

Title	Crimes and Misdemeanors
Director	Woody Allen
Date	1989
Area	Greek Philosophy
Theme	Plato – why be moral?
Plot Summary	Judah (Martin Landau), a distinguished ophthalmologist, has a mistress who threatens to expose their affair. He decides to have her killed, gets away with it, and finds he can live with himself. There is also a second plot dealing with a documentary film-maker (Allen). The doctor and the film-maker meet in the final scene. Can be used to present an up-to-date argument for why one should be moral. There are two positions presented – being immoral is OK if you can get away with it, and a theistic moral perspective represented by a rabbi and the main character's father.
Key Scenes	Flashback to Judah's father telling him that the eyes of God are always upon us. We should do the right thing in order to avoid divine punishment. [13.16 – 16.54] The doctor confesses to rabbi Ben about the affair. The rabbi argues that we must believe that there is an objective moral order or we will be left with an empty, valueless world. [13.16 – 16.54] As the doctor contemplates the murder, he has a conversation with the rabbi (actually an inner conversation) in which the rabbi again argues that we need a moral law, and that God sees everything. [38.15 – 41.22] After the murder the doctor recalls his father saying that nothing escapes God's sight, the righteous are rewarded and the evil are punished. [55.44 – 56.08] The doctor visits his childhood home and remembers a dinner table discussion from his childhood, discussing religious morality versus 'might makes right' views of ethics. [1.06.50 – 1.10.09] Final conversation between the doctor and the film-maker in which the doctor discusses his murder in the guise of a suggestion for a movie plot, about a murder who first feels and guilt and the eyes of God upon him, and then realises that it's OK because he has gotten away with it. [1.29.25 – 1.34.56] Final comment by the subject of the film-maker's documentary, Professor Levy, on moral choice and consequences. [1.35.14 – 1.36.20] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKkBEOOzIjk
Relevant Text	Plato, Republic Book II, 359a–360d John Pappas, 'It's All Darkness: Plato, The Ring of Gyges, and Crimes and Misdemeanors', in Mark Conard and Aeon Skoble, Woody Allen and Philosophy, 2004