

Odyssey Oracle

Created for and by the students of the UW-Madison Odyssey Project

Volume 3, No.5 October 18, 2006

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Happy Birthday!

Cameron Daniels 10/11

Stanley Salley 10/14

Latoya Robinson 10/18

Have you seen our Web site?

www.odyssey.wisc.edu

Our Odyssey to the Chazen

The class started out on a sad note but ended with a very happy and positive one. First we heard about Angel's brother dying a day or so before class, which made us all very sad. Like the brave person she is, she came to class, and we all helped her through the night (**Katy Farrens**).

At 6:00 p.m. we got in the bus, and we were like when we were children on the bus to school. (**Sandra Ramirez**) We bonded on the school bus like a football team or a baseball team bound for a tournament. (**Molinda Henry**)

It started out by us going to the Union to get our IDs, and even though we were not on display at Chazen, my favorite piece of art that evening was the look on everyone's faces when they received their IDs (**Cameron Daniels**).

I felt getting our student ID card was a profound experience. In this town dominated by the university and the state offices, it is often hard to feel truly connected to Madison. Now we all have that passport to the SERF, libraries, theater events,

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the terrace and most importantly to show our kids how to take a good ID photo. It was very empowering for me to witness all of us walking out of Union South with our happy, smiling mugs on laminate. Not taking anything from the Chazen, which over the years I have found to be a wonderful gem in our community, but having that tangible in your wallet, official proof that you belong, is priceless. **(Brian Benford)**

A classmate and I went upstairs to where dinner was being served. Upon entering we're in a spacious room, where a table was set up with yummy sandwiches. There were ham, turkey and veggie sandwiches on deli style sub rolls. The sandwiches were loaded with ripe veggies, tomato, lettuce, and humus. Next to the tray of sandwiches were a bowl of fresh chips and a platter of various



cookies, filled with chocolate chips, nuts and raisins. And last but not least various sodas. **(Angela McAlister)**

From IDs to art

I appreciated having Gene Phillips invite us into his world **(Anne Meyer)**. He gave us a brief introduction to the museum and invited us all to take him up on a private tour with our friends and family in our spare time **(Mary Wells)**.

What you missed out on was seeing the expressions on our faces when we (those of us who haven't been there) walked into the museum. I was amazed at all the different and beautiful art work. **(Sonia Spencer)**

The first thing that I realized was the security. It was not very aggressive but certainly apparent, which really informed me that the art we were about to see was precious, rare, and valuable. **(Corey Reece)**.

I saw a portrait where a woman artist drew animals (lions) because in that century women were not allowed to paint humans in the nude and had to get a license to wear pants. **(Juanita Wilson)** The piece that impressed me the most was a modern bronze

sculpture of a naked woman. She was sitting on the floor with her legs to one side leaning to the opposite side. The detail in the sculpture itself and the way in which it is painted are amazing! The detail is indescribable. If I didn't know better, I would think that it was a real woman frozen in time. **(Anne Meyer)**

There was one picture that disturbed me. It was an optical illusion, a man's face that looked as if it was coming out. He even looked as if he was turning his head following you as you walked away. **(Melissa Plasky)**

There was a preponderance of European art. Period. There was a paucity of art about Africans. ... One was a marble sculpture of Abraham Lincoln benevolently manumitting Africans. It shows Lincoln standing with his hand outreached over a kneeling African's head, as if he is a benevolent father figure granting light and destiny to Africans. The marble was an eggshell white. The color symbolizes whites delivering black people from bondage. It casts Lincoln in the role of supreme liberator of African people. **(Tillman Morris)**

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Writer Spotlight: *Harper Lee*

The writer we know as Harper Lee has published only one novel—but it is one of the best selling and most beloved books ever written.

Nelle Harper Lee was born in Monroeville, Alabama on April 28, 1926 and has spent her whole life there. Monroeville has a population of about 7,000 and served as the model for the town of Maycomb in her fiction. She is the youngest of four children.

