Brock Hammond

Paper Abstract

Society's Treatment of Characters in EQ

Question: Does society unjustly oppose people whose ideas or actions push the ideological boundaries of society?

Thesis: Society, although unjust or unreasonable, opposes characters or movements that test the ideological boundaries of society, despite their good intentions.

Throughout the semester, characters and their place in society has been a reoccurring theme. Many of the characters and works that have been analyzed this semester have dealt with some form of oppression or opposition by society as a whole even if the characters or works promote noble causes. For example, Rorschach in *Watchmen* is vilified by society because of his actions and feelings towards those who break the law. Society lays out how the justice system is supposed to work, and Rorschach directly defies that. Society sees Rorschach as a murderous lunatic, but in reality, he is a crime fighter out to rid the world of scum. His cause is noble, but he is discarded by society for being too extreme. The Priest in *The Power and The Glory* is killed for promoting religion. He is opposed by society because religion has been declared illegal in this Mexican province. The moral foundations that Christianity is built upon promote love and compassion, and he is killed for having these beliefs. Protest songs also provide insight on the injustices being served to those who opposed society. In the early 20th century, society denied millions of people African Americans and other ethnicities the same basic rights that were provided to white men. However, lynchings and other forms of discrimination tried to suppress any action towards equality for these oppressed peoples. With these three examples in mind, I hope to expand on my thesis that society can be unreasonable and oppresses anyone who defies it.

Joel Paquin

Expectations and their appropriate height

What do expectations do to people trying to discover their way? It sounds broad but if you think along the lines of the stories we read, every protagonist somehow battled or was helped by the expectations they were held up to.

Societal expectation can be harmful to someone if they do not enjoy the outcome set for them. Think about a child brought up to become a doctor but who really wants to do something else. Dr. Manhattan is help up to extreme expectations just because he has god powers. The pressure the expectations put on him are undoubtedly harmful because it drives him to abandon earth in its hour of need. Essentially the expectations cause him to snap.

You could argue that author Wes Moore was in a position where he had defied expectations. This was because Wes's mother saw that his environment and his friends were building him up to be a drug dealer. The solution to change the environment where he would be help up to high expectations (sending him to military school) worked because it helped him realize what he was capable of. Here expectations did not produce pressure but rather set achievable goals.

But how high is too high and whats wrong when one only accomplishes the bare minimum of already high expectations when they are capable of so much more? What if I only wrote this abstract to the 300 word minimum when I could have been more productive? There is no way to quantify expectations but I was finding it hard to find a place to say "this is the stopping point"

My ideas also seem to fall apart when I begin to think about characters like Gilgamesh. We have no idea what expectations he was held up to or if he even cared what they were. I believe the end result of "no expectations" was a tyrant who needed opposition.

In a nutshell I plan on examining the appropriate height of expectations (high or low). I contend the high is better because I have not been presented with a situation where low (or no) leads someone to accomplish anything. But how high is too high and whats wrong when one only accomplishes the bare minimum of already high expectations when they are capable of so much more? What if I only wrote this abstract to the 300 word minimum when I could have been more productive?

Eric Russell

Final Paper Abstract

Professor Helman

April 20, 2013

Question/Idea: Are the questionable ethical or moral choices made by certain people seriously damaging us as a human race as well as nature itself? There are certain instances in which choices made by a business man or an owner of an industry have really pushed the ethical boundary, in the sense that it is doing more harm than good. Even though these people believe their choices are good for business or for themselves, they don't always take into account personal safety of others. People who make certain unethical choices usually only take into consideration the well-being and desires of themselves, rarely seeing it from another's point of view.

Ties: I have tied this theme to three separate works in which we have discussed throughout the semester. These three works include *Food Inc., Polemic: Industrial Tourism and National Parks*, as well as *The Power and the Glory.* These three works all have ties to this theme, in which a decision was made that benefitted a certain group or individual, but ethically it may be incorrect to act in such a manner.

Thesis/Presentation: People make have to make decisions day in and day out, some more important than others. These decisions can prove to be very detrimental to human life as well as nature in general. The questionable and unstable ethical decisions made by business leaders and authorities leads to negative as well as harmful effects to society and nature.

