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***IJLLC, Team***

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# **DIGITAL TEXTS AND CRITICAL RHETORICS: AN INTERNET SOURCED RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT IN FRESHMAN COMP**

***Andrew Nelson, MA/English***

University of Missouri/St. Louis

English Instructor, The University of Arkansas at Monticello, USA

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## **Abstract**

This manuscript attempts to address two major problems in Freshman Composition scholarship: the lack of attention given to *specific* research assignments and exigencies concerning argumentation pedagogy in the Freshman Writing course. Concerning the former area of discussion, the paper suggests entering into public rhetoric and public discourse through local, digital resources. These are the sources for the research assignment. Implied here is the teaching of current issues—whether political or cultural—allows for the reemergence of the public intellectual. This assignment prepares students to function highly in a representative democracy. In order to enter public rhetoric and public discourse, digital texts are primary sources. Theoretical approaches to researching digital texts, and subsequent digital textual pedagogy conclude the first half of the manuscript. The second half of the manuscript discusses argumentation theory and pedagogy. Also included in this section is an original outline—based on the rhetorical stases—which accompanies the assignment. Concluding the essay are screen shots of student essays which opens up a discussion of assessment.

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**Keywords:** Freshman composition pedagogy, argumentation, digital writing and digital research, public rhetoric and public discourse

As the eleventh or twelfth week of the semester rolls around, I initiate a discussion of the research assignment I teach by asking the class something along these lines, “OK, what controversial issues at the city, county or state level have you heard about on the news?” Usually silence follows. I think the silence results from a lack of community awareness and probably a little indifference. After providing examples of local issues such as red-light cameras or medicinal marijuana, a receptive class will collaboratively generate between ten and fifteen topics. Several semesters ago a group of

students in a summer session I taught chose a topic for research unfamiliar to most of the class and myself. The issue involved a debate in a local municipality centered on a construction project. A proposed land development would either result in an Iron-Ore smelter or a recreational complex. After this group's effective oral presentations, I amended my original thoughts on the issue and assented to another position. I shared with members of this group how persuasive I found their in-class presentations. I believe their success was at least partially due to the outline I teach, which is largely based on stasis theory. This class was exceptional and inspiring in many ways. Looking back, I experienced one of my first kairotic moments as an educator. The class was now aware of a local issue, and the corresponding debate.

In a digital-age-meets-*dissoi logoi*, this assignment consists of: a minimum five page paper and accompanying five minute oral presentation; on-line research using specific types of websites; and small group, in-class discussion scaffolding analysis and evaluation of competing arguments surrounding local issues. Popular topics have been:

- Red light cameras at intersections
- Texting and driving in Missouri
- Smoking bans in local establishments and on campus
- Freedom of assembly arguments associated with the Occupy movement
- The introduction of Elk into Missouri for hunting purposes
- Prescription legislation concerning cold medicines
- Proposed public park closings
- Several land development projects

Students usually have merely peripheral, limited awareness of these issues. On the day classes workshop topics, students have often heard about local issues but rarely provide critical insight. Invariably, students are unaware of the histories, policymakers, and debates surrounding these issues. Additionally, students are unfamiliar with locations of sources that will provide facts, statistics, background and expert opinion necessary for successful completion of the assignment. The assignment is primarily internet sourced with the occasional personal interview.

Along with a lack of community awareness I've seen after teaching five years as a community college and university English adjunct, I've also noticed student deficiency in inventing and arranging effective written arguments. I hope to address these exigencies in this essay; furthermore I suggest assessment strategies concerning argument toward the conclusion. Argument theory and pedagogy along with using digital texts to teach community awareness makeup the core of this assignment; therefore to

demonstrate this assignment's capability of generating critical student writing, a discussion of these areas within Comp Studies deserves attention.

**Digital Texts**-Since the sources for this assignment are primarily digital, scholarship on digital texts, digital writing and digital environments needs to be discussed. Digital Compositional scholarship includes subfields as diverse as: classic and emerging rhetorics, epistemology, argumentation, literacy practices, discourse, ethics, power and privilege, visual rhetorics, semiology and multidisciplinary approaches to name a few (Dyehouse, Pennell and Shamoon, 2009; Hocks, 2003; Jackson and Wallin, 2009; McKee and Porter 2008; Sullivan, 2000). Examples of digital writing and digital texts-in and out of the academy-are diverse: computer generated imagery, multi-modal, on-line portfolios composed by students, Tweets, Facebook posts, internet images, icons, youtube videos, advocacy web-sites, electronic newspapers and uploaded news, sports and entertainment television programs. Facebook and Twitter are certainly possible locations for digital arguments. The argumentative research assignment that I teach is in some ways a reaction to the technological prowess displayed by today's student. I'm finding increasingly students are comfortable inserting links into their essays directing their audience to relevant sources. If students are comfortable writing in digital environments, and often prefer tech based pedagogies, then why shouldn't my assignments be supportive?

Michael Dean observes in *Writing Assessment and the Revolution in Digital Texts and Technologies* students at secondary and college levels "...are composing texts in digital environments (e.g., blogs, wikis, digital videos, podcasts, social networking sites, and a variety of Web 2.0 applications" (p.2). Dean's assessment strategies could prove useful as this trend seems to suggest that students are comfortable producing digital texts in digital environments. Comp textbooks such as *Sound Ideas* (Eds. Krasny and Sokolik) include multimodal, visual texts and links to digital supplements while Bedford St. Martins provides web-based tutorials introducing comp students to process oriented digital rhetorics.

A discussion of digital texts and digital environments--including the terms *hypertext*, *hypermedia*, and *materiality*--may help understand how both the writing process and knowledge formation occurs in these environments, and thus within the context of this assignment. Hypertext and hypermedia can be contrasted with material features of digital environments in the same way anthropologists often describe cultural phenomenon. *Emic* and *etic* are terms used by anthropologists in the field that denote perspective. An individual who is inside a culture has an emic perspective on their culture, while an individual outside a culture is said to have an etic perspective. An insider's perspective of digital texts and digital environments (emic) would include inner-workings of networks, such as hypertexts and hypermedia,

while the material, relational, and local features of digital environments, such as writer, writing lab, networked classroom, and community, would constitute an outsider's perspective (etic) of digital environments. I call emic digital environments *inner environments* and etic digital environments *outer environments*.

Definitions of hypertexts and hypermedia function within inner environments and have also been discussed in epistemological terms. Structuralism and Poststructuralism can be helpful in understanding hypertexts for George Landow:

“Like Barthes, Michele Foucault conceives of texts in terms of networks and links. In *The Archeology of Knowledge*, he points out that the ‘frontiers of a book are never clear cut,’ because ‘it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network...(a) network of references’” (1992).

Landow defines hypertext as “text composed of blocks of words (or images) linked electronically by multiple paths, chains, or trails in an open-ended, perpetually unfinished textuality described by the terms **link, node, network, web and path**” and “**Hypermedia** simply extends the notion of the text in hypertext by including visual information, sound, animation, and other forms of data” (1992). Landow uses the terms hypertexts and hypermedia interchangeably, which is problematic for Craig Stroup who believes “...English studies would benefit from revisiting the text/media dichotomy” (2000). Instead of discussing *lexia*-the basic units of hypertext-as an entire network, Stroupe would like to isolate *lexia* for discursive purposes. This is key for Stroupe's text/media split.

Landow's *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*, and similar texts exploring theories and pedagogies related to digital writing, digital environments and related technologies have influenced the academy significantly. Several institutions offer hybridized rhet/comp, communications and media studies programs. Scholars are publishing texts in online journals intended exclusively for online audiences using graphic design software. Digital texts and writing in digital environments are having an impact on freshman comp pedagogy-assignments sometimes involve on-line, multimodal writing portfolios and instructors are combining role-playing, computer gaming with written assignments in lab settings.

I suggest a relationship between hyperlinks and hypermedia with links as internal blocks of digital texts that link to other hypertexts and/or hypermedia, while hypermedia extend from hypertext, are often multimodal, and can incorporate more than one media (Dean 2011). For today's student,

capable of negotiating links from one media to another, the digital aspects of my assignment have been no problem. Today's technologically savvy student accustomed to navigating inner (emic) digital environments is capable of networking local, credible websites essential for successful completion of this research assignment. From an emic perspective, students have been able to successfully locate the Foulcauldian 'node within a network.' These nodes reveal themselves to students as hypermedia-credible websites-containing arguments on local issues of controversy.

An etic view of digital texts and digital environments begins with Dyehouse, Pennell and Shamoon's suggestion of architectural and ecological metaphors to help describe writing in digital environments. The architectural metaphor, "...retains a critical investment in the writing person, stressing the unique view that expert producers bring to processes of digital and multimedia literacy production" (2009). The architectural metaphor, which sees the writer building and producing texts, contrasts with the ecological metaphor that sees relationships between the writer and the material environment. The ecological metaphor, acknowledging the local aspects of digital environments-including interactions between writer, technologies and texts-is close to the etic, outer digital perspective I notice (Dyehouse, Pennell and Shamoon 2009). The outer digital environments-networked classroom, networked writing labs, libraries and even homes-also play a major role in this assignment. By thinking of digital environments etically and emically, and situating students accordingly, students become participant-observer researchers in this assignment.

The ecological metaphor is important for understanding the writer and digital environments, but ecology is also important in practice. Students have chosen eco-issues such as the pursuit of nuclear power in Missouri, bio-fuels, and the introduction of nonnative species into Missouri for hunting purposes. Prescription law concerning the purchase of over-the-counter medications containing pseudoephedrine has been a topical issue for students due to the use of these cold medicines as precursors for the production of the dangerous drug methamphetamine, and the horrible environmental consequences that follow.

In the St. Louis metropolitan area, the major newspaper and county newspapers have accompanying websites. These digital texts, along with the Missouri Department of Conservation's website, have appeared in works cited pages of students. A specific digital text that has been a valuable teaching tool for me is the online version of a local public TV program. Links appearing on a local TV network's website direct users to an uploaded TV program, which is a weekly roundtable discussion of local issues. Moderating the roundtable is a local radio talk show host. The three other regular participants in this roundtable debate program include two journalists



and another radio talk show host. Previously mentioned local issues are often debated on this program. At times, the program is not much different from other politically charged national news programs. Participants often interrupt each other, voices are raised, and political agendas are explicitly stated and/or implied. The *ad hominem* attacks are kept to a minimum; however I use the program as an example of the agonism described by Deborah Tannen in *The Argument Culture: Stopping America's War of Words* (1998).

The angry, violent tide of Tannen's argument culture may be waning a bit because ideology has significantly reduced two hallmarks of argument-discourse and assent. This erosion of argument, or more accurately civil discourse, may leave the door open for rhetoric's usefulness, and provide an opportunity for rhetoric as an alternative to the stranglehold that ideology has on discourse, and therefore argument. While political ideologies often surface in the local roundtable, revealing the aggressive, stereotypical aspects of argument, nonpartisan issues are frequently discussed. It is these nonpartisan, mostly politically benign, local issues involving competing arguments that students explore for essay topics. Some scholars believe what we do in composition classes is largely, if not entirely, political. I feel that avoiding ideologically "hot" political issues is wise mainly because my primary goal with this assignment is to import the critical argumentative rhetorics necessary to elevate student writing, and not to address and debate typically partisan political issues that can often distract and divide a classroom.

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**Critical Argumentative Rhetorics**-Timothy Barnett's preface to *Teaching Argument in the Composition Course: Background Readings* "...note(s) certain theorists-Aristotle, Stephen Toulmin, Chaim Perelman, and Carl Rogers..are the ones most often cited by argument textbooks in general..." (2002). I believe my pedagogical approaches to Aristotle, Stasis theory, and Toulmin have been successful in discovering argumentative rhetorics related to audience, invention, arrangement, analysis, and evaluation. Aided by rhetorics from these areas, students are capable of researching, assessing, inventing and writing arguments concerning local issues. Student compositions often reflect the understanding and application of critical rhetorics within these areas:

**Audience**-Aristotle discusses the three divisions of rhetoric as being determined by three classes of listeners to speeches (Bizzell and Herzberg 2001). The three types of oratory-*political*, *forensic*, and *ceremonial*-extend from three classes of "hearers." In any speech, there are three elements-speaker, subject, and person addressed. "...the hearer..." according to Aristotle, "...determines the speech's end and object" (Bizzell and Herzberg

2001). Aristotle's emphasis on the importance of audience in a speech, and potentially, any rhetorical situation is seen here.

Similar to Aristotle's three elements of a speech, the tripartite in my assignment consists of experts, topic, and student. For example, State Representatives Jane Doe and Joe Smith, red light cameras, and writer would constitute three elements of a rhetorical situation. As audience members, students assume all three classes of Aristotle's listeners. Students as forensic, ceremonial and political listeners research histories, are able to determine the persuasiveness of an experts' argument on a topic, and suggest a future course of action. My emphasis on audience can be seen most clearly at this point. Engaging students as audience members challenges culturally biased student *ethos*. Students may have strong, predetermined feelings about local issues; these biases impede critical understanding. Forensic and ceremonial rhetoric-online research and argumentation rhetorics-compel students to discover causes of topics, and analyze and evaluate competing arguments. Students have related to me that during their online research, arguments have emerged that have challenged their established positions on an issue. Aided by key websites and critical rhetorics, students primarily as audience members are therefore able to position themselves as effective researchers and eventual policymakers.

***Invention and arrangement***-A beneficial heuristic for this assignment is stasis theory. Stasis theory originated with Hermagoras and was later treated extensively by Cicero, Quintilian and others (Bizzell and Herzberg 2001; Carter 1988). Michael Carter's discussion of stasis theory includes his assertion that Hermagoras' entire rhetorical system was based on the stases (1988). Carter's five key features of the stases mostly extend from Hermagoras' use of the stases in legal proceedings:

- The stases originate from the conflict of oppositional forces
- This conflict has the generative power to call a rhetor into action
- Stasis theory is a doctrine of inquiry
- Stasis theory is a means for conflict resolution
- The stases are situational

Along with Carter's third feature, which sees the stases as an epistemological, inventive rhetoric, his discussion of the fifth feature may be the key to understanding why I believe stasis theory is a beneficial, critical argumentative rhetoric for this assignment:

Clearly, *stasis* was a rhetorical principal that was not individualistic and internal; instead it represented a community-oriented rhetoric. Rhetorical discourse found its motivation not in one person who wanted to impose an opinion on another, but in a shared conflict of knowledge. Stasis was a corrective, a way of identifying, controlling, and resolving that conflict within the community.

Rhetoric, then, was an act of bringing the members of a community to knowledge—a resolution of a conflict of knowledge. And language was at the center of that act: both the method of seeking knowledge and the knowledge that emerged from that method defined the community (1988).

