



The Evergreen State College - Olympia, Washington 98505
THE STUDENT'S OWN EVALUATION OF PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Olson	David (Dave)	A	A00044849
Student's Last Name	First	Middle	ID Number
Visions of Justice		01/04	03/04
Title		Date Began	Date ended

Visions of Justice presented a variety of learning experiences, which challenged my notions of justice and provided an opportunity to view the criminal justice system from several perspectives. I especially appreciated the opportunity to express and support my opinions in the various reports, discussions performances, and presentations throughout the quarter.

Through the diverse reading selections, I examined the philosophies underlying utilitarian and retributionist views of punishment. Additionally, I considered the role of human emotion in the judicial process and also how individual prejudices influence outcomes. I applied these concepts in annotation papers on topics including: the utility of the death penalty; appropriate use of the insanity plea; and the morality of offender's rights.

I addressed the philosophical concepts further in a narrative report about the drug court model of offender rehabilitation. To create the report, I observed the Thurston County Superior Court's drug court process from arraignment through graduation, examining the benefits to the community, both from economic and judicial standpoints. I conducted interviews with court personnel, researched case histories, reviewed relevant laws and sentencing guidelines, and included collaborating research to support my conclusions and provide international context to the problems and solutions.

For a group presentation project, I moderated a panel discussion covering alternative punishment methods, crime myths, innovative correction programs (both in-use and proposed), and the benefits of harm-reduction and prevention programs. My group included a prison worker who provided hopeful insight despite the emotionally heavy tone of the topic.

Finally, with another group I planned, rehearsed, and performed the title role in "Agamemnon," the first part of the classic Greek trilogy "The Oresteia" by Aeschylus. The intensive re-reading of this stirring text reinforced the precepts, which underlie our modern gauges of fairness. Particularly powerful was the evolution of what society considers to be 'right,' starting from a violent, revenge-based standard, through to the advent of courts, personal rectitude, and society's acceptance of a verdict for the greater benefit of the community.

Additionally, the staged reading served as an interesting exercise in group dynamics and an opportunity to utilize leadership skills, plus provided a refreshing creative outlet to complement the thought-provoking academic discourse and legal research.

 Student's signature

 Faculty signature: Howard Schwartz

 Date

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