Arguments: The first argument is that ethically wrong decisions have negative and harmful effects. The first piece of evidence for this is in the film Food, Inc. The decisions by the companies, as well as the farmers, to produce meat the way they do is wrong. They are aware that their operations have a high

risk of producing meat that contains E-Coli or other harmful diseases. Another supporting tie is in Polemic: Industrial Tourism and National Parks. The park that is discussed towards the beginning of the reading was being considered to put a road through it. This decision would be made by the government, and would in turn only bring about more destruction to the forest as well as more man-made objects (such as buildings or perhaps more roads). This decision would be good for business men and women, but would seriously damage the park and take away from the habitat of certain animals, putting them at an ethical risk. The third piece of evidence comes from The Power and the Glory. The decisions and the actions of the lieutenant are morally wrong, due to the fact that he is hunting down with the intention of killing a priest. He is doing so because he does not believe it catholic practices, and thinks that executing him is a reasonable punishment.

-The other side to this issue is that unethical decisions that are made do not always have negative effects.

-This argument could include the fact that more production, in the case of Food, Inc. and the destruction of forests like in *Industrial Tourism*, provide more job and economic opportunities and profit

-They see this as helping the general people, instead of harming them.

Kun Tran

Professor Helman

FRC 13E

April 21, 2013

Final paper abstract

In my paper I will discuss how language can be a powerful tool for humankind. The example will be in Frankenstein, Apology, and The Power and the Glory.

First I will say that language is the tool for people to express themselves, like how the monster in Frankenstein learns to speak and grows to like the family in the cottage: De Lacey, Felix…. Furthermore, with the language he picks up, he is able to tell Frankenstein what he has gone through. Without language, the monster would have always been a monster that kills others, and people cannot have a view from his perspective to understand him better.

Another example of that is when the priest talks to the lieutenant in The Power and the Glory and is able to change his mind for the better. After his talk with the priest, the lieutenant begins to doubt his action since he now has a better, broader view.

Another aspect that I will discuss is how Socrates's mastery in language usage can be so persuasive. In the Apology, we doubt whether Socrates is guilty or not for not recognizing the gods recognized by the state. He further goes on and embarrasses Meletus, the one responsible for bringing Socrates to the trial. The most notable passage is when he considers himself to be the gadfly that helps awaken the city of Athens, and therefore should be rendered innocent.

Even in sports, communication is one key to success.

Finally, I would use the example of Hitler with his mastery in language that could have indeed led humans into destruction, or maybe how one who is not fluent in the use of language can be so successful. Michelangelo and Andy Warhol are sometimes considered to be autistic, and did not communicate much with other people, but they both were so successful in their own times and able to show the emotions through their paintings.

Korbin West

Dr. Helman

Enduring Questions

Paper 4 Abstract

Morality

Does the intent to do good the only thing that classifies a person as moral? Or do the actions take precedence over this? People can do evil things for good reasons, so which is a stronger indicator of morality, intention or action? This is not an easy question to answer, and more than often there seems to be grey areas. It seems that most say that morality can only be determined by analysis of a person's intentions, yet some others say only by their action can decide one's morality, no matter what they want or wish.

In "The Power and the Glory", the priest is not a perfect man. He drinks, thinks selfishly, and even has an illegitimate child. Yet he is always seen by people as a moral man, because he risks his life every day to help the believers. His reputation by the readers gives credit to the argument that people can still be moral if they have moral intentions but sometimes immoral things. But the lieutenant, who always does whatever is needed for his people, is almost always seen as immoral. Yes, he does kill and threatens people, but he always does it with the future in mind. He strives to make the future free of corruption and deceit filled by religion and politics. Is this no more righteous than the priest's cause? Yet, his actions speak much louder than his intention, giving evidence that action is the judge of morality.

In "Watchmen", all the heroes seem to have some flaw. Some are indifferent to the people, some are stubborn, and some simply do not really care what happens. Rorschach is considered the protagonist, always the guy who will do the right thing for the people. But, he will harm and kill criminals to get what is needed to be done. His uncompromising attitude for attaining good seems to overlook his brutal actions, and his character gives support to the argument that people can maintain their morality while doing harm to others. But on the other hand, the Comedian does heroic things too, is praised by the government, and is seen as a national hero. Yet he only does his job because he enjoys harming others, so he only does the good things for the wrong reasons. But still, he is still considered a hero, even by some of the people who knew his darkest secrets. So does his malicious intention of becoming a hero outdo his heroic actions?

In "The Trial and Death of Socrates", Socrates always preaches that people should try to never do anything wrong, to never offend someone or cause them harm. Only by this can someone be a good person. According to Socrates, when people do wrong, it harms all under the law. He states quite clearly, anyone who does something wrong is being selfish in some way, not taking others into account. Socrates offers the simplest solution to the issue, that if wrong actions are committed for good reasons, overall that person is not truly good. For him, there is always a solution where no one needs to be harmed or offended. And if there is not a solution, then non-action is a better solution than harming someone else. The intention of someone who does something wrong is always selfish.