Competing arguments involving community issues, and local, digital texts are at the center of this assignment. It is within specific locations that the stases can serve as a conflict resolving, policy making, community-oriented rhetoric. Scholars throughout the history of rhetoric have been able to revise the stases to fit within specific contexts, thus exploiting their malleability. My revision of the stases extends from the work of Fahnestock and Secor (1988).

The outline that I post on my classes webpage acts as both a tool for invention and a map for arrangement. I have included the outline at the end of the essay. The outline guides students through eight stases by engaging the lower stases which involve the descriptive, and definition *topoi*. Stases one and two can also be thought of as general stases because they treat the topic broadly. The third stasis, the thesis statement, informs the audience that the primary purpose of the essay is to argue for a position on the topic. The fourth stasis refines and localizes the topic again revisiting the definition *topos*. Students then progress through the middle stases consisting of the causes of a topic and its effects. When students arrive at these middle stases, causes of an issue and the effects of an issue are discovered. At these stases, competing arguments emerge. Students acknowledge both sides of an issue. This is where student *ethos* is often challenged. The higher stases—six, seven and eight—involve Carter’s notion of language as the center of the rhetorical act. Students are able to determine the probability of conflicting arguments, and develop their own policies by analyzing the language of experts. The way an expert’s argument is structured, an expert’s effective use of Aristotle’s appeals, and whether an expert commits logical fallacies are the three critical analytical and evaluative rhetorics which aid students in determining whether an expert’s argument is probable or improbable. Instead of a student developing an argument influenced by preexisting attitudes or beliefs, theory and practice of the following critical argumentative rhetorics work to establish student *ethos*.

***Analysis and evaluation***—Stephen Toulmin’s “Big 3” as a pattern for analyzing and evaluating arguments has been a beneficial rhetoric. Toulmin uses the terms *claim*, *data* and *warrant*. Claims are concluding statements meriting an argument, data support the claim, and warrants are “...rules, principals, (and) inference licenses...instead of additional items of information” (Barnett). Warrants, differentiated from claims and data, are steps that help establish an appropriate, legitimate claim (Barnett). Toulmin

acknowledges the often trivial aspects of warrants. I can attest to this as students often overlook warrants during class discussion and even in writing. After doing quite a few in-class exercises that involve students finding warrants for existing arguments, I think students often ‘over-think’ warrants. This may explain, in practice, the Toulmanian notion that warrants are often trivial. However, since warrants are implied support for claims developed by students, they can be another tool empowering student *ethos*.

My slight variation on Toulmin’s Big 3 includes substituting the term *backing* for support, and the following enthymeme, with coordinating conjunctions as a way to establish grammar, is an example of a proof:

**Claim 1:** Red Light cameras should be installed at certain intersections in Arnold, MO.

(Because)

**Backing 1:** There are certain intersections in Arnold, MO. where the violation of red light signals has lead to serious accidents

(And)

**Warrant 1:** Serious accidents can cost taxpayers, and the city of Arnold, MO. significantly.

In the classroom, I call this “diagramming an argument.” I have inverted the claim, usually concluding Toulmin’s Big 3, for several reasons. With the claim situated at the top of an enthymeme, it is visually supported by a foundation. The foundation consists of backings, which I define as: data, statistics, reasons or examples that experts use to support a claim. An expert will usually give more than one backing for a claim. Warrants are agreed upon universals, link backings and claims, support a claim, and form the base of an argument. This visual presentation of warrants as the base of an argument is yet another way to establish student *ethos*. Positioning warrants as the base or foundation of an argument is a way to establish voice in student writing. Since students develop warrants and frame them in their own language they bring their own unique voice to the table. I include a student writing example from Sara illustrating this point. Although this particular student is a touch off grammatically in her description of a warrant, I believe her assessment of how the warrant relates to the rest of the expert’s argument is correct.

Because Toulmin’s Big 3 is a tight, succinct, three termed rhetoric, I believe it is useful in practice. Again, audience is key in my approach to teaching argument. Students, as audience members, are required to find several warrants in an expert’s argument. During a discussion designed to teach audience, I partially diagram an argument for the class, and then we break into small groups. These small groups will collaboratively develop two or three warrants to complete an enthymeme. Group volunteers will

approach the whiteboard, and students write grammatically complete sentences describing warrants.

Students evaluate an argument not only through their application of critical rhetorics, but at the level of language. If the enthymeme “flows” grammatically, and if students have little difficulty finding warrants linking claims with backings, then a probable argument exists. If an expert gives more than one backing for a claim, and the backings directly support the claim, then that is another sign an expert’s argument is probable. An arguers’ effective, persuasive use of the appeals needs to be analyzed by students as well. An improbable argument contains insufficient backing, commits logical fallacies, and lacks effective persuasive appeals. Examples of student writing follow in order to demonstrate how students are applying these critical rhetorics.

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**Sarah, Aaron and Hannah-I** obtained permission from three students to use their essays as examples for this article. Out of respect for their anonymity, I will only use their first names. Sarah and Hannah were in a section of second semester comp together, while Aaron was in a separate section of second semester comp. Aaron also took me for first semester comp. He had a quiet way about him, participating in discussion sparingly. He always sat in the back of class with a baseball cap usually tilted sideways. Hannah and Sara both sat on opposite sides of the class in the front row. Sara took a leadership role in her class, and I’ll always be grateful to her for that. Sara and Hanah’s class was one of the few classes I’ve taught that lacked regular participation. The following is an excerpt from an essay Sara wrote on the issue of medicinal marijuana in the state of Missouri:

You could re-phrase here. Remember, you discover warrants in an argument, as opposed to an argument “holding” a warrant. How about, “A warrant for this argument is...”

Representative Flook makes the claim that medicinal marijuana should not be legalized. He backs his claim with another statement saying, “It’s about a party, not about illness” (Swant). He believes that if medicinal marijuana were legal that it would turn into a joke and people would be faking illnesses in order to obtain the drug legally. His argument holds the warrant that the whole purpose of legalizing the medicinal use of marijuana would be compromised by those who do not need the drug to relieve real pains and suffering from true ailments or illnesses. Flook uses the persuasive appeal of pathos, reaching towards the emotions of his audience. If people think that others will start to abuse medicinal marijuana just to get a high, they will feel as though marijuana should stay illegal on all accounts. Representative Flook commits the logical fallacy of having an irrelevant argument. Instead of focusing on abuse that could occur, the argument should focus on whether or not truly sick people should have the option to use medicinal marijuana to relieve them of their symptoms and pains.

As mentioned previously, and noted in her margin, the singular, present tense verb *holds* implies that the argument is doing something. My remark encourages her to think about warrants as an extension of her own thoughts, instead of an expert or an argument ‘holding’ a warrant. Teaching the warrant in this way sees students as audience members, thus encouraging voice. Later in her analysis, she correctly identifies an implied link between Rep. Flook’s quote and her assessment of his position that medicinal marijuana should not be available for Missourians. This link involves her isolation of the pathetic appeal she sees in his argument. An acknowledgement of the fear fallacy implied in Flook’s pathetic appeal may have also strengthened this part of her analysis.

Medicinal marijuana is topical, as evidenced by both Aaron and Hanah’s research. After moving through the lower and middle stases, Aaron

The most practical solution to such a potentially helpful drug would be to legalize medicinal marijuana with the proper requirements and law enforcement. Marijuana should only be used when it is recommended by a doctor and only for medical reasons. This way, this will not impact the youth negatively by having drugs more accessible, but it will help those who truly need it.

arrived at a policy seen in the above excerpt. Below, is Hanah’s policy on the same issue. Both Hanah and Aaron arrive at the same policy claim but give different backings for their claim. Aaron backs his policy claim by reinforcing the potential economic benefits of medicinal marijuana explored earlier in his essay. He contextualizes his backing by appealing to today’s struggling economy and marijuana’s potential to “help.” Hanah discovered websites that she used during the middle “causes and effects of a topic” stases. During these stases, histories and policies of topics are discovered. Arguments before a policy’s institution, and arguments since a policy’s institution are diagrammed and analyzed. These stases can appear in the body of a student’s essay. In Hanah’s essay, she cited websites in the body of her essay which revealed that Missouri has some of the harshest penalties in the nation for individuals who illegally possess marijuana. A particular website mentioned statistics related to the number of individuals incarcerated as the result of either the sale or possession of marijuana. I think it’s important to note Aaron and Hannah had the same policy claim, yet found different backings for their claim. Accordingly, both student’s research



using the stases for invention and arrangement took them in different directions. I think this displays the stases are not just a rote compositional formula yielding homogeneity. When used as a rhetoric of arrangement and invention, the stases are a valuable tool for producing diverse research and writing even when students choose the same topic or the stases aid in arrival at similar policies.

**Assessment-**I believe holistic assessment is a balanced approach generally; for this assignment I focus on student's familiarity with the critical argumentative rhetorics we cover. After all, it's not enough to use the terms. A student's ability to demonstrate the application of these critical argumentative rhetorics is important. For instance, when analyzing a claim, a student must first establish the type of claim an arguer makes (fact, definition, cause, value or policy). Backings for an arguer's claim are analyzed within the context of the type of claim. A specific type of claim calls for corresponding backings. For example, if a student analyzes an expert and determines the expert makes a claim of *fact*, the student will then look for statistics and data to support the factual claim. A claim of *value*, may involve anecdotal backings. Claims of *cause* may involve an arguer's ability to cite historical examples as support. Warrants are then developed by students for an expert's claims/backings. When a student has completed the claims/backings/warrants aspect of analyzing an expert's argument, they have 'diagrammed' an argument. I call this the first set of 'analytical' tools in a student's toolbox.

The second set of analytical tools focuses on the appeals. Students are encouraged to analyze an arguer's persuasiveness based on appeals to speaker credibility, hard data, and not just appeals to the emotions of a specific audience, but the emotions themselves. Is an arguer appealing to fear, anger, frustration, empathy/sympathy, nationalism, etc.?

Logical fallacies make up a student's third set of analytical tools. Although scholarship is divided on whether fallacies should be taught, many Comp. textbooks contain at least seven or eight fallacies. I teach fallacies for two main reasons. First, students are able to recognize the fallacies in examples I use; for instance, stereotyping, generalizing, post hoc reasoning, and red herrings. Second, fallacies are committed so often, by so many of us, that they are almost at the unconscious level. When recognized and exposed, the fallacies can help us in our own reasoning.

After the student has used all three sets of critical tools-in the *analytical* phase-I look for students to widen their focus and *evaluate* an expert's argument. I look to see if, after a student diagrammed an argument, they commented on the argument's plausibility. Second, after noting the type of appeals an arguer makes, are the appeals effective? Why or why not? Finally, if logical fallacies are committed, how and where are they made?

**Conclusion-**Digital texts, writing and researching in digital environments, critical argumentative rhetorics, and local issues all intersect in this assignment. By carefully choosing the proper rhetorics, and research approaches for this assignment, I believe I have aided students in the critical awareness of local issues. As demonstrated by examples of student writing, and after leading class discussions for the last several years, the assignment has seen the understanding and subsequent application of critical argumentative rhetorics in essays. Since this assignment can often involve controversial issues, which can arouse emotion, I try very hard to keep my own personal opinions about these issues to myself. Remaining objective is important for me in this assignment. What is of utmost importance, however, is challenging students to produce critical argumentative writing and encouraging the discussion of local issues at the highest level possible. I feel after teaching and assessing this assignment for the last several years, I have made significant progress toward achieving this primary goal.

## Endnotes

The outline appearing below is based on the stases. Ideas located under roman numerals can be placed at certain points in the essay. For instance, questions under roman numerals I and II could be used to generate ideas for the essay's introduction. Roman numeral III could be the thesis statement. Questions under roman numerals IV, V, and VI, could help with the essay's body and roman numerals VII and VIII could be used for a conclusion. The thesis statement should be the last sentence of the first paragraph, and should convey a clear sense of purpose. An example of a thesis statement for this research paper could be, "Topic X will be explored in this essay and current debate among experts associated with this issue will also be considered to suggest a course of action that should be taken concerning topic X."

I Topic (Mention the topic in the *introduction*)

- a. What is my topic?
- b. Have I articulated my topic clearly without grammatical errors?

II Define the Topic (Define the topic in the *introduction*)

- a. Have I started with a general definition?
- b. Could my topic be compared and/or contrasted to another topic?
- c. Have I consulted my textbooks and/or notes for other suggestions on how to define something
- d. If I use a source to help define my issue, have I cited my source?

III Thesis Statement (Have I placed my thesis statement at the end of my *introduction* paragraph?)



- a. Have I consulted suggestions at the top of this document and in my texts concerning thesis statements?

IV Develop an Operational Definition the Topic (The operational definition may appear in the *body*)

- a. Have I narrowed my definition?
- b. How is my topic defined locally
- c. Who is effected by my topic?
- d. Is this topic defined different ways in different places?
- e. Have I included plenty of facts concerning my topic that will help my audience understand my definition

V. Causes of the Topic (Include causes of my topic in the *body*)

- a. What is the history of my topic?
- b. Where did my topic originate?
- c. Who or What organization was instrumental in creating this topic?

VI. Effects of the Topic (Include effects of my topic in the *body*)

- a. Since my topic came into being, how has it effected individuals?
- b. Has my topic effected individuals differently in different areas?
- c. Has considerable attention been give to my topic since it began?
- d. Who is qualified to give expert testimony on this topic?
- e. Since this topic appeared, how has it been debated. What is the tone of the debate?
- f. Who are the experts discussing this issue, and what are their arguments?
- g. Have I diagrammed these expert's arguments?
- h. Have I evaluated these experts arguments?
- i. Have I cited expert testimony properly in my essay and in a works cited page?

VII Current Policy on the Topic (This could be the beginning of the *conclusion*)

- a. Review the operational definition here
- b. If my issue is tied to legal statutes, what are laws and consequences for breaking laws associated with my topic?
- c. Who initiated current policy? Was this policy voted on? Who voted on it? Will it be voted on soon?
- d. Who does current policy effect? Who is exempt? Who enforces this policy? Who, if anyone, reviews this policy?

VIII Future Policy on the Topic (This could be the *conclusion*)

- a. Have I reviewed my expert's arguments to help articulate MY position on this topic?
- b. What is my argument. Have I stated a claim, backed my claim, and mentioned warrants?
- Finally, should current policy be continued, eliminated, expanded or reduced? And why?

