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Final Paper Abstract

23 April 2013

How is the way that we utilize our natural resources affected by what we think is moral or immoral? Also, what does this tell us about where our priorities lay as humans? Many people know that the way we use the resources on our planet is not ideal, but nothing major is ever done about this. My paper will use the texts *Polemic: Industrial Tourism and the National Parks*, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, and, *Food Inc.* to investigate how we view the morality of the way we use our resources and how it compares to other things such as job creation.

In *Polemic*, a road is going to be constructed through the middle of a national park. The main character in the book whole-heartedly opposed this plan. He was strongly in favor of the strict no motor vehicles regulation at the time. In class we discussed both the merits and the downfalls of this plan. It is hard to decide which decision is the right decision, and which one is wrong. I think most people can agree that it would be good and moral if they were to preserve the wilderness and not build the road. However, some would say that it is a greater moral good for the road to be built. That way more people have access to the wonders that nature has given us.

In the *Omnivore's Dilemma*, Pollan talks about how we humans learned to cook our food and therefore expanded even further the amount of foods that we can consume. Nobody would argue that this skill that was developed by early man is immoral. It was a skill developed and it helped the species feed itself more effectively. The rise of genetically modified organisms or GMOs has created a lot of controversy. There is no doubting the fact that GMOs have allowed yields to increase, but some

question the cost of those increased yields. I will discuss the arguments of which one is morally greater, not using GMOs, or being able to feed more people. I will also use examples from *Food Inc.* to expand the argument.

Cameron Dennis  
April 24, 2013  
Professor Helman  
Enduring Questions-Abstract for Final Paper

**Abstract: The Common Good: Is This Worthy of Pursuit?**

My proposed paper will concern the idea of a common good. The big issue that surrounds this topic is whether or not one should strive to work toward what he perceives as the common good. This topic is divided into five sections. To help defend both sides of this argument, I will take into account the following works: *The Power and the Glory*, *Watchmen*, *The Other Wes Moore*, and "Rabbit-Proof Fence." In each of these works, there is at least one character that looks to benefit the common good. The first portion of the paper will be an introduction to the topic which will include a very broad definition of the common good, the works that are in consideration, and the methodology for answering the presented question (which will also serve as an outline for the paper).

The second portion will be defining the common good. This portion will be vital to both sides of the argument. Here I will begin by conveying the goal of Veidt in *Watchmen* and then call into question his authority and motivation for making the decision that he made. The goal here is not to demonstrate that his decision was wrong, but to show the difficulty in defining what is good. To drive this point home, this will be followed by a discussion of the Priest and the Lieutenant in *The Power and the Glory*. I will argue that both characters worked toward what they perceive to be the common good, but had opposing perceptions. The conclusion of the second portion of the paper is that not everyone shares the same perception of the common good or can accurately predict what will be of most benefit to the greatest number of people. It will also be made clear that one's idea of the common good balances "relative levels of happiness" with "greatest number of people benefited." Consider a situation in which an action causes considerable detriment to one group and minor benefit to another group. If the group of benefit is only slightly larger than the group of detriment, some may not consider the action to be toward the common good. The point that I will try to make is that this issue is not black and white.

The third (and largest) section will be an argument toward and against pursuing the common good. This will revisit the characters that were previously mentioned and demonstrate the benefits and drawbacks of their actions and then attempt to answer whether or not they were justified. This section will also consider the actions of Mr. Neville in "Rabbit-Proof Fence."

The fourth section of the paper will make an argument for and against the idea of individualism. Here, an argument will be made from the characters: Molly from "Rabbit-Proof Fence," the other Wes Moore, the gringo, and Rorschach will be used to show the positive and negative effects of pursuing individual freedoms in spite of what is perceived to be the common good.

The fifth and final section will be my assessment of which argument is strongest and my concluding thoughts on the subject. I choose to argue that the idea of the common good does not exist and that it is not worth pursuing.

Methuselah Gee  
EQ  
Professor Helman  
4/21/2013

**Manhood and Identity by Society**

Throughout this semester we have talked about identities; we talked about self-identity and the society identity. Through the class discussions we find out that the society has its way of defending individual. In this paper I want to write about some of the criteria and principals that the society uses to identify people. With that I want to talk about different self-portraits from my EQ.

I also want to talk about self-identity and how it differs from how others or society identify an individual. For example I want to talk about the play *take me out*; I want to talk about how the mean character fine himself. And how others treated him as a result and how different he was from what the society thought he was.

The next thing I want to talk about how the society create people. I want to talk about manhood and what make a man. And has the society's definition of men just to other human or living thing. With his I want to bring in some of the songs that we listen to in class. Song like *Mississippi Goddam* by Nina Simone and Bob Dylan *Blowing in the wind*, These two song talk about how the society define people.

The last thing I want to talk about is the relationship between men and things that are around. How we treat other living things, how our society view animals.

Are people inherently good? I intend to prove that people are not inherently good. This, however, does not mean that they are necessarily inherently bad either. People, as a whole, do not seem to be naturally good all the time. A few ties to this subject are Frankenstein, The Trial And Death of Socrates, and even in Food Inc.

First, in Frankenstein, it could be argued that Victor Frankenstein is inherently good because he was trying to develop a way to make human life better. However, he became obsessed with his work, and it became problematic. He made a monster that went around and killed innocent people. He created the monster because he had a huge ego that prevented him from realizing what he was doing.

In The Trial And Death of Socrates, it is seen that the people of Athens do not want Socrates around them any more. Socrates shows how much better he is than the people by belittling them. They respond to Socrates by putting him on trial and eventually sentencing him to death. This is where my strongest argument against the inherent goodness can probably be found.

In Food Inc., the big corporations were creating unhealthy conditions for the animals they were "raising". These unhealthy living conditions for the animals caused the meat to be bad, yet the big companies are still selling this stuff to human beings for consumption.

History tends to repeat itself time and time again. History has also shown us that we, as people can not trust ourselves. Some of these examples are extreme, and I will explore more into detail what these examples mean in the context of human nature.

Final Paper Abstract

**Question:** Should things that are natural in this world be left alone even if the intentions are positive?

**Answer/Thesis:** I believe that things that are a natural part of this world, whether it be people, animals, or land masses, should be left alone and not be forced to be changed.

**Examples/Reasons:**

In Desert Solitaire, author Edward Abbey talks about the problems with national parks in the United States. I think this would be good for my paper because there are plenty of examples of the government interfering with natural land masses to build roads and structures so that more people can see more of the park. I think that there are some areas that humans don't necessarily need to be able to drive through or walk through. As my counterargument, I can discuss why building roads in national parks would bring in more people and, in turn, bring more money into the park.

In *Food Inc.*, it discusses the food industry and what they have done to what once were natural animals to help make them into mere brainless meat. There are numerous examples of tampering with natural, living animals throughout the movie. For example, Tyson takes chickens out of their natural environment and make them live in a barn in which they never see light. I think I can use this and other examples in the movie to drive home the point of making natural things

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unnatural is not a good thing. To counteract this, I can talk about the financial sense that this would make to the food companies that treat their animals in inhumane ways.

In *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, it shows the oppression of the native people in Australia by white people who want them to conform to "normal society". I see no point in trying to change people's ways unless they are somehow harming the rest of the population. I can go into detail about Mr. Neville and why he might think that changing the indigenous people's ways would be a good thing for the rest of the country. For example, forcing them to take classes and become more educated could result in more people in the work force in Australia.