Her father was a lawyer, like Atticus Finch in her novel, and her mother a millworker. She was a little girl when she became friends with the writer Truman Capote. When she was still young, Lee's father bought her a typewriter, and she and Capote set up a little office in the tree house

in her backyard. Capote convinced Lee to start writing with him for two or three hours every day.

Lee went to law school at the University of Alabama, and after she graduated she worked as a reservation clerk for an airline in New York City. She spent all day at work, and then came home to write for four hours every evening. In the mid '50s, Lee started working on a novel about the trial of a black man in a small town in Alabama.

In December of 1956, she celebrated with a family she knew in Manhattan. Their gift to her that year was a loan so that she could take a year off from her job and write whatever she wanted. It was during that year that Lee wrote most of the first draft of *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

The novel centers on a girl named Scout growing up in Alabama during the Great Depression. Scout, her brother Jem, and her best friend

Dill (based on Truman Capote) spend all their time trying to uncover the mystery of Boo Radley.

Scout's father, Atticus Finch, takes on the case a black man named Tom Robinson, who is accused of raping a white girl. The title of the novel comes from something Atticus Finch says to his daughter: "Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corncribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird."

She submitted the novel to a publisher, which turned it down, saying it was a series of short stories strung together. She spent two and a half years rewriting it. The novel was published in July of 1960. It was priced at \$3.95, and it sold more than two and a half million copies in less than a year. It won the Pulitzer Prize in 1961.

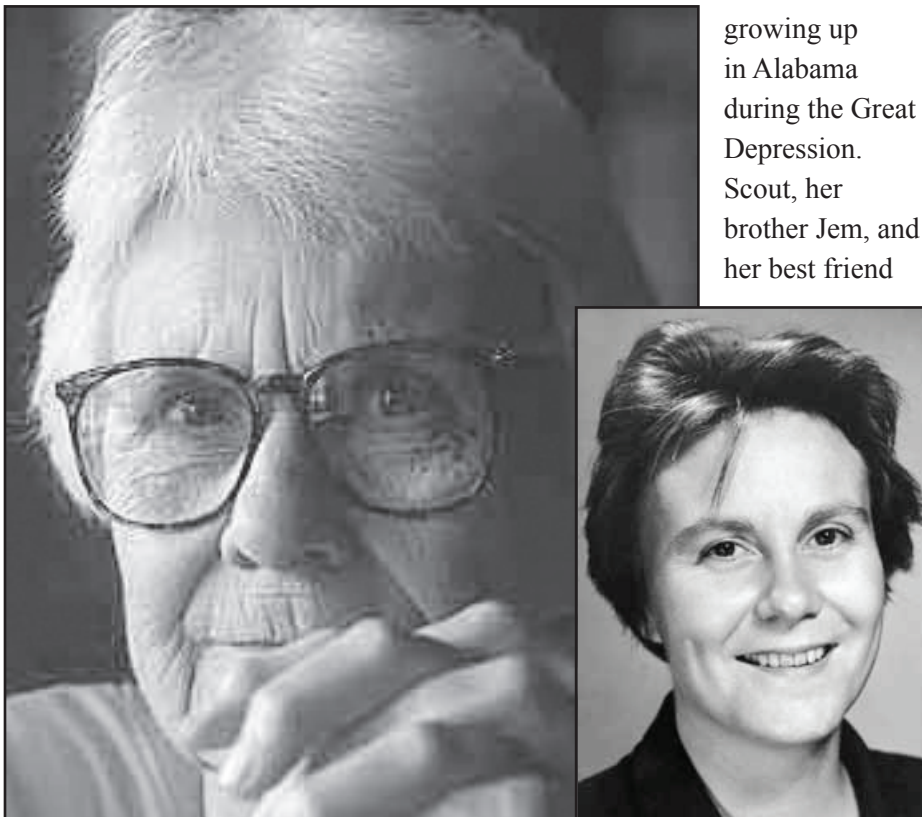
Today, *To Kill a Mockingbird* sells about a million copies every year, and it's sold over thirty million copies since its publication. In 1963, just three years after its publication, it was taught in eight percent of U.S. public middle schools and high schools, and today that figure is closer to eighty percent. Only *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth* and *Huckleberry Finn* are read by more high school students.