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# **HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE GHANAIAIN MEDIA: A PRELIMINARY SURVEY**

*Charles Quist-Adade, PhD*

*Faith Bates*

*Nubwa Wathanafa*

Kwantlen Polytechnic University

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## **Abstract**

This paper examines how homosexuality is represented in the Ghanaian media. More specifically, it focuses on newspaper articles from *GhanaWeb* for the years 2008 - 2011. This research discusses the prevalence of negative stereotypes about homosexuality in the Ghanaian media, and reveals the ways in which the type of language used by the Ghanaian media stigmatizes, dehumanizes, and others the homosexual population. This paper argues that homosexual stereotypes are prevalent in Ghana, and that these stereotypes are reflected in the Ghanaian media. It suggests that it is essential for Ghanaian media to portray homosexuality in a holistic manner in order to debunk stereotypes and myths regarding homosexuality. It focused on attitudes toward homosexuality as presented in the Ghanaian media and not the media (e.g. editors', reporters') attitudes toward homosexuality.

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**Keywords:** Homosexuality, Ghana, media, gay, lesbian, Africa

## **Introduction**

Under Ghanaian criminal law, same-sex sexual activity among males is illegal. It is uncertain whether same-sex sexual activity among females is illegal. Under the chapter 6 of the Criminal Code, 1960, as amended by The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 2003, homosexuality is punishable by law. In fact, the Ghanaian constitution criminalizes homosexual coital activity (<http://www.politicsresources.net/docs/ghanaconst.pdf>). Chapter 6 of the Criminal Code, 1960, as amended by The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 2003, provides:

Section 104. Unnatural Carnal Knowledge.

(1) Whoever has unnatural carnal knowledge : (a) of any person of the age of sixteen years or over without his consent shall be guilty of a first degree felony and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than five years and not more than twenty-five years; or

(b) of any person of sixteen years or over with his consent is guilty of a misdemeanour....

(2) Unnatural carnal knowledge is sexual intercourse with a person in an unnatural manner..

Under Section 99, "unnatural carnal knowledge shall be deemed complete upon proof of the least degree of penetration".(<http://www.refugeelegalaidinformation.org/ghana-lgbti-resources>)

According to Section 296 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which applies because of Section 1 of the Criminal Code, a misdemeanour is punishable by imprisonment for not more than three years.

The constitution, though, is silent on sexual activity between females and homosexuality is restricted to only male-to-male "carnal knowledge". Other members of the GBLT community are not mentioned. But, Section 12(2) of Chapter 5 of the Constitution of Ghana guarantees all residents in Ghana their fundamental human rights. It states:, "Every person in Ghana, whatever his race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, religion, creed or gender shall be entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual contained in this Chapter but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT\\_rights\\_in\\_Ghana#cite\\_note-1A](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_rights_in_Ghana#cite_note-1A) recent Pew survey of various countries, not all African, reveals that 98 percent of Ghanaians feel that homosexuality is "morally unacceptable," the highest percentage of any country surveyed.

How are homosexuality and homosexuals portrayed by the Ghanaian media? "Everybody in Africa is mad because gay people demand to recognize simply as people," writes Joseph Osei Oppong Brenya, a columnist on **GhanaWeb** (See Appendix B). In a report by Joy Online, Ghana's Minister of Justice, Marietta Appiah Oppong, stated categorically that Ghana's constitution did not recognize gay rights, and asked all who believe in the rights of gays to proceed to the Supreme Court for interpretation. Oppong's view of the law, according to the report, contrasts sharply with the view of the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Nana Oye Lithur, who does not support the practice of homosexuality but is convinced that gay rights, and the rights of all other Ghanaians, are guaranteed by the constitution and must be protected (<http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=264400>). The report captures the tone of discourse on homosexuality in the Ghanaian media: While the contrasting views expressed by the two government officials strike a balance on pro-gay and anti-gay views in the discourse of homosexuality, the Ghanaian media tends to tilt heavily towards anti-gay discourse during the period under review.

This research seeks to explore the different attitudes for and against homosexuality in Ghana as reflected in the Ghanaian media. This preliminary research not only focuses on the media's depiction of homosexuality as expressed in general public discourse, but also seeks to unravel how the power elite—political, economic, cultural, and ideological leaders—in Ghana use the news media to construct and depict homosexuality. The aim is to gain a deeper understanding and to investigate the challenges of homosexuality in Ghana. The intent of the research is to consider how the power elite deploy the media to engage people in regards to issues of homosexuality. More specifically, the research investigates and analyzes homosexuality with respect to human rights, religion, homophobia, and HIV/AIDS by examining articles published in the *GhanaWeb*.

## Background

A report published by a team of scientists appointed by the Ugandan government asserted that:

Sex is a natural phenomenon in all life forms and is the basis for the reproduction and continuum of life, though some lower forms of life may have asexual reproduction. Sexuality is determined by biology (anatomy, physiology, biochemistry) and how one relates to others which is a function of psychology, sociology, and the culture in which one lives, the latter includes anthropology, religion and other environmental factors. Ultimately, these functions are determined by genes and their interactions with the environment. What, therefore, constitutes normal sexual behavior in any given society (learned sexual practices) is a function of one's biology, psychology, sociology and culture, the last three being dynamic and often changing. Sexuality, on the other hand, depends on four interrelated factors:

- i) sexual identity (XX or XY karyotype that will determine the sex phenotype),
- ii) gender identity (the psychological feeling of being male or female and the accompanying gender roles),
- iii) sexual orientation (one's inner sexual attraction impulses: heterosexual - to opposite sex, or homosexual - to same sex),
- iv) sexual response (desire, excitement, orgasm, resolution.

(See Smith, 2014,

p.1 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/23/africa-homophobia-uganda-anti-gay-law>)

The report goes on to state that:

Homosexual behavior has existed throughout human history including in Africa. Judeo-Christian religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) condemn it but not all religions of the world condemn it. Many

Western-based evangelistic missionaries and Arabs penetrated Africa and influenced her people with their views on homosexuality. This continues today. However, different cultures practice their sexualities differently and these practices have often changed with times” (p.2).

For the scientists, homosexuality existed in Africa long before the coming of the white man. However, most African cultures controlled sexual practices, be they heterosexual or homosexual, and never allowed exhibitionistic sexual behavior. Almost universally, they contained homosexual practices to such a point that overt homosexuality was almost unheard of. Indeed, there are undeclared homosexuals in Africa who may not even realize it because their cultures never give room for the expression of such behavior. Many sexually inactive individuals exist throughout African societies, but no one has done any study to unpack their sexual orientations. The present fad of sexual exhibitionism, both heterosexual and homosexual, is alien and repugnant to most African cultures.

Sylvia Tamale, a lecturer at Makerere University in Uganda, notes that “the sad, tired, but widely accepted myth that homosexuality is un-African has been valorized and erected on the altar of falsehood time after time,” adding that “it is a myth that has been played out in numerous contexts, most recently over the debate on Uganda’s anti-homosexuality bill.” Tamale (2014) goes on to debunk the myth. She explains that the “homosexuality is un-African” myth is anchored on an old practice of selectively invoking African culture by the power elite, particularly the political elite. Tamale observes that “African women are familiar with the mantra “It is un-African” whenever they assert their rights, particularly those rights that involve reproductive autonomy and sexual sovereignty” (p.1). She notes that the mistaken claim that anything is un-African is based on the essentialist assumption that Africa is a homogeneous entity and insists that “In reality, however, Africa is made up of thousands of ethnic groups with rich and diverse cultures and sexualities.” She debunks the notion of a monolithic African culture. “As appealing as the notion of African culture may be to some people, no such thing exists. Moreover, even if we wanted to imagine an authentic African culture, like all others, it would not be static” (p.1).

Tamale (2014) goes on to note that African history is full of cases of both erotic and non-erotic same-sex relationships, citing the ancient cave paintings of the San people near Guruve in Zimbabwe, which depict two men engaged in some form of ritual sex. In precolonial times, Tamale (2014) notes, the “mudoko dako,” or effeminate males, among the Langi of northern Uganda were treated as women and could marry men. In Buganda, one of the largest traditional kingdoms in Uganda, it was an open secret that Kabaka (king) Mwanga II, who ruled in the latter half of the 19th century, was gay

(p.1). She buttresses her argument by referring to the vocabulary used to describe same-sex relations in traditional languages that predate colonialism. For example, the Shangaan of southern Africa referred to same-sex relations as “inkotshane” (male-wife); Basotho women in present-day Lesotho engage in socially sanctioned erotic relationships called “motsoalle” (special friend); and in the Wolof language, spoken in Senegal, homosexual men are known as “gor-digen” (men-women). But Tamale (2014) was quick to add that “the context and experiences of such relationships did not necessarily mirror homosexual relations as understood in the West, nor were they necessarily consistent with what we now describe as a gay or queer identity” (p.1), stating that:

Same-sex relationships in Africa were far more complex than what the champions of the “un-African” myth would have us believe. Apart from erotic same-sex desire, in precolonial Africa, several other activities were involved in same-sex (or what the colonialists branded “unnatural”) sexuality. For example, the Ndebele and Shona in Zimbabwe, the Azande in Sudan and Congo, the Nupe in Nigeria and the Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi all engaged in same-sex acts for spiritual rearmament — i.e., as a source of fresh power for their territories. It was also used for ritual purposes. Among various communities in South Africa, sex education among adolescent peers allowed them to experiment through acts such as “thigh sex” (“hlobonga” among the Zulu, “ukumetsha” among the Xhosa and “gangisa” among the Shangaan) (Tamale, 2014, p.1).

Tamale (2014) also explores the spiritual and magical significance of homosexuality in African cultures to further debunk the same-sex-relationships-are-un-African argument. She notes that in many African societies,

...same-sex sexuality was also believed to be a source of magical powers to guarantee bountiful crop yields and abundant hunting, good health and to ward off evil spirits. In Angola and Namibia, for instance, a caste of male diviners — known as “zvibanda,” “chibados,” “quimbanda,” “gansas” and “kibambaa” — were believed to carry powerful female spirits that they would pass on to fellow men through anal sex (p.2).

Tamale (2014) cites contemporary examples of same-sex relationships in several African traditional societies as further proof that homosexuality is not un-African, as anti-gay proponents claim. She writes:

Even today, marriages between women for reproductive, economic and diplomatic reasons still exist among the Nandi



and Kisii of Kenya, the Igbo of Nigeria, the Nuer of Sudan and the Kuria of Tanzania. Like elsewhere around the world, anal intercourse between married opposite-sex partners to avoid pregnancy was historically practiced by many Africans before the invention of modern contraceptive methods (p.2).

For Tamale (2014), it is not homosexuality that is un-African, but rather the laws that criminalized such relationships:

...what is alien to the continent is legalized homophobia, exported to Africa by the imperialists where there had been indifference to and even tolerance of same-sex relations. In Uganda such laws were introduced by the British and have been part of our penal law since the late 19th century. The current wave of anti-homosexuality laws sweeping across the continent is therefore part of a thinly veiled and wider political attempt to entrench repressive and undemocratic regimes” (ibid.).

Tamale (2014) argues that the anti-gay ethos in Africa should be blamed on European and Arabic colonialism and proselytization, writing:

Equally alien to the continent are the Abrahamic religions (particularly Christianity and Islam) that often accompany and augment the “un-African” arguments against homosexuality. African traditional religions were (and still are) integrated into the people’s holistic and everyday existence. It was intricately tied to their culture, including sexuality. With the new religions, many sexual practices that were acceptable in precolonial, pre-Islamic and pre-Christian Africa were encoded with tags of “deviant,” “illegitimate” and “criminal” through the process of proselytization and acculturation. It is ironic that an African dictator wearing a three-piece suit, caressing an iPhone, speaking in English and liberally quoting the Bible can dare indict anything for being un-African (ibid.).

## Literature Review

A review of the literature addressing homosexuality in Ghana reveals explanations that generally fit into two categories: Social and political (Tester & McNicoll, 2004). Both of these categories typically focus on how information regarding homosexuality is provided to the public. Content analysis helps examine how the media determines the quantity and quality that is reported on sexuality, sexual health, and sexual rights (S/SH/SR). It also focuses on the extent to which the media contributes to misinformation and negative condemnations, and how the media uses images and language

to promote or devalue issues regarding sexuality (Akinfeleye, 2006). Studies indicate that the media has the power to influence peoples' perspectives on controversial issues. They also have the ability to reinforce stereotypes, making it difficult for individuals to gain informed options (Bangwayo-Skeete & Zikhali, 2011).

According to report in the *Pambazuka News*, a team of top scientists appointed by the government of Uganda to give an opinion on homosexuality declared unequivocally that sexual orientation is natural and has existed in Africa and everywhere in the world since time immemorial. Yet, extant research suggests that homophobia is a major problem in African societies. In fact, some writers have described Africa as having the most homophobic societies in the world (See Smith, 2014 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/23/africa-homophobia-uganda-anti-gay-law>).

Same-sex relations are illegal in 36 of Africa's 55 countries, according to Amnesty International, and are punishable by death in some states. Now a wholesale anti-gay crackdown appears to be taking off. Recent political pronouncements and legislative decisions in several African countries, including Uganda, Nigeria, and Gambia, overwhelmingly condemn and outlaw homosexuality. Al Jazeera reports that Kenya, Tanzania, Cameroon, and Sierra Leone have all expressed the desire to emulate Uganda and Nigeria. At least 38 African countries already proscribe consensual same-sex behavior (<http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/4/homosexuality-africamuseveniugandanigeriaethiopia.html>).

In February 2014, the Ugandan Legislative Assembly voted to criminalize homosexuality. In January, Nigerian president Goodluck Jonathan signed into law a bill criminalizing same-sex "amorous relationships" and membership of LGBT rights groups. Last week Gambian president Yahya Jammeh declared: "We will fight these vermins called homosexuals or gays the same way we are fighting malaria-causing mosquitoes, if not more aggressively."

Studies demonstrate multiple strains and repercussions which stem from social, cultural, religious, and political factors, and which together work to repress same-sex discourse in Ghana (Essien & Aderinto, 2009). This "new wave of homophobic expression that ensued is partly a product of the new globalization and also a manifestation of the clash between what is considered 'African' and 'un-African' social and sexual behaviour" (ibid., p.121). This notion illustrates how Western societies and African societies differ in their views regarding acceptable sexual behaviour.

Numerous studies also indicate that the government of Ghana and its religious institutions do not identify homosexuality as a human rights issue.

Instead, they perceive homosexuality as a form of “sexual colonialism” or Western ethnocentrism. These beliefs are associated to a host of ideologies structured along the lines of religious, moral, and cultural boundaries (Essien & Aderinto, 2009). For many Ghanaians, especially several government officials, homosexuality is an aberration, not “natural,” and a cultural taboo. In fact, consensual homosexual behaviour is criminalized across the continent (Murray & Viljue, 2007). Since homosexuality is illegal and perceived as going against Ghanaian cultural values, elite discourse on sexuality is replete with gay-bashing as Ghanaian leaders freely employ homophobic and heterosexist language in their discussions of issues regarding homosexuality. Gays and lesbians are frequently stigmatized and devalued as less than human. Elite media discourse spins a web of stereotypes around homosexuals, in particular, and GLBT in general. With almost complete absence of counter-hegemonic discourse to check the straightjacket of homophobic and heterosexist portrayal of gays, lesbians, and other sexual minorities in the media, it is hardly surprising that public attitudes towards gays and lesbians are largely negative. Such attitudes portend to threaten human rights of sexual minorities, which includes their right to freedom of expression, the right to equality and dignity, and the right to having one's identity respected (Reddy, 2002).

