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Professor Helman

FRC

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Abstract

For my paper, I am going to use the theme of change. Using change, I will be able to incorporate several sources very easily, because all characters change. The two sides I will argue will be whether the characters change was a good thing. People often argue that change is a good thing. But is it really?

I will use three sources for sure, and potentially a fourth. Using an even four sources will allow me to use two sources each for where I believe change was a good thing and where I felt change did not effectively work. My four potential sources are:

Gilgamesh: I plan on talking about Enkidu's change from his early days living in the wild to his realization of human ways. I believe this was a good change for not only himself, but also for the friendship he developed with Gilgamesh.

Frankenstein: I could take two different approaches to Frankenstein. I could talk about the change of behavior in the monster or the change in behavior of Victor. With Victor's approach, I would be able to talk about his change after realizing the monster he created is harmful. On the other hand, speaking about the monster, I would likely show how change negatively affected him.

Macbeth: Macbeth's major change occurred when he found out he is destined to be King of Scotland. In my opinion, his change of behavior was definitely negative. Once he found out that he was to be King, he changed his demeanor and forced to get his way.

The Other Wes Moore: For this source I may be able to talk about the negative change of Wes as he gets involved into drugs and such activities. They clearly only get him in trouble and provide no benefits.

Aaron Stewart-Curet

FRC 14-I: Essay Abstract

“I am Me”

Through-out the semester, we have touched on the topic of identity; debating whether or not it is directly related to someone’s environment or something that is innately a part of who someone is. In this paper, I want to explore and discuss what identity is and what decides a person’s identity.

Sources:

- The Rabbit-Proof Fence: I wanted to use this movie because of the many examples it gives on the topic of identity. It includes clear examples on the disagreement between the people of Australia as to how they view themselves. I could use the “Half-castes” to show the difficulty of trying to oneself in the midst of society’s labels for them.
- The Other Wes Moore: I thought that this book would be good to show how ones environment can have an impact on the way an individual views and identifies themselves. The way how each Wes Moore grew up in similar home situations, but how their lives took radically different paths.
- The Power and the Glory: For this source, I am not entirely sure how I am going to incorporate this into my paper. I believe I can connect the priest’s struggle with who he is with the crisis of identity. His struggle to hold on to the identity of a good priest could be a justifiable source to use for my topic

I wanted to do my paper over this topic because I believe that identity is a complex and important aspect of a person that is not just result of one factor, but a multitude of possibilities that eventually result in the identity that a person believes in and lives out.

Deryion Sturdivant

Paper Abstract

One of the big topics that we have been discussing in class has been devoted to role theory. My paper will discuss how role theory applies to our society. The three sources in which I plan to use are:

1. Peter Berger, "Sociological Perspective": this is the main work in which role theory is discussed and where we gained most of our knowledge on it. I can use some examples from the text for explanations of how role theory applies to our society.
2. The Other Wes Moore: I can use this to tell how each Wes was put into a different role in society and each had a different outcome, even though they were from nearly identical backgrounds.
3. How Junk Food Can End Obesity: I can use this to explain how the food corporations are so important and have so much power is because the people give them the role of being the biggest source of food in the country.

I plan to write the paper on role theory because I think it is a concrete theory with many cases of evidence. In my opinion, I believe that role theory does exist in our society. People act the way they do, because society needs people to fill that role, whether it be for better or worse. I am also somewhat unsure as to how I could go about a counterargument for my topic, other than that role theory does not exist.

Christopher Szostek

Professor Helman

April 29, 2014

Who are We?

Can Our Past Decide Our Future?

Does our environment dictate who we are as people? There are trends that we can see in society that indicate as such. We see some of these trends in some of the books we read this year. *The Watchmen* is a novel which dives deeper into each hero's backgrounds which indicate who they come to be as people. There is Rorschach who was abused as a child. We can see how that affected him in the future. Rorschach became cynical, somewhat, abusive, and cold. He was a very harsh person who used the psychiatric help to help define himself in his alternate persona. There is also the Silk Spectre who was always taught to follow in her mother's footsteps. She was trained at a young age to be a superhero like her mother. She grew up and did just that. This idea both compares and contrasts with *The Other Wes Moore*. We have one Wes who grew up in a very rough neighborhood surrounded by drug dealers. This Wes had issues with prison time, and had a really rough life and became a product of his environment. The Other Wes is an anomaly He was able to escape a very similar environment. He ended up being put into a military school and fought and clawed his way up in life and eventually became a successful entrepreneur, and worked under Secretary of State, Condeleezza Rice. This is one example of a person who worked against the grain and escaped a path of suffering. The two Wes's lives were very similar before their teenage years. After that they split and embarked on several very different paths. This is very strong evidence against the idea that our environment leads to who and what we will be.

American Food Industry Abstract

The American food industry has the important job of feeding 300 million Americans. To feed all these mouths they must produce an enormous amount of food. To produce this enormous amount of food and simultaneously make a good profit the American food industry resorts to methods that some would consider unethical towards the employees of the industry, the livestock from which the food is made, and American citizens who consume the food produced. This essay will attempt to clarify the motives of the industry that provides our sustenance and determine whether or not their actions are morally justified.

There are strong arguments to found on both sides of this issue. One must remember that the large food corporations are businesses. They must make a profit to stay afloat in our capitalist society. Even if their methods of providing food for us were deemed unethical, could they not be considered a necessary evil? After all they do have 300 million mouths to feed. Possibly the strongest argument on the side of the corporations is that there is perhaps no alternative currently to feed so many people.

The other side of the argument makes many relevant points as well, one of which is that the food corporations have profit-tunnel-vision and act purely from a business standpoint regardless of the moral sacrifices. This statement encompasses many of arguments against the corporations regarding livestock, workers, and consumers. Moral sacrifices for the sake of increasing profit include: inhumane methods of captivity, feeding, and slaughter of livestock, providing consumers with a nutritionless, unhygienic product that may cause disease, and taking advantage of workers who have no choice but to accept a job because they are so poor (some of whom are believed to be illegal citizens) as well as exposing these workers to conditions that harm their health. The side opposing the corporations also makes the point that all of the instances above are made possible by corruption in the FDA and policy-making institutions that favor the food industry.

This is obviously a very important, complex issue that requires dissection on more than one level. To truly determine whether the food industry is morally justified in their ways one must examine not only their methods, but American culture itself and the lifestyle it incites in us. To truly analyze this issue one must look into possible alternatives to the current system, the nature of capitalist society, and the American way of life.