Sources

Keillor, Garrison, *The Writer's Almanac* for April 28

Lee, Harper, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

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[www.http://mockingbird.chebucto.org/bio.html](http://mockingbird.chebucto.org/bio.html)

Excerpt from *To Kill A Mockingbird*

“You can just take that back, boy!”

This order, given by me to Cecil Jacobs, was the beginning of a rather thin time for Jem and me. My fists were clenched and I was ready to let fly. Atticus had promised me he would wear me out if he ever heard of me fighting any more; I was far too old and too big for such childish things, and the sooner I learned to hold in, the better off everybody would be. I soon forgot.

Cecil Jacobs made me forget. He had announced in the schoolyard the day before that Scout Finch’s daddy defended niggers. I denied it, but told Jem.

“What’d he mean sayin’ that?” I asked.

“Nothing,” Jem said. “Ask Atticus, he’ll tell you.”

“Do you defend niggers, Atticus?” I asked him that evening.

“Of course I do. Don’t say nigger, Scout. That’s common.”

“s what everybody at school says.”

“From now on it’ll be everybody less one—”

“Well if you don’t want me to grow up talkin’ that way, why do you send me to school?”

My father looked at me mildly, amusement in his eyes. Despite our compromise, my campaign to avoid school had continued in one form or another since my first day’s dose of it: the beginning of last September

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An oil on canvas, created during the baroque period by Theodor van Thulden, called out to me. This painting is called “Justice and Abundance.” I was drawn to this painting as we stood in a group, preparing to depart. As Emily gave the farewell announcements, I kept looking back at it. The subjects are two women. I related to their easygoing, laid-back, having-a-good time flair.

The woman on the left is carrying scales. At her knee is a sword which could possibly be used to punish wrongdoers. At her feet, Lady Justice has knocked over a money box, maybe indicating her resistance to being bought. Together, I understand this to stand for balance, justice. She links arms with Abundance, who is decorated with flowers. Could her green dress symbolize fertility? She holds a cornucopia, indicating a wealth of resources. The caduceus, the winged staff of

Mercury now used by the medical profession, is at her reach. I visualize tranquility, understanding, and goodness at her hands (E. Oroki Rice).

The biggest thing I will remember is the bus ride to and from the Art Museum. I had a real chance to get to know the Odyssey Class of 2007. Our Odyssey Class in itself is art. (Roslyn Phillips)

Did You Know?



Chazen Museum of Art

The museum’s new logo consists of three simple shapes inspired by the letterforms in its name: A circle for the “C,” a square for the “M,” and a triangle for the “A,” proof that something as simple as a letter can be inspiration for artwork!

had brought on sinking spells, dizziness, and mild gastric complaints. I went so far as to pay a nickel for the privilege of rubbing my head against the head of Miss Rachel's cook's son, who was afflicted with a tremendous ringworm. It didn't take.

But I was worrying another bone. "Do all lawyers defend n-Negroes, Atticus?"

"Of course they do, Scout."

"Then why did Cecil say you defended niggers? He made it sound like you were runnin' a still."

Atticus sighed. "I'm simply defending a Negro-his name's Tom Robinson. He lives in that little settlement beyond the town dump. He's a member of Calpurnia's church, and Cal knows his family well. She says they're clean-living folks. Scout, you aren't old enough to understand some things yet, but there's been some high talk around town to the effect that I shouldn't do much about defending this man. It's a peculiar case-it won't come to trial until summer session. John Taylor was kind enough to give us postponement..."

"If you shouldn't be defendin' him, then why are you doin' it?"