Like most constitutions in Africa, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights does not uphold the rights of GLBT identity. Furthermore, the issue of sexual orientation is not a priority for the African Commission, despite the tremendous violation against gays and lesbians. Although the African Charter does not specify the rights of gays and lesbians, it does include a broad range of civil, political, social, cultural, and individual rights that are said to be protected. Thus, one can conclude that homosexual rights fall within its umbrella, as the document is considered to be a living document and purports to be adaptable to change. Moreover, criminalizing consensual same-sex relationships can be deemed as violating the rights of and respect for human integrity and social identity (Murray & Viljue, 2007). When these elements are not understood as fundamental components of an individual's life, they result in an erosion of the sense of belonging of sexual minorities (Goodwill & McCormick, 2012).

Identity and culture are important components in terms of finding one's place in society. (Tester & McNicoll, 2004). Intense external pressure from the Ghanaian power elite, the media, and society as a whole has alienated, devalued, criminalized, and pathologized the homosexual community (Kirmayer, 2007). This pressure has created profound consequences for gays and lesbians. In order to explain the importance of belonging and self-worth, scholars of sexuality often use social identity theory to explain how it is necessary for homosexuals to be recognized

asworthy individuals. In addition, social identity theory predicts the challenges of identity between different sexual orientation, especially when one is classified as a majority, and how this can be problematic for gays and lesbians due to the conflicting values, norms, and moralsofGhanaian culture. Social identity theory also supports the concept thathomosexualsare generally suppressed and thus often struggle to find ways of integrating into Ghanaian society (Goodwill & McCormick, 2012).

When one evaluates social identity theory in relation to the Ghanaian media, one may conclude that the media haspersuasive functions in terms of how homosexuals are identified in the public realm. The media also has the power to affect their sense of belonging within Ghanaian society. In other words, the media has the ability to alienate homosexuals from society and to devalue their self-worth. Ultimately, the media can represent and manipulate homosexuality in a manner that allows for stereotypes and biases to proliferate (Akinfeleye, 2006).

## Methodology

The purpose of this study was to understand the representation of the homosexuals in the Ghanaian media. A cross-sectional sample of 42 newspaper articles from *GhanaWeb* spanning from 2008 - 2011 was collected in order to offer a holistic selection of media representations of homosexuality. (*GhanaWeb* is an online news portal which serves as repository and clearing house for current news from the major news outlets in Ghana. It carries and publishes opinion and analytical articles from freelance writers and bloggers, and prints interviews from the major radio and television stations in the country). These years were chosen due to the high number of articles that were available for the research. The search terms for this research were “homosexual,” “gay,” “lesbian,” and “media.” In searching *GhanaWeb*, the news archive function was used, and the search terms were taken into account with dates and categories, which included news, sports, business, entertainment, and opinions. Mixed methods were used in data collection. The total population of the articles from 2008 and 2009 were used, due to their limited number, and a convenience sample was used for the years 2010 and 2011, in which a random quantity of articles, six for 2010 and 12 for 2011, was also utilized. The study focused on attitudes toward homosexuality as presented in the Ghanaian media and not the media (e.g. editors’, reporters’) attitudes toward homosexuality. The articles included commentaries and views of Ghanaians, including Christian ministers, pastors and opinion leaders toward homosexuality in Ghana.

The method of research was content analysis, which refers to a method of summarizing content by grouping it based on various aspects. Considered a secondary type of data analysis, content analysis looks at data

that has been collected by someone else and is therefore subject to the biases that the original person had when creating the data. It also refers to the “systematic examination of written text” (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2010, p. 232), but offers much more than that. It presents a way of looking at many different samples of material and making some comparable and interesting connections, or lack thereof, of different ideas or patterns of findings. Content analysis is a useful tool as a qualitative research method because of its non-intrusive nature. With content analysis, we can add to what we already know without any potential harm to participants or the researcher.

The newspaper’s articles were coded utilizing five specific topics: The source/columnist, the headline of the article, the number of words in the article, the date of the article, and whether the article had a positive or negative connotation regarding homosexuality. Quantitative results were produced using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), and qualitative results were created by putting the articles into the themes of human rights, religion, homophobia, and HIV/AIDS. These themes were then analyzed.

Utilizing the entire population of the newspaper articles allowed the researcher to obtain a complete trend of the types of subjects that the media was writing about in the selected date span. One criticism that needs to be considered when using specific keywords is the biases that are inherent to the sampling procedure. By limiting our research to the four key search terms, the results will be reflective of only those terms. Since the entire population of newspaper articles was used for this research, it can be seen as representative of the media’s perspective of homosexuality on the Ghanaian media. This is considered acceptable because of the very nature of qualitative research. One uses qualitative research to understand a particular phenomenon, and is cognizant of the systematic bias that is apparent with the sample procedure as well as the sample size.

The research was separated into the five different categories based on the particular subject matter of the article. This allowed for a comparison of the topics that were being discussed with overall topics, as well as the subtopics that were pervasive throughout.

One of the major considerations that every research project needs to contemplate is ethics. In qualitative research, the samples usually include human participants, and the well-being and anonymity of the participants need to be forefront in the research. Principles, such as honestly representing the data, striving to maintain objectivity, and by doing so, maintaining the integrity of the research, are important in all research, including content analysis. As noted above, content analysis is considered to be secondary data analysis, and the issue of ethics does not need to be the main consideration (Glesne, 2011). That is not to say that ethics are completely absent from this research; rather, it is to say that because the articles used as

samples were in the public domain and available to everyone, there would be very little chance of a breach. Another consideration is the researcher's personal biases while conducting the research. In this research, many topics were discussed, so maintaining objectivity was incredibly important. By using the entire population in newspaper articles, the researcher was able to eliminate the potential bias of only picking articles that may have promoted the researcher's point of view (Glesne, 2011).

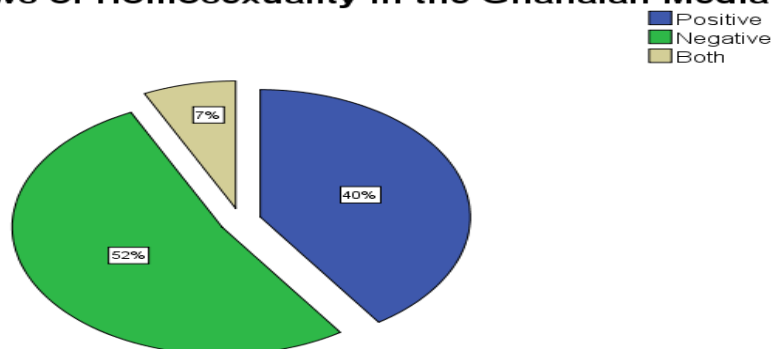
One of the major limitations of this research was the inability to use any method other than content analysis. Due to the specifics of this class, it was the only available option. A way of increasing the verification of the research would have been to use triangulation, which involves using multiple research methods as a way of gaining more supportable research. For example, it would have been beneficial to interview different media representatives, such as reporters, editors, and even the general public, to see if the media representations of homosexuality are accurately portrayed in the articles that are being written (Glesne, 2011).

### Findings and Analysis

When the data was analyzed, it was found that with a small majority, 52% (n = 22), the media representations of homosexuality in the Ghanaian media held negative views. A further 40% (n = 17) held positive views, and 7% (n = 3) held both positive and negative views of homosexuality.

Figure 1

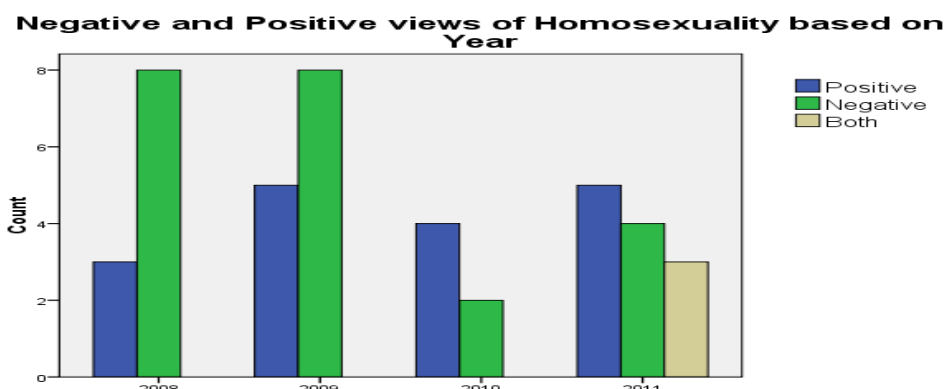
**Views of Homosexuality in the Ghanaian Media**



This suggests that although the majority of views regarding homosexuality within the Ghanaian media are negative, there is a smaller but equally important percentage of positive views. In a large majority, 92%, the media reflects a strong view of homosexuality. It is only in a very small number of articles that both sides are portrayed with equal consideration.

In coding the articles with SPSS, a trend developed. As shown in Figure 2, the articles in 2008, a large majority (n=8) were found to be negative. This is in direct comparison to the negative articles in 2011, with the result being much lower (n=4). For the first time in 2011, the articles show an unbiased approach the topic of homosexuality (n=3).

Figure 2



While the number of positive views has remained fairly steady over the past four years, the results show a continual and substantial decrease in the amount of negative views. The political pressure being placed upon Ghanaian leaders, as reflected through the media, may be the cause of this decrease. Articles such as “No Gay Rights, No Foreign Aid - Obama” (*GhanaWeb*, 2011) emphasize the importance of global human rights in relation to the aid that Western states will offer. This aid is provisional if sexual orientation is valued as a human right under the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, Article 2, which states:

Every individual shall be entitled to the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms recognized and guaranteed in the present Charter without distinction of any kind such as race, ethnic group, color, sex, language, religion, political or any other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or other status (African (Banjul) Charter on Human and People's Rights, 1986).

In this article, “sex” should be interpreted to include sexual orientation, because it is important for the document to address issues that respond to the changing circumstances and the lack of respect towards homosexuality as a violation of human dignity and freedom (Murray & Viljue, 2007).

The data demonstrate that although there is a downward trend in the amount of negative views towards homosexuality, negativity continues to be prevalent. This could be associated with the ways in which religious



institutions often denounce any attempts for individuals and/or groups to promote sexual orientations as a human right. Furthermore, “[the church] said homosexuality was not only an abomination before God but also a threat to the moral and spiritual foundation of the society” (*GhanaWeb*, 2010). This statement illustrates the failure of homophobic religious leaders to establish adequate visions for a positive discourse on homosexuality (Essien & Aderinto, 2009).

The negativity in the majority of the articles also suggests that stereotypes about homosexuality are common, especially in regards to HIV/AIDS. For example, “if you ask the majority of the people how the HIV virus originated many would point their fingers to the homosexuals in society, Bible verses would be quoted stating how God detest homosexuals and that's why he has made his disapproval known by plaguing them with this deadly virus” (*GhanaWeb*, 2009). The belief that the incidence of HIV/AIDS is higher among homosexuals is a common misconception among Ghanaians. Studies have demonstrated that this claim is false due to the lack of scientific evidence. It is worth noting that not all Ghanaians believed this myth to be true; many supported sexual freedom of homosexuals as a democratic principle that is rooted in Pan-Africanism (Essien & Aderinto, 2009).

## Conclusion

Our research has clearly shown that there is an overtly negative stigma attached to homosexuality in the Ghanaian media, but it has also shown there has been a slight shift in thinking. Although most of the articles include negative connotations of homosexuality, there is a push towards changing that. The media has been proven to be a powerful tool in influencing the way people think or see things, and its negative categorization of a whole population can be destructive for that population. The media in Ghana has been using terms such as “plague,” “epidemic,” and “blasphemous” to describe the gay population. These terms are damaging, as they present the homosexual community as a group of people who are sick and sinful. To present people who are homosexual in this way makes it seem as though the gay and lesbian population has to be eradicated, or that they have to be cured from the “disease” of homosexuality. Words are powerful instruments, and there is no question that the description of homosexual populations in the Ghanaian media has to be changed in order to prevent discriminatory behaviour against homosexuals in Ghana. Another important finding is that the Ghanaian media tend to conflate the term “homosexual” with “GLBT,” or use them as synonyms, hence the former was sparsely deployed in the Ghanaian media during the period under review.



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## **Appendix A**

Coding for Ghana Research Project: Year 2008 - Faith

Source/Columnist: Ghanaian Times

Headline: Police in sex scandal

Approximant # of words: 595

Date: December 19 2008

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Gyan, Eric

Headline: HIV in our Campus

Approximant # of words: 1,097

Date: December 1 2008

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Agboka, Godwin Yaw

Headline: A society of criminals: Deconstructing our Prisons

Approximant # of words: 1,751

Date: November 18 2008

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: ADM

Headline: Drugs and Homosexuality in Ghanaian Prisons

Approximant # of words: 441

Date: November 18 2008

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: musah@africanewsanalysis.com

Headline: Pay just price for raw materials produced by Africa

Approximant # of words: 311

Date: September 30 2008

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: GNA

Headline: GES reiterates its serious concern about occultism in schools

Approximant # of words: 263

Date: August 29 2008

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: The Mirror

Headline: Male Prostitutes practice openly in Accra

Approximant # of words: 690

Date: June 29 2008

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Afreh, Manu Bernard

Headline: Kwaku Bonsam and acts dressed in feathered gown

Approximant # of words: 1,269

Date: May 21 2008

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: GNA

Headline: Government urged to improve on Human Rights

Approximant # of words: 560

Date: May 7 2008

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: GNA

Headline: Kumasi Catholic Archdiocese gets new Archbishop

Approximant # of words: 379

Date: May 3 2008

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: pinknews

Headline: Ghanaian delegation attends African Lesbian Conference

Approximant # of words: 278

Date: February 28 2008

Positive/Negative: Positive

Coding for Ghana Research Project: Year 2009 - Andrea

Source/Columnist: The Speculator

Headline: Managers, policemen were clients - Gay Prostitute

Approximant # of words: 850

Date: December 20, 2009

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: GNA

Headline: Churches asked to stop demanding HIV/AIDS test before marriage

Approximant # of words: 314

Date: November 24, 2009

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Biakoye, Nana

Headline: 30 Press Conferences in 10 Months

Approximant # of words: 665

Date: December 1, 2009

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Wellington, Naa

Headline: The Effects of Globalization on the Ghanaian Child

Approximant # of words: 2,026

Date: September 22, 2009

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Graphic

Headline: Ghana's Challenges With Homosexuality

Approximant # of words: 1,743

Date: September 15, 2009

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: GNA

Headline: “Telephone sex” prevailing in second cycle schools

Approximant # of words: 535

Date: July 11, 2009

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Ghanaian Times

Headline: Homosexuality is an abomination – Rev.

