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Abstract

Throughout the semester, we have discussed a lot of different topics and ideas presented in the works we have encountered. Some works have focused more on certain topics, but some themes have come more frequently than others. One theme that I found to be brought up a lot was personhood and identity. These themes were discussed in many different ways, whether it was through an author's argument or the presentation of a character in one of the readings or movies we studied. My paper will focus on several works that present similar and contrasting views on this topic.

My paper will begin with the subject of personhood. Personhood was a highly talked about and debated subject in our class due to the different views that were presented to us. The first and most memorable work I will discuss is *In Defense of Dolphins*. I think that the main focus of this work should not be "Are dolphins people?" but the qualities that define personhood and the things that make someone a person. I will present some of the things that I found to be good, valid points from this work.

Expanding on the idea of personhood, I will also focus on people and characters finding their identity. In many works, characters seem to have a hard time figuring out who they truly are and what they need to do. As young, male, college students, many of us are facing or will face some identity issues. That is why this was a very interesting topic for me. In *City of God*, many of the characters seem to wonder what their identity is. Knockout Ned, Benny, and Rocket all experience issues with who they truly are and what they need to do in their lives. The Power and

the Glory also demonstrates problems with character identity. The Priest and the lieutenant both have to face their identity problems throughout the book and make big decisions based on their identity. Finally, I will present some ideas of identity that are presented in *The Daodejing*.