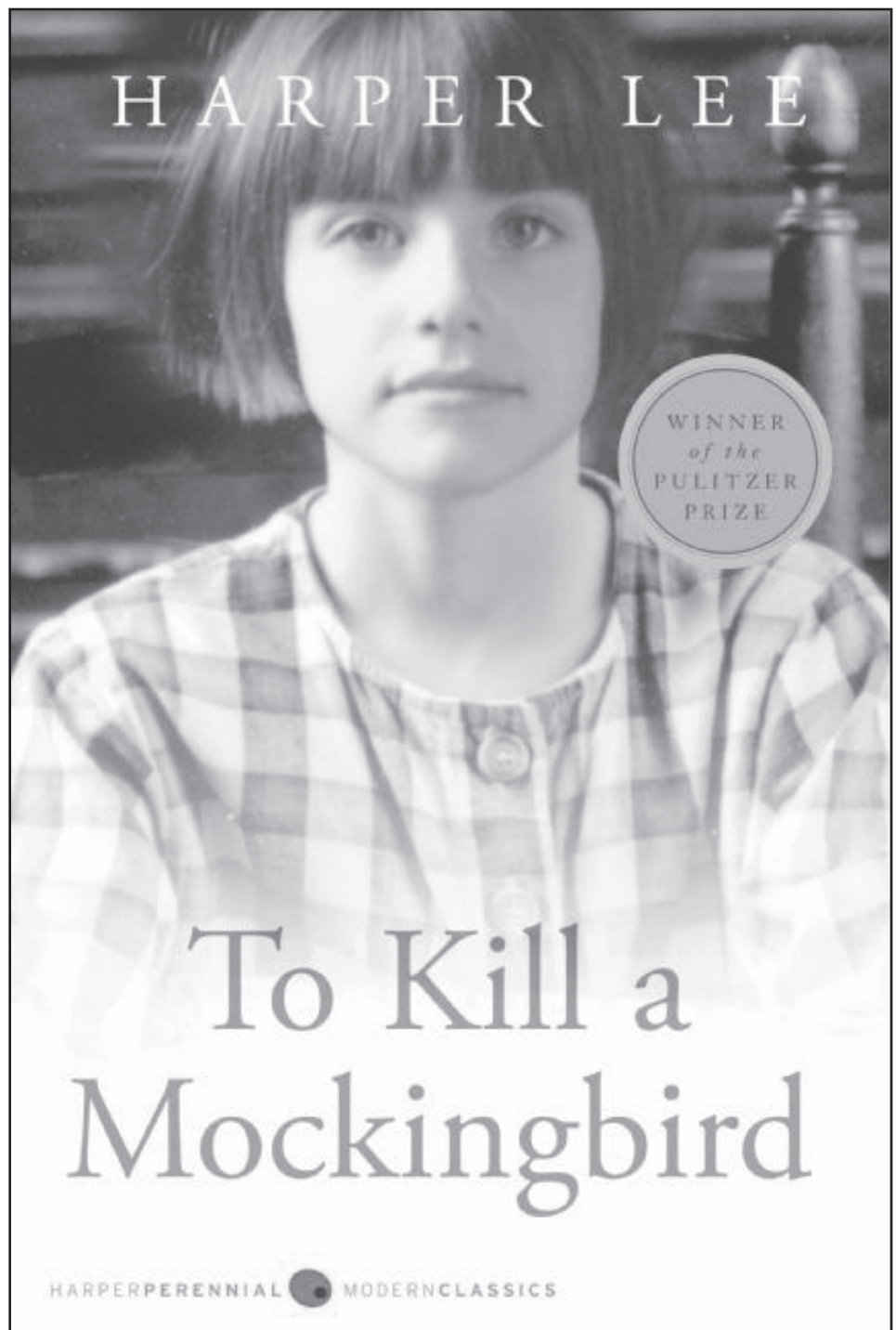
"For a number of reasons," said Atticus. "The main one is, if I didn't I couldn't hold up my head in town, I couldn't represent this county in the legislature, I couldn't even tell you or Jem not to do something again."

"You mean if you didn't defend that man, Jem and me wouldn't have to mind you any more?"

"That's about right."

"Why?"

"Because I could never



ask you to mind me again. Scout, simply by the nature of the work, every lawyer gets at least one case in his lifetime that affects him personally. This one's mine, I guess. You might hear some ugly talk about it at school, but do one thing for me if you will: you just hold your head high and keep those fists down. No matter what anybody says to you, don't let 'em

get your goat. Try fighting with your head for a change...it's a good one, even if it does resist learning."

"Atticus, are we going to win it?"

"No, honey."