Approximant # of words: 535

Date: July 9, 2009

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: MP

Headline: When Silence Becomes Death

Approximant # of words: 535

Date: June 1, 2009

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: GNA

Headline: Christianity is not only about singing, prayers and sermons

Approximant # of words: 161

Date: May 13, 2009

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Karikari, Isaac

Headline: Before “Sakawa”: Tracing the Origins of the Youth’s Involvement in the Occult

Approximant # of words: 1,260

Date: May 5, 2009

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: The Stateman

Headline: Gay And Lesbian Club On Legon Campus

Approximant # of words: 521

Date: April 2, 2009

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Unknown

Headline: The Slow ‘Death’ of Ghanaian Cultural Values

Approximant # of words: 1,300



Date: February 12, 2009  
Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: GNA  
Headline: Ministry to train staff of Training Colleges  
Approximant # of words: 330  
Date: February 8, 2009  
Positive/Negative: Negative

Content Analysis: Coding for Ghana Research Project: Year 2010 - Jethro

Source/Columnist: Ghana Web  
Headline: The Woes Of A Lesbian Ghanaian Woman  
Approximate # of Words: 591  
Date: 28 August 2010  
Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Ghana Web  
Headline: GEC condemns attempts to promote homosexuality  
Approximate # of Words: 421  
Date: Sunday, 8 August 2010  
Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Ghana Web  
Headline: Gays have rights, they must be respected  
Approximate # of Words: 849  
Date: Friday, 18 June 2010  
Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Citifmonline.com  
Headline: Thousands Attend First Anti-gay Protests In Ghana  
Approximate # of Words: 497  
Date: Friday, 4 June 2010  
Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Daily Guide  
Headline: Gays, Lesbians Go Gospel  
Approximate # of Words: 645  
Date: Friday, 28 May 2010  
Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: CitiFM

Headline: Ghana's laws do not prohibit homosexuality - Law lecturer

Approximate # of Words: 557

Date: Friday, 14 May 2010

Positive/Negative: negative

Content Analysis: Coding for Ghana Research Project: Year 2011- Sonal

Source/Columnist: Nketia, Seth

Headline: No Grounds for Homosexuality, lesbianism in Ghana

Approximate # of Words: 1,219

Date: June 11 2011

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: citifmonline

Headline: There is no Justification for homosexuality-Methodist Bishop

Approximate # of Words: 551

Date: June 09 2011

Positive/Negative: both

Source/Columnist: Karikari, Isaac

Headline: Homosexuality in Ghana: Senior High Schools-The Real Hotspots?

Approximate # of Words: 738

Date: June 09. 2011

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Star Observer

Headline: World News: Ghana Orders the Arrest of All Homosexuals

Approximate # of Words: 231

Date: July 21 2011

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Amnesty International

Headline: AI Condemns Comments by Ghanaian Minister

Approximate # of Words: 541

Date: July 27 2011

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: citifmonline

Headline: Ghanaians are Hypocrites-University Don Bares Teeth

Approximate # of Words: 267

Date: November 4 2011

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Various

Headline: No Gay Rights, No Foreign Aid- Obama

Approximate # of Words: 209

Date: December 6 2011

Positive/Negative: positive

Source/Columnist: citifmonline

Headline: Nana Oye Lithur: Gays Have Rights & Must Be Respected

Approximate # of Words: 312

Date: November 4 2011

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: LGBT Asylum News

Headline: Gay Community Fights Government Attack

Approximate # of Words: 1,335

Date: August 6 2011

Positive/Negative: both

Source/Columnist: pinknews

Headline: Ghana Gay Rights Leader Urges UK Not To Cut Aid

Approximate # of Words: 313

Date: October 12 2011

Positive/Negative: Positive

Source/Columnist: Xinhua

Headline: British PM Under Attack in Ghana

Approximate # of Words: 635

Date: November 2 2011

Positive/Negative: Negative

Source/Columnist: Adom News

Headline: 3% of Ghanaians are Homosexuals

Approximate # of Words: 242

Date: November 4 2011

Positive/Negative: both

## **Appendix B**

Homosexuality discussed in Ghana

I will reform gay Andrew Solomon - Foh Amoaning (2013-02-12)

Andrew Solomon is doing more harm to Mahama (2013-02-11)

Andrew Solomon wants Mahama to take a lead role in promoting gay rights (2013-02-10)

Prez. Mahama is too liberal on homosexuality- Sammy Awuku (2013-02-07)

Constitution frowns upon gay rights- Justice Minister-designate (2013-02-07)

Oye Lithur supported gay marriage- Ayikoi Otoo (2013-02-06)

Amofo Yeboah declares support for gay rights (2013-02-06)

Mahama's friendship with gay doesn't make him one - Ken Agyapong (2013-02-05)

Forces behind homosexuality are strong- Foh-Amoaning (2013-02-05)

Is homosexuality the biggest immoral act in Ghana? Akomfrah asks (2013-02-03)

Ayariga 'lied' about Mahama's links with gay lobbyist Andrew Solomon (2013-02-03)

Mahama must emulate Mills and stop encouraging "dirty acts" – P.C. Appiah Ofori (2013-02-02)

There is no law on homosexuality in Ghana - Ndebugri (2013-02-02)

Mahama did not receive cash from gay activist- Ayariga (2013-02-02)

Parliament has betrayed Ghanaians - Concerned Clergy (2013-02-02)

Even animals have rights why not gays - Joseph Yamin (2013-02-02)

President Mahama speaks: Homosexuality is criminal (2013-02-01)

"I will not promote homosexuality" - Oye Lithur (2013-01-31)

I have never said that homosexuality should be promoted- Nana Oye Lithur (2013-01-30)

Gays have rights and I will protect them - Oye Lithur (2013-01-30)

Clergy petitions Appointment Committee over Oye-Lithur (2013-01-29)

Clergy Posture against Oye Lithur is distasteful - Dr Amo-Antwi (2013-01-29)

Leave Oye Lithur alone - Amnesty International (2013-01-15)

We're not against Nana Oye but protecting Ghana's future - Clergy (2013-01-15)

Ministry hails appointment of Nana Oye Lithur (2013-01-15)

Oye Lithur's appointment opposed over her 'support' for homosexuality (2013-01-14)

No gay rights, No foreign aid -Obama (2011-12-06)

Nana Oye Lithur: Gays Have Rights & Must Be Respected (2011-11-04)

Oye Lithur: Homo hate speech not a solution (2011-11-04)

Ghanaians are hypocrites - University don bares teeth (2011-11-04)

3% of Ghanaians are homosexuals (2011-11-04)

British PM under attack in Ghana (2011-11-02)

Government flexes muscles over UK gay threat (2011-10-12)

Ghana gay rights leader urges UK not to cut aid (2011-10-12)

Gay Community Fights Government Attack (2011-08-06)  
AI condemns comments by Ghanaian Minister (2011-07-27)  
British MP objects to Ghana's latest anti-gay campaign (2011-07-27)  
BBC: Paul Evans Aidoo's Ghana gay spy call 'promotes hatred' (2011-07-22)  
World Media Condemns Regional Minister For Anti-Gay Comments (2011-07-22)  
World News: Ghana Orders the Arrest of All Homosexuals (2011-07-21)  
No grounds for homosexuality, lesbianism in Ghana (2011-06-11)  
Kwesi Pratt: Catholics And Anglicans Support Sodomy (2011-06-11)  
Homosexuals Have Rights Of Association - Ndebugri (2011-06-11)  
There is no justification for homosexuality - Methodist Bishop (2011-06-09)  
Homosexuality in Ghana: Senior High Schools - The Real Hotspots? (2011-06-09)  
Gays can be prosecuted (2011-06-07)  
Why are Ghanaian women switching men for women? (2011-05-01)  
Same Sex Wedding Held In Kumasi (2011-04-28)  
One percent of Ghanaians are gay or lesbian (2011-01-02)  
The Woes Of A Lesbian Ghanaian Woman (2010-08-28)  
GEC condemns attempts to promote homosexuality (2010-08-08)  
Gays have rights, they must be respected - Lithur (2010-06-18)  
Thousands Attend First Anti-gay Protests In Ghana (2010-06-04)  
Gays, Lesbians Go Gospel (2010-05-28)  
Gays and lesbians invade Takoradi (2010-05-21)  
Ghana's laws do not prohibit homosexuality - Law lecturer (2010-05-14)  
Gays To Boycott Elections? (2008-05-23)  
Sodomy Cases Rise In Prisons (2008-02-29)  
British sodomite to be deported (2007-11-15)  
Opinion: A Ghanaian take on homosexuality (2007-09-12)  
Gays persecuted by criminal legislation in Ghana -GHF (2007-08-05)  
Gay Prostitutes Invade Accra (2007-05-19)  
Lesbian In Ghana To Lobby (2007-05-18)  
Gays address Kufuor in UK (2007-03-13)  
Ghanaian gays to meet Kufuor (2007-03-12)  
'Fa wo to begye sika' syndrome rises (2006-12-11)  
62% of Ghanaian Gays indulge in heterosexual activities (2006-12-06)  
Lesbians Meet In Accra (2006-11-20)  
Gays Target Kufuor's UK visit (2006-11-15)  
Gays Demonstrate Against Ghana (2006-10-05)  
Stiff Opposition for Gays, Lesbians in Ta'di (2006-09-26)  
Gay leader asks: What is Ghanaian culture? (2006-09-25)  
Gay Laws in Ghana And Around the World (2006-09-21)  
Thank You, Mr President (2006-09-20)

Apostle Appiah's Take On The Lesbian-Gay Syndrome (2006-09-15)  
E/R Residents Rage Over Gays, Lesbians Issue (2006-09-14)  
Gay Conference At Legon? (2006-09-11)  
Ordination of gay Anglican Bishops - 'Ghana cannot comment' (2006-09-11)  
The conference that never was! (2006-09-11)  
Ghana To Endorse Gay & Lesbian Practices? (2006-09-10)  
Homosexuality in Ghana: The Great 'Coming out' (2006-09-08)  
Presbyterian Church condemns homosexuality (2006-09-08)  
Why Should Kufuor Peep Into Our Bedrooms (2006-09-07)  
Ghanaian gay leader attacks media (2006-09-07)  
Chief Imam supports homo conference ban (2006-09-06)  
Charismatic churches support ban on homo conference (2006-09-06)  
Homosexuality: The Last Ghanaian Taboo? (2006-09-05)  
Christian Council calls for aluta (2006-09-05)  
Muslims hail decision to stop homo conference (2006-09-05)  
Is it illegal to use a 'sex toy' in Ghana? (2006-09-04)  
Gays Meet Opposition In Ghana (2006-09-02)  
Research Showed Homosexuality Is Real In Ghana (2006-09-02)  
Govt bans International Homo Conference (2006-09-01)  
Proposed gay conference still sketchy (2006-09-01)  
Is Homosexuality Really New In Ghana? (2006-08-30)  
Ghana's gays battle AIDS underground (2006-08-21)  
Ghana Gay and Lesbian group concerned (2005-06-23)  
Gay, lesbianism against God's purpose for marriage - Bishop (2005-03-12)  
Students dismissed for homosexuality (2005-03-08)  
Ghana's gays organise to fight British criminal law (2005-03-05)  
CHRAJ Won't Advocate Gay Rights - Short (2003-12-17)  
Anglican Church Opposed to Any Form of Unnatural Carnal Behaviour (2003-11-26)  
Study Shows Homosexuality Hits High in Tema, Eastern Regions (2003-07-02)

## EVOLUTION AND ETHICS:T.H. HUXLEY

*Dr. R. Samuel Thorpe MA, PhD*

Oral Roberts University, USA

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### Abstract

Evolution and Ethics: T.H. Huxley

Thomas H. Huxley, renowned advocate and promoter of Charles Darwin's theory of evolutionary biology, gave a lecture in 1893 entitled "Evolution and Ethics." Though perhaps mentioned in other speeches or writings, Huxley's idea in this lecture, that the "cosmic process," or evolution, reveals itself to be deficient in certain ways, created a major logical issue with the accepted notions of modern science in relation to ethics.

Furthermore, if Darwinian evolution cannot explain or justify "civilized" ethical philosophy, according to Huxley, then what issues are then left unresolved by evolutionary thinking? Though we believe ourselves to represent the pinnacle of intelligence in the animal kingdom, this intelligence seems sadly inadequate to handle many of the problems that our own society continues to confront us with. Thus, not only does our technology provide us with an enormous expansion of the scope of our physical selves, but it also expands our mental capabilities by greatly improving upon our abilities to perform many routine tasks. What about mental tasks that are not routine – tasks that require genuine intelligence? Could this concern be defined as sensibility, the reasonable awareness that all people have value beyond the survival of the fittest? If so, we must define intelligence as anti-Cosmic Process, as Huxley has done.

Teilhard assumes that the emotional quotient is the ultimate evolution, that socialization depends on the emotive unity of humanity. These conditions have yet to be demonstrated in society. Rather, forces like religiosity, politics, economics, and ideology have made more significant inroads into social development, which cannot be called development in any real sense. Human societies have not improved the human condition much, even with technology. We still have an inclination to cruelty and self-destruction. The super-socialization of our collective 'heart' seems more remote every year. Yet our non-unity has not been aimed at a complete recognition of survival of the fittest, rather a survival of the clever, the selfish, the best funded, whether intelligent or not, from Penrose's definition. We are more segmented rather than globally similar and divided rather than united. Teilhard also assumes that a 'single heart' is more highly evolved than the 'single



brain' and reason is inferior to emotion in evolutionary survival terms, though historically and even today, no such paradigm.

Pinker's notion is that science, locating sentience in the brain, will destroy the social idea of soul, separate from physical brain, which will then eliminate our belief that we are free agents responsible for our choices (p. 48). For all our efforts to that end in the study of the brain, postmodern society has turned against such a "scientific" notion and focused even more on the passions of the soul as the "real" locus of person. Pinker's utopian empathy that all people will exhibit when distinctions and differences are removed fails to consider the importance of the non-physical in humanity from which we draw our notions of ethics and morality. Clearly, even evolutionists like Huxley sensed the rightness of morality, law and order in society, protection of children, peace in community with other persons, protection of property, and freedom. Evolution, according to Darwin, was heartless, mechanical, and meaningless. Huxley and others of his persuasion recognized that life must have meaning and must have other senses than survival. Evolution did not, and does not, provide the necessary explanations for these logical problems.

