

A Passenger on a Ferry

(This exercise combines the elements of freewriting, written response to an audio-visual presentation and argument crafting into one assignment. This would be done while watching the movie scene, but not its conclusion, in class)

One of the more intense scenes in Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight* is the one wherein the two ferry boats have been given the power to blow up each others' boat. One boat contains (mostly) the criminals put away by District Attorney Harvey Dent in his war on organized crime. They are necessary in the eventual prosecution of their high-level masters. The other boat is made up of a random sampling of Gotham City citizens.

You are on that boat.

TASK: For 5 minutes, free write about what it's like for you on that boat. How are you feeling? What are your concerns? What thoughts are going through your head?

When the Joker is done explaining the scenario to both boats, a surprisingly civil conversation breaks out on your boat about what to do. Everyone keeps offering their opinions on how best to proceed, but no one is making anything resembling a sound argument.

TASK: What do you think should happen? Create a sound argument detailing what you believe is the proper course of action here.