"Then why--"

"Simply because we were licked a hundred years before we started is no reason for us not to try to win," Atticus said.

Odyssey Students Have Dreams

After reading Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech, Odyssey students wrote their own dreams.

For themselves:

I have a dream that some day I will be a senator or a congressperson.

(Brian Bedford)

I have a dream that I will become a psychologist. **(Sandra Ramirez)**.

I have a dream that I will own my own restaurant. **(Troy Terry)**

I have a dream that I will return to Africa to see my family and show them that America is the country that makes your dreams come true. I have a dream that I will see my father's grave and say my goodbye to him. **(Sonia Spencer)**

I have a dream of hitting the lottery. **(Tillman Morris; Angel Lightfoot)**

I have a dream that I will die drug-free, in a balanced state of mind, and that my legacy will be of a woman who struggled, fell down, yet in the end was able to stay up. **(Oroki Rice)**

I have a dream to own my own company. I have a dream to be the best mother I can be. **(Kathleen Brown)**

I have a dream that I will be Jamie Fox's wife. **(Angel Lightfoot)**

I have a dream that one day I will get married to my boyfriend in Cambodia. I have a dream that one day I will become a doctor and help my people with sickness. **(Nou Yang)**

I have a dream that one day I will have money to build a school or

hospital for the children in Africa. **(Lily Komino)**

I have a dream of walking across a stage, being handed my Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin. **(Molinda Henry)**

For their families:

I have a dream that my daughter will never be sexually, mentally, or physically abused. **(Melissa Plasky)**

I have a dream that my kids won't have to deal with financial hardships and grow up struggling to stay alive dodging murderers and rapists, like I did. **(Stanley Sallay)**

I have a dream that one day my son will get his own television show. **(Angel Lightfoot)**

I have a dream that my grandchildren will become recipients of Dr. King's dream. **(Yasmin Horton)**

I have a dream of lying side by side with my mom on a beautiful sandy beach on an island, sipping on fruity drinks and reminiscing about our lives and accomplishments. **(Roslyn Phillips)**

I have a dream that I will live to see my two grandsons walk across a college platform. **(Angie McAlister)**

I have a dream that I will give my



kids more than what I had. I have a dream that my family will continue to have Sunday dinners at my house. **(Angie Williams)**

I have a dream that my granddaughter will grow up to know how much her dad [my late son] loved her. **(Mary Wells)**

For the Odyssey class:

I have a dream that this is the last homework assignment. **(Brian Bedford)**

I have a dream that everyone in this class will make it through and not give up! **(Katy Farrens)**

I have a dream that this class will end with every student that it began with. I have a dream that this Odyssey Project will stay available and untarnished for future students. **(Yasmin Horton)**

I have a dream that the Odyssey Project takes me to heights my educational mind never conceived. **(Curtis Williams)**

I have a dream that one day I will stop waiting until the last second to get work done. I have a dream that we in the Odyssey program continue to aspire to be better individuals and not stop after the class is over. **(Cameron Daniels)**

I have a dream that I will gain from our class lasting friendships and a support group for the rest of my life. **(Tiffani Puccio)**

For the community, country, and world:

I have a dream that I will not be judged on being a black female or quota fulfillment but simply as a human being. **(Angie McAlister)**

I have a dream that black people will not be in the majority in jails, that security guards and policemen will stop following black people just because they are black, that when black people sit down next



to a person of another color, that person will not get up and move away, and that all children can learn on an equal level and not have the best educational tools only for the rich. **(Juanita Wilson)**

I have a dream that no child will have to go without a father due to negligence. **(Cameron Daniels)**

I have a dream that Martin Luther

King's teachings will never be forgotten. I have a dream that the people of the world with the most help the people with the least. **(Dwayne Bland)**

I have a dream that one day America will have a black president. **(Lily Komino)**

I have a dream that there will be an end to homelessness. **(Lorena Lovejoy)**

I have a dream that one day people will find the cure to AIDS and HIV. **(Erica Garcia)**

I have a dream that the world can forget its prejudice and all religions put aside their differences. **(Curtis Williams)**