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**Keywords:** Evolution, ethics, morality, genes, survival of the fittest, social progress, animal instincts

## Introduction

Thomas H. Huxley, renown advocate and promoter of Charles Darwin's theory of evolutionary biology, gave a lecture in 1893 entitled "Evolution and Ethics." This speech was subsequently published by the Macmillan Company and reproduced in a volume entitled *Readings in Philosophy* edited by John Herman Randall, Jr., Justus Buchler, and Evelyn U. Shirk (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1967). Though perhaps mentioned in other speeches or writings, Huxley's idea in this lecture, that the "cosmic process," or evolution, reveals itself to be deficient in certain ways, stimulated my thinking that perhaps he had put his finger on a major logical issue with the accepted notions of modern science in relation to ethics.

Furthermore, if Darwinian evolution cannot explain or justify "civilized" ethical philosophy, according to Huxley, then what issues are then left unresolved by evolutionary thinking?

## Huxley's View

### Part One: Evolution, the Cosmic Process

#### Evidence of the Cosmic Process

Huxley evidently supported the notion of Darwinian evolution, i.e. the survival of the fittest by natural selection, as the "Cosmic Process," the force and method of the development of life on earth. "From the very low forms up to the highest, the process of life presents the same appearance of cyclical evolution

(222). In every part, at every moment, the state of the cosmos is the expression of a transitory adjustment of contending forces; a scene of strife, in which all the combatants fall in turn. What is true of each part is true of the whole. Thus the most obvious attribute of the cosmos is its impermanence. It assumes the aspect not so much of a permanent entity as of a changeful process in which naught endures save the flow of energy and the rational order which pervades it" (223). In the midst of this changing universe we know now that the universe is expanding and demonstrates entropy rather than a permanent consistent strength. A "cyclical" appearance of nature has not been demonstrated, especially in extinct species and apparent environmental destruction. There are some aspects of the whole which is not true of the parts. Some species cannot cope with change while others revel in it.

The notion that the universe has existed so long that a lengthy process of change has resulted in the complex systems of life we now observe has been reconsidered. Stephen Jay Gould, a prominent evolutionist, concluded that the universe could not have been in existence eternally, but in fact, for not very long. "If the universe had existed for eternity, and had always contained the same number of stars and galaxies as it does today, distributed in more or less the same way throughout space, it could not possibly present the appearance we observe. Stars pouring out their energy, in the form of light, for eternity, would have filled up the space between themselves with light, and the whole sky would blaze with the brightness of the sun. The fact that the sky is dark at night is evidence that the universe we live in is changing, and has not always been as it is today. Stars and galaxies have *not* existed for an eternity, but have come into existence relatively recently; there has not been time for them to fill the gaps in between with light" (Gould, pp.5-6). Gould indicates that the idea of a Cosmic Process must be conceived without the necessity of vast eons of time, since the universe is "relatively recently" existed and within the universe is the earth, which had to develop in an even shorter period of time. So any idea of an evolutionary process of development must be considered to be much shorter than initially believed. This shorter historical development throws some doubt into the effect of a Cosmic Process at all. Teilhard's understanding is more logically acceptable, that "the scientific idea of evolution implies no more than the affirmation of this fact: that every object and every event in the world has an antecedent which conditions its appearance among other phenomena" (Teilhard, p. 192). Though somewhat Platonic, Teilhard only insists that there may be a process whereby all things develop and change. In this notion, Huxley may be clearer as he said, "...the cosmos is the expression of a transitory adjustment of contending forces."

### **Survival of the fittest**

Huxley supported the view that humankind developed within the process of natural selection and rose to the top of the food chain, as it were. "Man, the

animal, has worked his way to the headship of the sentient world in virtue of his success in the struggle for existence" because of conditions and organization better than his competitors (223). "In the case of mankind, the self-assertion, the unscrupulous seizing upon all that can be grasped, the tenacious holding of all that can be kept, which constitute the struggle for existence, have answered" (223). The reason humans could rise so high was due to the nature of the human personality and drive. Man's great characteristics that have enabled him to survive in the cosmic process of strife against competition, i.e., his "exceptional physical organization, his cunning, his sociability, his curiosity, and his imitativeness, his ruthless and ferocious destructiveness . . . against opposition, have now become defects." "Man now punishes many of the acts which flow from them [ape and tiger] as crimes" (224).

There seems to be no clear evidence that any species of animal has ever "worked its way up" the ladder of evolutionary structure. In most natural ways, humans are one of the least "fittest." We do not breed in great numbers; our physical strength and endurance are obviously inferior to many other animals; without artificial environments, we are more affected by environment than many other animals. There continues to be no evidence of "intelligent" species changing positions in the natural order of things and certainly no other social animals with morals. Some species have social structure but not morality. Who decides that man-eating tigers demonstrate unacceptable behavior? Rabbits do not seek to destroy the wolves that eat them. Why should humans? There seems to be logical deficiency here that insists that humans have the right to oppose the Cosmic Process for the sake of our comfort and convenience. Huxley implies that we oppose the Cosmic Process in order to survive, but no other creatures do this. What makes us think we should or ought? The concept of "fittest" is enigmatic, more of a circular argument. The fittest survive, so which animals are fittest? The ones who survive? "We know that many varieties of domestic animals, as well as plants, have arisen under the guiding and indeed forcing hand of man, but they are only varieties, and all tend to revert as soon as man's influence or power over them is removed" (Migeod, p. 18). We really have no evidence for the system; no intermediate states, no transitional forms, no observable changes of a species directly into another totally different one. Dawkins and Ridley suggest that the entire evolutionary process is gene-controlled rather than species-controlled. Ridley contends that "we are far more dependent on other members of our species than any other ape or monkey. We are more like ants or termites who live as slaves to their societies. We define virtue almost exclusively as pro-social behaviour, and vice as anti-social behaviour. The conventional wisdom in the social sciences is that human nature is simply an imprint of an individual's background and experience. But our cultures are not random collections of arbitrary habits. They are canalized expressions of our instincts. That is why the same themes crop up in all cultures – themes such as family, ritual, bargain, love,

hierarchy, friendship, jealousy, group loyalty, and superstition. Instincts, in a species like the human one, are immutable genetic programmes; they are predispositions to learn” (Ridley, p. 6).

Ridley quotes Dawkins that “we are survival machines—robot vehicles blindly programmed to preserve the selfish molecules known as genes. Given that genes are the replicating currency of natural selection, it is an inevitable, algorithmic certainty that genes which cause behavior that enhances the survival of such genes must thrive at the expense of genes that do not” (Ridley, pp. 18-19) . Dawkins has called the genes “selfish” and that they create *memes*, or units of cultural information transferable from one mind to another. The human gene then lives in a host (humans) and powerfully transmits information to the host that will facilitate the survival of the gene. For Dawkins, “evolution depended not on the particularly chemical basis of genetics but only on the existence of a self-replicating unit of transmission--...the gene” (from Meme article). So then, the gene replicates itself and transmits the cultural information from itself to the next human host, thus propagating or developing an inheriting understanding of culture, like morality and religion. The major problem for Dawkins’ idea has recently appeared in genomic research. The gene, in fact, only stores or contains information but does nothing with it. Other molecular elements and forces actually “move” the information (Meyer, pp. 453-480 ). Dawkins had assigned a sentient-like quality to genes, which implies intelligence or plan; hardly a random, purposeless situation. Now we know that there are so many other factors involved in the transmitting of DNA information and that genes are simply “encyclopedias” or containers of information. Other forces must use the data, and Dawkins’ idea has no foundation in evidence.

Stewart explains that “some secrets lie deeper than the genetic code. Genes are fundamental to earthly life but their role in determining form and behavior tends to be overstated – especially in the media. Genes are not like engineering blueprints: they are more like recipes in a cookbook. They tell us what ingredients to use, in what quantities, and in what order – but they do not provide a complete accurate plan of the final result. . . . In trying to understand life, however, it is SO tempting just to look at life’s recipe book – its DNA code sequences. DNA is neat and tidy; organisms are messy. DNA can be captured by little more than a list of symbols; the laws of physics require sophisticated mathematics even to state them. . . . As a consequence, we are in danger of losing sight of an important fact: there is more to life than genes. That is, life operates within the rich texture of the physical universe and its deep laws, patterns, forms, structures, processes, and systems. . . . DNA is not the secret of life . . . It is an essential secret, but not the only one” (Stewart, pp. x-xii).

Huxley defined “fittest” as “the best, and best means moral.” Not all evolutionists hold to this idea that fittest is only most moral. Some admit that Darwin’s idea was more inclined to the necessities of physical survival, and

conclude that human intelligence afforded people new ways to adapt to environment and competition from other species for food, shelter, and protection from harm. The film "2001," based on Arthur C. Clarke's book of the same title, illustrates this view as one scene shows the ape-man learning to strike one bone upon another and realizing the strategic effect of such use in driving away enemy competitors at the water hole. So "fittest" depends on conditions. Thus men must define the evolution of ethics as dependent on developing conditions of society (236).

E.O. Wilson and several other scholars have sought to explain the social evolutionary development of morals in the study of sociobiology. The idea is that genes play a decisive role in human behavior to improve fitness for survival, which results in social processes conducive to their continued existence. The individual is not as important to the population as its genes. Homogenous groups have common genes which, when passed along to the next generation, will result in behaviours that will be more likely lead to survival (from Sociobiology article). The problems with this idea are similar to Dawkins' idea of the selfish gene. We have discovered that genes are not the driving force. Genes do not transmit any information, but other molecular elements are the chief factors in the use of the data stored in genes. Therefore, social conventions and traditions are not so much transmitted by impersonal genes but by personal values of persons. Even in animals, there are some which protect young and some which do not. Both kinds of offspring have survived, so no pattern of sociobiology can be derived from this example. There is no evidence that species which have become extinct did so because their genes did not transmit survival behaviours, not any evidence that the survivors' genes did. Instincts are much more complex behaviours than gene-driven information for which genes can claim responsibility. As Card explains, "Jane isn't rational either," said Miro. "She's just like us. Just like the Hive Queen. Because she's alive. Computers, now, those are rational. You feed them data, they reach only the conclusions that can be derived from the data – but that means they are perpetually helpless victims of whatever information and programs we feed into them [not unlike the idea of selfish genes or the inevitable Cosmic Process]. We living sentient beings, we are not slaves to the data we receive. The environment floods us with information, our genes give us certain impulses, but we don't always act on that information, we don't always obey our inborn needs. We make leaps. We know what can't be known and then spend our lives seeking to justify that knowledge" (*Children of the Mind*, p. 113).

### **The nature of morality**

Huxley believed in what he called "sound ethical principles" which reflect actions that are contrary to the "lower nature" of humanity, exhibited by the "passions," the desires for selfish aggrandizement and mistreatment of others. "The science of ethics professes to furnish us with a reasoned rule of life; to tell us

what is right action and why it is so." Ape and tiger methods of the struggle for existence are not reconcilable with sound ethical principles (224). The problem of evil has demonstrated itself as a major problem that humans must overcome; evolution is "full of wonder" and beauty but also pain (224). In Hinduism and Buddhism, evil is an illusion. "There is nothing good nor bad but thinking makes it so." The cosmos is good, man escapes evil by destroying our human "fountain of desire whence our vices flow," i.e. asceticism, enlightenment, selflessness (228-231).

The Stoics saw that "the cosmic nature is no school of virtue but the headquarters of the enemy of ethical nature." Man has a lower nature, the animal, which leads to savagery.

Man also has a higher nature, reason, which leads to virtue (232-233). Modern thought is fresh, the human mind is much like it was 26 centuries ago (234). "Modern speculative optimism, with its perfectibility of the species, [promises the possibility of] the reign of peace. . ." (234). "The majority of us are neither pessimists or optimists." Good or evil [is] "affected by human action", essentially [most] all believe "evil can be diminished", by training our intellects and energies (235). Hastings contends that instincts "are the fundamental impulses of nutrition and sex, which Wundt contends, men and animals alike possess 'to form the inalienable foundation of human society as well as of animal association [Ethics: The Facts of Moral Life, p. 129].'" Moral concepts have their basis in feeling, not in reason;"(p. 624). Mutual aid is key, "Morality has arisen because it is socially useful" (p. 624). ". . . the social animal must be altruistic if the herd is to survive; its tendencies towards self-regardfulness are restrained by communal action whose one end is the common weal" (p. 625).

Problems arise with Hastings' notion in that, first there is no evidence from nature. Generally social herd animals will not sacrifice their own lives for the sake of their young or the elderly of their group. Normal behavior for them is to run, and protect themselves primarily. Secondly, what part does instinct play in herd behavior, rather than conscious altruism? From our study of "social" animals, instinct and perhaps some intelligence (as in primates or dolphins) dominate their behaviours but none of these "intelligent" animals will sacrifice its own life to save another of its group. Altruism appears to be only a human characteristic.

Isaacs "suggested that morality emerged as a parameter of animal behavior as a consequence of the conflict between gregarious and predacious motivations. Man became the 'ethical animal' because of his biological dependence upon social organization and human morality is essentially a rationally formulated code of behavior which must exist between members of a community if that community is to survive" (Isaacs, pp. 182-183). But ants, bats, monkeys, et. al. did not become ethical though they obviously have biological dependence upon social organization. Why didn't they develop morality? Not all



codes are rationally based or not based on what one group considers rational such as Geneva in the Reformation, monastic orders, Islam, cannibalistic tribes, and a host of others.

Bertrand Russell believed that “other moral rules, such as the prohibitions of murder and theft, have a more obvious social utility, and survive the decay of the primitive theological systems with which they were originally associated. But as men grow more reflective there is a tendency to lay less stress on rules and more on states of mind.... All the great mystics... what they value is a state of mind, out of which, as they hold, right conduct must ensue; rules seem to them external, and insufficiently adaptable to circumstances” (Russell, p. 224). Some cultures have valued what Western society calls murder and theft, i.e. American Indians, South American tribes, Nazis, etc. Also “primitive” is a prejudiced word, assuming a cultural, technological inferiority, as well as a certain lack of a “civilizing” factor. Such categories are not only prejudicial but assume that certain cultures (Western) have evolved at a higher level and serve as the example for all other cultural values. Russell makes a good comment on state of mind, if he means that which within emerges as “character,” a personal rather than societal behaviour.

