

PORTFOLIO INTRODUCTION

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It's late on a school night. I sound like am I still in high school, because here at college people don't say school night. They say that they have class tomorrow. I realize this only now and wonder how many times I have said "un-college" things in the past year. I miss high school to be perfectly honest. I miss a lot of things. My home is hundreds of miles away, my friends are scattered across the Midwest, my girlfriend is no longer my girlfriend, and my parents are not here to take care of me. Am I afraid to grow up? I'm sure many would say so. My problem is that I want to be Peter Pan, only I want to keep my parents and Wendy with me forever.

Throughout this semester, I have read and written, all the while comparing myself to the characters and situations in the books and stories. At one point I had decided that I am John Grady Cole. I have huge dreams and goals, but I am deathly afraid of seriously trying to make them come true. I may be afraid to make any serious decisions concerning the rest of my life. Or perhaps I am only Cole to a certain point. He had no problem leaving home, whereas I have thought of nothing else but returning to the comfort of northern Minnesota. John Grady Cole did love on the other had, as have I, and he had friends as well, but you will not find a paper concerning any pretty horses in this portfolio. I have thought far too long and hard about Cormac McCarthy's piece of art to desire to work with it anymore on an academic level. To be honest, there are issues in that book that are hard for me to revisit. Maybe that's why I enjoyed reading it so

much. I have grown sick of earthly love, as it is far too fickle and incomplete. I know this may be sad because I am only nineteen years old, but I have chosen to focus on a different love, one complete and perfect. Love will be evident in the most surprising of places; love will be found in death. You will find love pouring out the hands, feet and side of God, stretched upon a cross, gasping for air. It is death that has truly changed the world. The most significant instance of this was when death and life happened at once, and for the same purpose: freedom and forgiveness.

Before humans can reach their own death, it is necessary for them to work and to “make a living.” I have never had clear thoughts on the subject of work. I know that it is necessary and that I would feel incomplete if I did nothing. I know that work is worthwhile. I haven’t always seen the reasons that people work as being worthwhile, however. The motives behind the desire for money may be inherently evil. People strive to build up treasures on earth and often neglect to store treasures in Heaven. While I say this, it is true to say that I also agree with capitalism. Irony? Yeah. Paradoxical? Yep. Hypocritical? I wouldn’t go that far. Capitalism is good when it pushes people to succeed, to be the best at their craft, and when it rewards people who obtain these goals. One must be ever mindful to keep money and possessions from becoming “false gods,” and neglect other, more meaningful issues. I’m sure you will see the contrast between my two views on work when reading “The Concept of Work,” and “The Work Place,” essays. Upon revision, it was this major difference in my personal philosophy that hit me with quite a bit of force. In these two papers I am advocating two completely different ideals. In one I state dramatically that “I refuse to sacrifice my happiness on the alter of capitalism,” while in the other

I praise the capitalist company and ideals that I learned about from my interview sessions. Perhaps, the differences are not so black and white in truth. I never said money is evil, just that the lust for money is evil. One must be careful to be aware of this subtly huge difference.

It was the units dealing with death and work that forced me to realize that I too will one day grow up. Maybe I'm not completely ready for this right now. I know that I'm not I guess. But, surprisingly enough, through my Core experience, I believe that one day I will be ready to, as I have learned many lessons in the past semesters here at Valparaiso University. I have learned more about the human life cycle and more about myself. I realize that things can never be the same, and that may make one sad at times. What a person needs to look forward to, however, is the next adventure, the upcoming change, and to prepare for that. In the end, it has been Core that has helped prepare me to be able to make that next leap, at least one day in my future.