I have a dream that one day there will be a worldwide redistribution of wealth. I have a dream that one day no human being will go through life without basic necessities. **(Tillman Morris)**

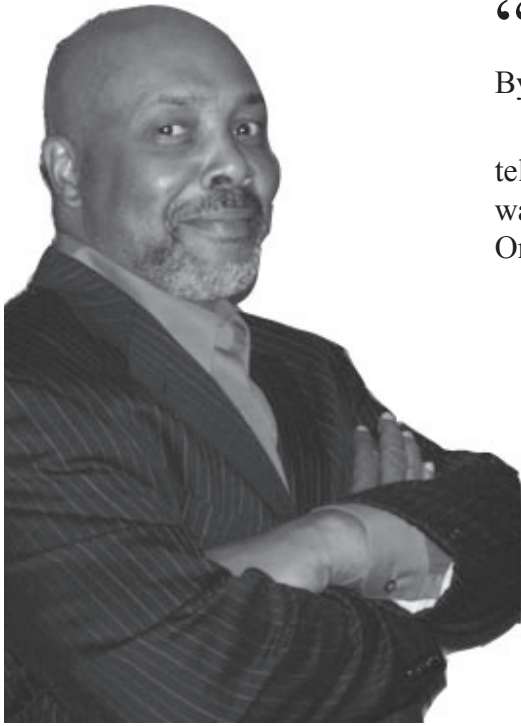
I have a dream that we won't ever have a future administration to occupy the White House as horrible as our current one. **(Yasmin Horton)**

I have a dream that they will stop giving away enormous amounts of money on T.V. when there's poor, homeless, starving people right here in America. **(Stanley Sallay)**

I have a dream of an earth where no man raises his hand to inflict harm on another human being for any reason. **(Molinda Henry)**

“Gordon” Comes to Madison

By Kegan Carter



On September 20th and 21st, a television icon came to visit all the way from *Sesame Street*. Roscoe Orman, better known as Gordon

to fans of the show, was here in Madison to promote his book at local stores. His book, *Sesame Street Dad: Evolution of an Actor*, is a memoir recounting his career from its beginning to the present. Every chapter opens with an original poem by Roscoe.

At a private reception for Roscoe on September 21st, he was gracious enough to sign books and take pictures. I had an opportunity to talk with him briefly, and he seemed like a very sincere, down-to-earth person. He even made me prove my knowledge of *SS* by singing the number song!

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated the chance to meet a man I grew up watching.



Right, above: Roscoe Orman and Emily.

Below: Roscoe and Marilyn Sims, *Odyssey Class of 2006*

Was Socrates right to take the hemlock?

Most of the members of the Odyssey Class of 2007 felt that Socrates did the right thing in dying rather than escaping the punishment of the state.

Socrates accepted death in fidelity to his own principles; he knew who he was and was willing to die for that. (**Sandra Ramirez**)

He didn't want to respond to one evil with another evil. (**Stanley Sallay**)

He decided to die so that his principles might live. (**Juanita Wilson**)

Socrates stays and faces his death sentence... because he thinks that it is morally wrong to escape. He has more fear of harming his righteous soul than dying. I do agree with Socrates, but I don't know if under the same circumstances I could be

as strong. (**Yasmin Horton**)

At seventy-plus years of age, it was clear he didn't want to relocate for the sake of living a little longer. Staying reaffirmed his views that justice was paramount to his life. Had he escaped, the government could have discredited him and his reputation. (**Brian Benford**)

Also, he believes that by getting the help of all those men would put them in an unjust spot to lose their livelihoods and/or lives just for the sake of him. (**Tiffani Puccio**)

Dissenting voices

I don't believe he truly committed

a crime for which he had to die. I personally would have escaped. (**Lorena Lovejoy**)

His premise and argument were based on a paternalistic metaphor in which he likened the state to a father-figure. Just as a child does not run away from the discipline of the father, he would not flee from the verdict of the state.

I disagree with Socrates' premise and argument because they seem to imply that one should passively submit to the decisions of the authorities, when oftentimes the reality is both parents and authorities can be off the mark or dead wrong about things. (**Tillman Morris**)