Penrose asserts that “the issue of ‘responsibility’ raises deep philosophical questions concerning the ultimate causes of our behavior. It might well be argued that each of our actions is ultimately determined by our inheritance and by our environment – or else by those numerous chance factors that continually affect our lives ... is there actually something else – a ‘self’ lying beyond all such influences – which exerts a control over our actions? The legal issue of ‘responsibility’ seems to imply that there is indeed, within each one of us, some kind of an independent ‘self’ with its own responsibilities – and by implication, rights – whose actions are not attributable to inheritance, environment, or chance” (Penrose, p.36). As an example, Westaway suggests that “all authorities concur in maintaining, for example, that it is wrong to commit murder. But one philosopher tells us that it is wrong because it is inconsistent with the happiness of mankind, another tells us that it is wrong because it is contrary to the dictates of conscience, a third because it is against the commandments of God, a fourth because it leads to the gallows. Now how are we to account for this curious mixture... the strange variety exhibited in ... these various systems.... Why does not as great a divergence manifest itself in the results arrived at as we undoubtedly find the methods employed?” (Westaway, p. ). Indeed, why are there not as great a variety in the criminal actions themselves? Why isn’t murder condoned in some philosophies, as it has in some cultures? As well, this understanding that there is the idea of good and bad, only in humans, causes some consternation with evolutionary development, as does the fact that the variety suggest choice rather than purely convenience or practicality. If the process is effective and morality



makes a species more fit to survive, why the lack of consistency in value? And yet why the consistency that there is such a thing as morality?

### **The Weakness of the Cosmic Process**

Huxley, though an adherent of evolution, considered the Cosmic Process inadequate to provide sufficient abilities for human to act morally. He insisted that the moral and immoral sentiments have both naturally developed. "The thief and the murderer follow nature just as much as the philanthropist" (235). But such natural development now needs adjustment. "Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and the evil tendencies of man may have come about, but, in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good, is preferable to what we call evil than we had before... but all the understanding in the world will neither increase nor diminish the force of the intuition that this is beautiful and that is ugly" (235). It is a fallacy that evolution advanced biologically and "men as ethical beings must yield to the same process to help them towards perfection" (235). Clearly, for Huxley, evolution did not resolve the issue of human animal behaviour, the problem of evil. All Richard Dawkins would support was protection of so-called scientific truth from deliberate libel against it (pp.40-42). "At present, we get away with our flagrant specieism because the evolutionary intermediates between us and chimpanzees are all extinct" (Dawkins, p. 135). That's a huge assumption based on no fact. Dawkins is pro-life but not pro-human life. Specieism assumes human life is most valuable species of life (p. 135).

Gribbin asks the important question. "If the universe was 'born' and is changing and will die, how can evolution be an improvement? Or a development? (Gribbin, p. 7). Milton echoes Gribbin's concern that the Cosmic Process, if such a prominent actor in the drama of life, should be able to account for what we see or expect to see in the world. "Do we really believe that black people are black by accident? What kind of accident was it? Why don't we see such accidents happening today? Why does the fossil record not show us such accidents happening in the past? ...if we don't see genetic mutations – the accidents of inheritance – because they are very rare, then how can there have been enough of them to produce anything as complex as humans? (Richard Milton, p.10). That question may answer Gribbin's important issue. The Cosmic Process cannot be seen to be at work today. Huxley's concern that the weakness of the Cosmic Process actually seems to counter his support of it. The evidence of a continual "process" appears to be lacking.

Jones equates Darwinian evolution with variation, change within species on the domesticated level, i.e. pigeon to pouter to runt to turbit, but these are still birds. There genetic changes required a mind, a design, of a human being to achieve. There is no evidence brought forth to demonstrate pigeon reptile (Jones, pp.28-51). "Natural variation, the raw material of evolutionary change" (p. 55).

But this can't be demonstrated; no transitional forms exist, no modern observation has demonstrated a complete macro-evolutionary change. Biological classification is arbitrary anyway, from Aristotle; some human being must "recognize relationships, even to assume that, such as panda to raccoon (now no longer recognized by 2009). Genes are the way to categorize, as Jones does on p. 59, but even then the groupings are arbitrarily decided. "We may agree that all species of living things can do for themselves all that is necessary for their preservation, and can adapt themselves to circumstances. Some can do it better than others; but there comes a time when all their efforts are unavailing and the species either perishes or only a small remnant survives, perhaps by reason of some modification, down to a later period" (Migeod, p.16).

Perhaps it is simply a perception problem, as Gullberg suggests in a discussion of mathematics. "There is no such thing as only one unassailable, mathematically true, geometry. From a mathematical viewpoint, any geometry – or any other branch of mathematics – that does not produce contradictions is acceptable. Another matter of concern is, however, to find the geometry that gives the most accurate representation of the physical world" (Gullberg, p.384). Indeed, an accurate representation of the physical world should be the goal of all science. But all systems and theories to date have failed in one way or another to give the whole picture. Hence the continued search for the ultimate element from which all things are made. That science seems to have proposed to have achieved the absolutes of reality has not enjoyed the popular approval in the 21<sup>st</sup> century that appeared to be so in the early 20<sup>th</sup>. Howard revealed that "many people no longer trust modernity. People still believe but not want to belong to institutions. They distrust authority (even scientific authority) as a source of truth. They want a more personalized intuitive approach" (Howard, p.273). Modernity did not "work" for postmoderns. Problems exist for them that modern science cannot resolve, as they perceived to be promised in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Societies seem to be less societal and more individual. Ethics must be efficacious or at least applicable for everyone, in spite of the narcissistic philosophy prominent in so many postmodern perspectives.

### **Man can modify the Cosmic Process through reason and science**

Huxley's hope was that the deficiencies of the evolutionary process could be overcome by the efforts of humanity. Science through reason has the power to lift humanity above the animal nature and develop temperate and benevolent societies. "The history of civilization details the steps by which men have succeeded in building up an artificial world within the cosmos. Huxley recognized that societies and their governments have laws to resist the "natural" aspects of human behaviour. (a). In every family, in every polity that has been established, the cosmic process in man has been restrained, and otherwise modified by law and custom. Further, Huxley considered science and art to have been the vehicles for this constructed superiority over evil actions. (b). "The organized and highly

developed sciences and arts of the present day have endowed man with a command over the course of non-human nature greater than that once attributed to the magicians" (237). "The point is that knowledge in general and science in particular does not consist of abstract but of manmade ideas, all the way from its beginnings to its modern and idiosyncratic models. Therefore the underlying concepts that unlock nature must be shown to arise early and in the simplest cultures of man from his basic and specific faculties. And the development of science which joins them in more and more complex conjunctions must be seen to be equally human: discoveries are made by men, not merely minds, so that they are alive and charged with individuality" (Bronowski, pp.13-14). "Science has no methods for deciding what is ethical" (Dawkins, p.39). Russell also perceived the same perspective, "...the fact that science has nothing to say about 'values.' This I admit" (Russell, p.223).

Carl Hempel accepts that "to explain the phenomena of the physical world is one of the primary objectives of the natural sciences... the purpose of science, which after all, is concerned to develop a conception of the world that has a clear, logical bearing on our experience and is thus (47) capable of objective test. Scientific explanations must, for this reason, meet two systematic requirements, which will be called the requirement of explanatory relevance and the requirement of testability" (Hempel, p. 48). Toulmin's critique allows that "certainly, every statement in a science should conceivably be capable of being called in question, and of being shown empirically to be unjustified; for only so can the science be saved from dogmatism" (Toulmin, p.81). "Now and then there may have to be second thoughts about matters which had been thought to be settled, but when this happens, and the lower courses have to be altered, the superstructure has to be knocked down too, and a batch of concepts in terms of which the scientist's working problems used to be stated – 'phlogiston' and the like – will be swept into the pages of history books" (p. 81). "If we interpret the idea of 'the uniformity of nature' in this particular way, the only question is, whether we should not replace it entirely by the idea of the uniformity of scientific procedures. Perhaps we ought" (p. 154).

## **Part Two: Ethical Man Overcomes Evolution**

### **Evolution is the enemy of man's ethical nature**

Huxley goes so far as to declare evolution as the enemy of morality, that evolution promotes the animal nature of humans and cannot resolve the problem of evil naturally.

(a). The theory of evolution encourages no hope for the solution of "curbing the instincts of savagery in civilized men."

(b). Only the developed intelligence of men can "change the nature of man himself."

(c). We have "emerged from the heroic childhood of our race" and now must "strive in one faith towards one hope", our hearts "set on diminishing it" [evil in society] (238).

### **Social progress means checking the Cosmic Process.**

If humans propose to overcome evil and selfishness in society, evolution must be restrained and restricted. "Social progress means a checking of the cosmic process at every step and the substitution for it of another, which may be called the ethical process; the end of which is not the survival of those who happen to be the fittest,... but of those who are ethically the best. Ethically best is the practice that involves a course of conduct which, in all respects, is opposed to that which leads to success in the cosmic struggle for existence."

- (a). "In place of ruthless self-assertion it demands self-restraint;
- (b). In place of... treading down all competitors, it requires that the individual shall not merely respect but shall help his fellows;
- (c). It repudiates the gladiatorial theory of existence";

### **Laws and moral concepts try to curb the Cosmic Process**

The existence of laws and our human sense of morality indicate that we have been trying in history to resist evolution. "Laws and moral precepts are directed to the end of curbing the cosmic process, reminding the individual of his duty to the community, to the protection and influence of which he owes, if not existence itself, at the least the life of something better than a brutal savage" (236). "Neglect of these considerations attempts to apply the analogy of cosmic nature [evolution] to society, a misapplication of the stoical injunction to follow nature; the duties of the individual to the state are forgotten and his tendencies to self-assertion are dignified by the name of rights" (237).

As a secondary point, Huxley even doubts the explanation of evolution that had been given at the time. Perhaps something had been left out or ignored or misunderstood. "If that which I have insisted upon is true; if the cosmic process has no sort of relation to moral ends; if the imitation of it by man is inconsistent with the first principles of ethics; what becomes of this surprising theory?" (237).

### **Part Three -- Huxley's Conclusion**

#### **Evolution is inexorable; it can't be stopped from its ultimate goal.**

Still, Huxley believes that evolution marches on its way, and cannot be stopped, inasmuch as the earth has a certain ultimate destiny. He does not appear to be one of the philosophers who held to an eternal universe idea, which does Huxley credit, since Einstein and the Big Bang, later in scientific

history, demonstrated that indeed the universe had a beginning and an expected end. "The theory of evolution encourages no millennial anticipations. If, for millions of years, our globe has taken the upward road, yet, sometime, the summit will be reached and the downward route will be commenced." Human intelligence and ability cannot stop this progression (238).

"Moreover, the cosmic nature born with us and, to a large extent, necessary for our maintenance, is the outcome of millions of years of severe training, and it would be folly to imagine that a few centuries will suffice to subdue its masterfulness to purely ethical ends. Ethical nature may count upon having to reckon with a tenacious and powerful enemy as long as the world lasts" (238).

### **The progress of human society depends on successfully combating the Cosmic Process**

Huxley therefore calls for the best efforts of humanity despite the evolutionary opposition or we shall continue to be afflicted with social evil and needless human suffering. His main point of the entire essay then is that "... the ethical progress of society depends, not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it" (p. 237).

### **Man can change the world to repress his basic savagery**

Huxley's optimism reflects his confidence that humans can succeed in this war on evolution. "But on the other hand, I see no limit to the extent to which intelligence and will, guided by sound principles of investigation, and organized in common effort, may modify the conditions of existence, for a period longer than that now covered by history. And much may be done to change the nature of man himself "(238). It "ought to be able to do something towards curbing the instincts of savagery in civilized men" (238).

### **Critique of Huxley's Views**

#### **Part One: The Weaknesses of the Cosmic Process**

1. The Cosmic Process as an explanation of the origin and development of life may not be valid.
2. Survival of the fittest may not be a valid explanation of the behaviour of humans.
3. Objective moral principles may not be the result of human evolutionary development.
4. The Cosmic Process as a theory of development of life may indeed have weaknesses.
5. The Cosmic Process may not be amendable by any natural force.

There are several logical problems that could arise in considering the notion of evolution of species based on natural selection and the survival of the fittest.

The first issue that arises is the instinct to survive itself. Why does any species have an instinct for survival? What made survival the driving force of life? We assume that survival is a desire, drive, or force that pushes the species to compete for resources, but that drive appears to be inclusive of all species. It is conceivable and logical to conclude that a random process would not necessarily produce such an attitude or instinct in every species of living things. Life could have been simply the fact of existence without “drives.” We assume instincts for such because that’s what we think we see in the natural order. Another major problem is death. If an impersonal, physical/chemical force can create life, why would it also create death? Death is not logically a necessary corollary to life. As well, why doesn't this life-creating force continue to create life today? Evolution cannot answer these objections satisfactorily.

Secondly, we also assume that this drive to survive includes aggressive competition for life resources. But why would competition be a force in random selection rather than something else? Wouldn't life itself, very existence, be sufficient as a result of evolution? Logically, if a force of some kind brought life into nonliving matter, the very fact of existence would satisfy the theoretical necessity. The things that then lived, would simply live and then die; even with a desire to survive, the species could have simply adapted to eat whatever was there, including such things as air and water. Why would it be necessary that food for animals be species specific, if the life developed randomly, without order or purpose? Logically there would have to have been some pre-existing force that required evolution to move in such a definitive direction.

Third, what made animals compete? What makes one species 'fight' another for existence of that species? What is there about the Cosmic Process that requires aggression? We assume aggression, fighting, ruthless conflict to be natural yet if species evolved randomly, logic dictates that some other means could have appeared such as sharing or moving from one location to another when scarcity came or simply dying without struggle. How would one species “know” to kill and eat another one for the first time? We conjecture that a randomly created being would also not know purpose, i.e. to survive, to compete, to reproduce. To simply assume that the random process would build these “instincts” into the beings, is a large presupposition that implies purpose.

Why is there violence in the Cosmic Process? There can be also questioned the whole idea of carnivorousness. Some species eat plants and yet some eat other animals. There is no imperative in evolutionary theory that requires eating of flesh. If life is assumed to have been at first single celled and



then gradually multi-celled, there does not seem to be an absolute notion that violent conflict would have been necessary. How would it be better, more advantageous and therefore fitter, for an animal to eat other animals than to eat plants? If all life came from ocean water, we could just as well assume that life would survive on ocean elements and chemical nutrients.

Fourth, another problem is reproduction. The notion of reproduction itself is not required logically for life to have existed by chemical means. The chemical/energy process itself could have simply made more beings. In fact, that idea is more logical and less complicated than a competing environment that involves a complex system of species competition. The idea of sexuality and gender does not appear to be the logical outcome of chemical creation of life. Even complex beings could just as well have multiplied like the simple celled animals, by cellular division.

