive, outspoken, and appreciative of the gift that is Odyssey.

Others need to know that Odyssey is here to assist them along the way to the journey to themselves. Odyssey has been very important in helping me to expand my vision for my life and to understand more fully our society and culture. **James Morgan**



I am impressed with this experience here at the Odyssey Project. I'm having the time of my life. This class has brought life to me after I thought it was over. Thank you, Odyssey! With you I am in love.

Tosumba Welch



I've enjoyed my experience with the Odyssey Project. It has made me dig very deep into the depths of my soul with the interesting readings and new language. I work a full time job. I admit times for reading and doing homework do not always come easy. I am learning how to be a student again, and I'm up for the challenge. I enjoy classmates as well as the professors I have met. My goal is to continue my studies and go for my Bachelor's in Business. Had it not been for this program, I probably would never have pursued this journey. **Mary Millon**



My experience so far in the Odyssey Project is one that I will share with future generations of mine so they know it is never too late to educate; you are never too old, and no one is unreachable or unteachable. This is what I want to be known about the program and

how it has changed my outlook on life. Emily and the other staff have made me a firm believer in 'each one teach one'; yes we can.

Michelle Whitman



The Odyssey Project is absolutely wonderful. I was so nervous at first but just feel so truly blessed to be a part of this class. I'm pressing forward on my journey! I'm pressing forward in my fears and holding on to my faith. You can do anything if you put your mind to it. Never quit or give up. **Dominique Haskins**



The Odyssey Project has been a great experience. This class has opened my eyes to a continuing education. It has prompted me to believe in myself and want more for my educational future, past the completion of the Odyssey Program. This program has truly brightened my future and self-image. **Sharisse Hancock**







Screening of a documentary about the UW Odyssey Project

Come join us!

Thursday, December 6
SUNDANCE CINEMA #3
3 showings: 5:00 pm, 5:40 PM and 6:20 PM

~~ Refreshments in 2nd floor bistro ~~

Free admission
DONATIONS WELCOME!

Film produced by UW Communications and Marketing
for UW-Madison, in conjunction with
Katy Sai and StoryBridge.tv
for the Big Ten Network