



Democracy and Me



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Foundations of Democracy



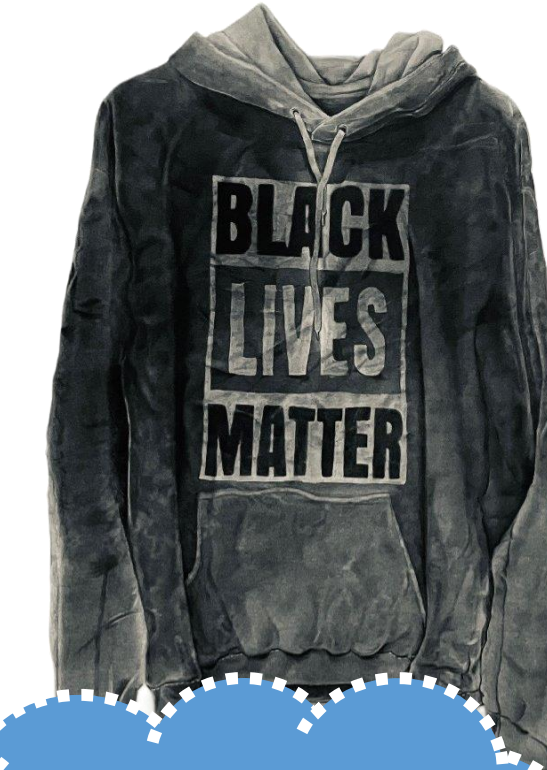
"I found that men, who's reputation for wisdom stood highest, were nearly the most lacking in it; while others, who were looked down on as common people, were much better fitted to learn" (Plato, 150).

Socrates, expressed through Plato, identified that people who claim to be knowledgeable and don't seek to know what they are ignorant of are the least wise. Socrates continued that the common people, who don't believe themselves to be all knowing are the greatest fit for discovering new ideas and learning. This quote emphasized the importance of curiosity within every aspect of democracy, and to always be aware of your ignorance, as well as always continue to seek new knowledge.

"...are we to be content to accept the bare assertions of other men, or of ourselves, without asking any questions?" (Plato, 125).



"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" (King, 457).



Civic Engagement



At K4F, I learned again and again that "democracy is a verb!" (Dilley). I think this simple, yet profound, exclamation perfectly illustrates how our democracy does not exist without the people engaging in it. Civic engagement is not just the foundation of democracy, but is democracy itself. We should always try to involve ourselves in our communities, advocate for justice, and work for the betterment of our democracy. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., "we must use time creatively, and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right" (King, 463). I am grateful to the K4F program for giving me the education and confidence to be more outspoken in political discussion, and to know that the time to act is now!

Community and Freedom

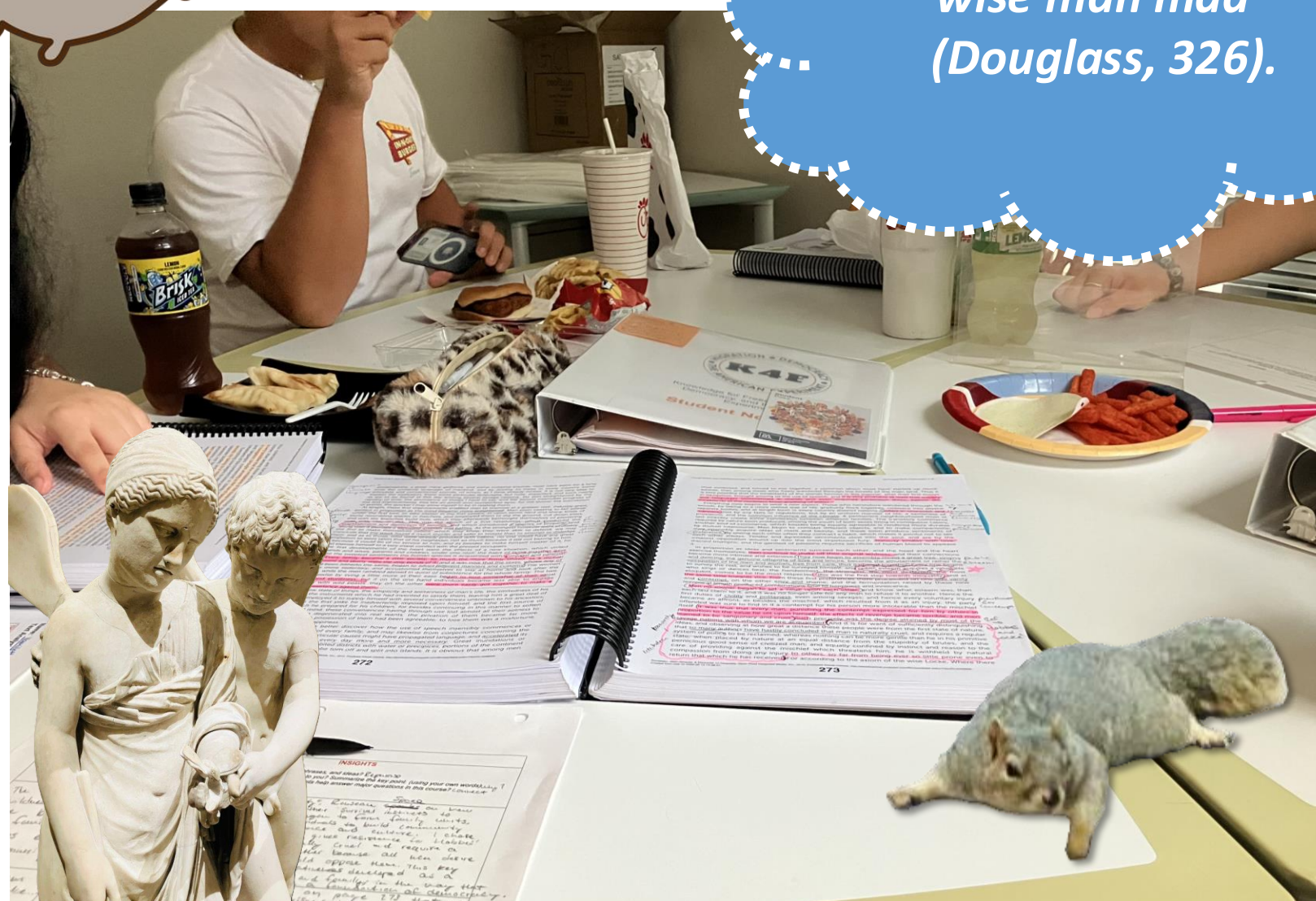


"This magistrate, on his side, obliges himself not to use the power with which he is intrusted but conformably to the intention of his constituents...and upon all occasions prefer the good of the public to his own private interest" (Rousseau, 282).

Rousseau spoke on how governing powers should act according to the good of the people, instead of using their power, bestowed by the people, to benefit themselves. I agree with the quote's intentions of serving the common good, but at the same time I realize the difficulties with enacting laws with a subjective idea of what that common good is.



"Oppression makes a wise man mad" (Douglass, 326).



Justice and Calls to Action



"Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust" (King, 461).

King advocated for the civil disobedience of unjust laws and the following of just laws, which meant that they worked to bring people together, to uplift, and to better all humanity. I love this quote because I believe that justice is innately tied to our "human personality" and that in advancing justice, we allow creative people do creative things; we allow the advocator to speak out for change; and we allow the goodwill in us all to flourish and make a more just world for everyone.

"We are all bound up together in one great bundle of humanity, and society cannot trample on the weakest and feeblest of its members without receiving the curse in its own soul" (Watkins Harper, 524).