Fifth, there is in the Cosmic Process the assumed notion that animals seem to care that they survived. Otherwise there is no reason for an instinct for survival to develop. We look at the natural order and, because we care about our own existence, we superimpose on the animals and plants a desire, a force, that makes them try to survive. We see them fight and kill, and we assume it is for survival sake, but that could also be simply the way they are. They fight and kill because that is their nature or that they do those things without purpose, just because that is the nature of life. We so like to personify our own values and thoughts on the animals world when life may just be by nature violent and heartless. Natural randomness doesn't answer these questions. Random purposeless pointless life logically doesn't lead to competition and the purpose of perpetuating and the need to exist. How would it know that survival was the greatest value? How would it know self-interest, and to compete, kill, or defeat another "competitor"? We're assuming a built-in drive to survive but there is no evidence or logic to convince that the drive must be there at all. I think we can call into question the description of evolution as defined by Darwin that requires complex processes when simple ones would have done just as well for life to exist. What we see in the animal and plant world does not necessarily reflect a logical picture of a chemically based, purposeless random selection of life.

Many evolutionary theorists, including Huxley, attribute man's success of survival to organization, though there are other species who also organize yet without the development that leads to superior species. Huxley as well decries the process by which man has succeeded by claiming that it has or will let us down now that we claim to be civilized. Huxley rejects the cosmic process as the future hope, assuming that we now know better than the principle upon which all life process and human development heretofore has depended for millions of years. What are these conditions, especially since they appear to change? Utilitarian? That has been rejected since Nazism. No evolutionary progress? That idea seemed to be destroyed by the 1920s and the Great War.



Evolutionary geneticist H. Allen Orr says that “we haven’t a shred of evidence that morality did or did not evolve by natural selection” (in Pearcey, p. 56). Pearcey continues that “The force of sheer logic became clear a few years ago when a book came out called *The Natural History of Rape*. The authors made the disturbing claim that rape is not a pathology, biologically speaking, but is an evolutionary adaptation for maximizing reproductive success, . . . the ‘product of the human evolutionary heritage’” (pp. 56, 59). Such a conclusion would support Huxley’s claim that the Cosmic Process must be overcome but clearly indicates that the Cosmic Process itself did not develop the notion of morality.

So if evolution changes or man changes the essential nature of evolution changes or results, it will become something other than fittest or natural selection; the force of change will become the will of man. Is that not contrary to the cosmic process? Will that not change the whole destiny and process of development in the universe? Is that not immoral in itself?

## **Part Two: Future Uncertainty**

1. Evolution may not be the enemy of man’s ethical nature.
2. Checking the Cosmic Process may not result in social progress.
3. Laws and moral principles may not curb the Cosmic Process.

“And if nature can produce such rich diversity as the present animal and plant kingdoms by pure chance, why is it that thousands of years of serious guided selection by mankind has resulted only in trivial sub-specific variation of domestic plants and animals, while not one new species has been created?” (Richard Milton, p. 11). “Watch a bird building a nest. Is the bird methodical? Undoubtedly. Is it working according to a plan? Apparently. Then is it intelligent? Hardly, for it is simply repeating exactly what innumerable generations of its ancestors have done before. Its method never varies. It is customary to say that the bird is acting in accordance with instinct, but what is instinct? We do not know, though people who use the term seem to suggest that instinct is something inherited” (Westaway, p. 33). “That within their own province scientific methods are perfectly sound cannot be denied. But those methods are quite useless in any exploration of human actions or human motives, except in their primary demand for bed-rock facts” (Westaway, p. 50). “Ask any half dozen intelligent friends to write down definitions of the common terms truth, goodness, beauty. The differences will be amazing. . . beauty may be thought of subjectively or objectively. There will be no agreement about the true essence of any one of them. And here scientific method can give no help” (Westaway, p. 50). “Needless to say, humanists are evolutionists believing that the future evolution of this planet rests in our own hands. To guide us in this task, and also in our personal life, humanists teach that we need values. And where do

these values come from? Well, according to the British Humanist Association's introduction to humanism called the Humanist Perspective, these values were 'discovered during evolution' and 'such values include telling the truth, being honest, accepting responsibility, playing fair, cooperation for the common good, and caring for others.' One wonders whether the author of this paper has ever heard of evolutionary concepts such as 'the survival of the fittest' or 'the selfish gene'! (White, p. 14). "Now the theory of evolution teaches that human beings are the product of chance natural processes without the intervention of any supernatural agent. Furthermore, some argue that if we are just animals, the result of random natural processes, then why should abortion, or even euthanasia, be considered wrong? Putting to death an unwanted puppy or kitten is not considered immoral, so why is it wrong for an unwanted unborn child ...or a old sick person?" (White, p. 15).

### **Huxley's Conclusion**

1. Evolution's progress toward its ultimate goal cannot be stopped.

This is an assumption of downwardness; thus evolution will eventually be destructive, i.e the Big Implosion. Nothing anyone can do to stop this. Why would evolutionists care to stop it or to live differently now than what is supposedly destined for all life? Yet they do care; they insist on morality of some kind, particularly protection of themselves from crime and war. But if morality doesn't really mean anything for selfish survival, why would anyone object to a culture that wants to survive more than other cultures? Why isn't it acceptable for a totalitarian regime to conquer the world and oppress the "weaker" people groups if that makes them the "fittest"? So said Nietzsche in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It's wrong because deep inside every person is the awareness that people are not just animals on the food chain and we all have some sense of morality, a God-given capacity, an innate recognition of right and wrong. John Gribbin, PhD, Science Journalist, BBC "That puzzle is brought home with full force by the light of the sun in the daytime. This represents an imbalance in the universe, a situation in which there is a local deviation from equilibrium. It is a fundamental feature of the world that things tend towards equilibrium" (Gribbin, p. 6). "No one, so far as I know, has ever claimed to have seen a species created. Neither has anyone seen a species evolved from other species (Migeod, p. 19). It is significant that neither in ancient nor in modern times is there any instance of the merging of one species into another collateral species, and so on into another by means of slight gradations or variations. For instance, we see pygmy elephants alongside great elephants but there is no merging (p. 19). I make this statement following a number of writers, but there is in fact no evidence whatever to show that the individual in any given species was in any way smaller in the early days of the species

than it was at the time of the extinction of that species, or that there was any material difference in the species at its end from what it was at its beginning (Migeod, p. 20). “If we consider the mineral world: there is no evolution there. Each metal or precious stone is itself and nothing else. One does not descend from another. One does not merge into the other. There was a separate and sudden appearance of each into the world, and, evidently, in many places at once. It is hard not to call this process creation” (Migeod, p. 105). Huxley’s main conclusion is that, “the ethical process of society depends not on initiating the Cosmic Process. . . but in combating it”(p. 237). And in so doing, change the essential nature of man, that through our intelligence, “be able to do something towards curbing the instincts of savagery in civilized man” (p. 238), i.e. resolve the problem of evil that men perpetuate on themselves and become ethically good.” “Aristotle, Greek philosopher and scientist, pupil of Plato, who was a pupil of Socrates, held that any logical argument could be reduced to two premises and a conclusion, and laid down in three basic laws, or principles, of logical reasoning, often referred to as classical logic or Aristotelian logic:

1. The principle of identity. A thing is itself: A is A.
2. The principle of the excluded middle. A proposition is either true or false: Either A or not A.
3. The principle of contradiction. No proposition can be both true and false: A cannot be A and not A” (Gullberg, p. 216).

Huxley’s argument may fall into the trap of the principle of contradiction, since he believed that the Cosmic Process was the force that brought life into being and directed it over time to evolve, and then tries to defend a concentrated, rational effort on the part of humans to resist the Process for the sake of morality. He seems to say that, because the Cosmic Process logically brings pain and suffering to all life, and we do not like such pain and suffering, we should develop practices that contradict the Process. So morality then becomes an accommodation to personal preferences, nearly a utilitarian goal of pleasure over pain because we can, rather than because there is some real meaning to morality. Howard says, “certainly, moral absolutes seem best tempered according to the situation. Generally they should come from within, then be tested by our friends. We can only ever have partial knowledge of good and evil, but few would see genocide, paedophilia, environmental destruction, or greed as good.” On the contrary, good cases can be made that in history many nations and governments with the consent of a majority of their citizens, have approved of genocide. Capitalism is built on greed, the desire to possess as many material possessions as possible, preferably more than the neighbors. Starving people have no problem destroying certain parts of the environment to use it for obtaining goods, as in some areas of rainforests. Some ancient cultures, such

as in Greece and Rome, exhibited societal approval of paedophilia. Friends tend to have common goals and perspectives. "Testing" ethics on them will only get basic approvals of these goals such as in Nazism, Stalinism, Maoism, and Japanese atrocities in World War II. Situation ethics has already proven to be an undependable and unstable system for societies. Rules keep changing with every change in leadership or law. Postmodernists distrust modernity because science didn't resolve the basic problems of human society, as some people expected, nor provide all the desired moral results that were claimed. "Undoubtedly the most hopeful prospect for psycho-social evolution is this trend towards more compassion both in the formulation and the enforcement of moral systems. Or ... man is slowly learning that his survival depends on his ability to use reason to encourage his sympathetic emotions, and to suppress those which are antisympathetic" (Alan Isaacs, p. 193). Social evolution is better with compassion? Is postmodernism more compassionate than modernism? We are having more conflict now because of emotions; our reason is now being used to encourage agreement and stability. Our "sympathetic" emotions result in narcissism, incoherent, incongruent, and intolerant behaviors and philosophies. Walsh concurs that science itself is greatly affected by the societal trends of the times. "Cogent reasons of intellect and scholarship have been suggested for pursuing...a resolution of the case ... Compelling is one reason in particular: the rare chance afforded to learn more about the interior process of science in itself and in its relation to society. Especially relevant is a third reason, uncovering the pernicious effect on science of fashionable ideas, the degree to which a prevailing paradigm may influence and even dominate not only thinking but discovery" (John Walsh, p. xx). Without a standard of morality that extends beyond the current trends of society or is considered higher than individual emotive choices, societies are victims of merely personal preferences which can be anything.

### **Man can change the world by repressing his savagery**

Why bother? If evolution is true and life is meaningless, who cares if man is "savage," meaning just like the animals only "fitter"? Why does Huxley or any evolutionist feel the need to rebel against the Cosmic Process? Why are there ethics at all? Not for societal benefit – the natural world functions without ethics and some animals are highly societal. Without ethics life would be brutal, merciless, and vicious, like the animal world (as we perceive it) without emotion, caring, love, or compassion, which we must have or life is total hell. We will not live that way. Why not? Why does that notion bother us, if evolution is the norm and the natural?

Roland Howard implies a certain guilt in news and entertainment media that "the media as a meaning-making machine which idealizes wealth,

romance, excitement, and immediate gratification and which shows life as a series of intense experiences seems to having an effect on virtually all forms of spirituality” (p. 272), not to mention paradigms of life and societal values. Huxley’s relative, Julian Huxley, said that “first and foremost come the consequences of evolution and its acceptance. If man’s body has evolved, then so has his mind. Our mental powers are not only relative, developed in adaptive relation to the world around us, but there is no reason whatever supposing them in any way complete” (p. 59). But what compels one group of people to refrain from annihilating another group who is competing with them for resources, as is claimed regarding animals? Why do we have emotional compassion for others? To be sure we survive in a world of limited resources, why do we not highly value abilities and attitudes that result in dominance of one group over another. Nazism would be the most obvious philosophy to adopt, which sought to eliminate weaker groups and to enhance and perpetuate one group. Yet we clearly see a repugnance of such paradigms and seek to rid the world of such “extreme” notions. Why would anyone do that if humans’ minds evolved along with our bodies? We should see more and more effect ways to use our minds to eliminate competitors. “For, in the main, social morality relies upon the exploitation of reason and the subjugation of emotion. In theory, therefore, such a system should reflect the best interests of the majority. The purely secular society therefore suffers from the disadvantage that it has to sacrifice an undue proportion of individual freedom in order to impose its legislation. This will be so no matter how sensibly it has tried to arrange for the suppression of greed in the common good. These secular societies, therefore, are always in danger of becoming police states” (Isaacs, pp. 188-189). But, in evolutionary terms, why wouldn’t a police state be satisfactory if that would bring about the proper survival of the fittest? Minorities, by definition, are fewer and therefore weaker and more likely to be the groups that will not survive. We clearly see that such a philosophy is intolerable but are reluctant to blame evolutionary ideas, as Huxley does, for promoting the survival of the fittest in human society. Penrose agrees that “as we open our newspapers or watch our television screens, we seem to be continually assaulted by the fruits of Mankind’s stupidity [warfare, unrest, violence, conflict, squandered prosperity]. Though we believe ourselves to represent the pinnacle of intelligence in the animal kingdom, this intelligence seems sadly inadequate to handle many of the problems that our own society continues to confront us with. Thus, not only does our technology provide us with an enormous expansion of the scope of our physical selves, but it also expands our mental capabilities by greatly improving upon our abilities to perform many routine tasks. What about mental tasks that are not routine – tasks that require genuine intelligence?” (Penrose, pp. 8-9). What is “genuine intelligence”? Is intelligence the key to unlocking the highest values of evolution – survival? If it is, then the *use* of intelligence should be highly

significant, beyond gathering food, selecting the strongest mates, or finding ways to protect ourselves. Intelligence must include more than cleverness or technological inventiveness but must as well be comprised of a lack of Penrose's concern with stupidity and more of Isaac's emotive values. Could this concern be defined as sensibility, the reasonable awareness that all people have value beyond the survival of the fittest? If so, we must define intelligence as anti-Cosmic Process, as Huxley has done.

Teilhard insisted that "for some two hundred thousand years or more, we agreed, mankind as a whole has not ceased to advance in the direction of higher cerebralisation and closer socialization. Human brains have reached the limit of anthropogenesis but the areas still open are collective cerebralisation or socialization. Forces are making us more in common. In the case of man, therefore, collectivization, super-socialisation, can only mean super-personalisation; in other words it ultimately means (since only the forces of love have the property of personalizing by uniting) sympathy and unanimity. It is in the direction and in the form of a single 'heart' that we must look for our picture of super-mankind, rather than in that of a single brain" (pp. 157-160). Teilhard assumes that the emotional quotient is the ultimate evolution, that socialization depends on the emotive unity of humanity. These conditions have yet to be demonstrated in society. Rather, forces like religiosity, politics, economics, and ideology have made more significant inroads into social development, which cannot be called development in any real sense. Human societies have not improved the human condition much, even with technology. We still have an inclination to cruelty and self-destruction. The super-socialization of our collective 'heart' seems more remote every year. Yet our non-unity has not been aimed at a complete recognition of survival of the fittest, rather a survival of the clever, the selfish, the best funded, whether intelligent or not, from Penrose's definition. We are more segmented rather than globally similar and divided rather than united. Teilhard also assumes that a 'single heart' is more highly evolved than the 'single brain' and reason is inferior to emotion in evolutionary survival terms, though historically and even today, no such paradigm.

## Conclusions

Kluger refutes the notion that sociobiology or genes control us with his study of the brain. "Specialized neurons are being found [in the brain] that allow us to mirror the behavior of people around us, helping us learn such primal skills as walking and eating as well as how to become social, ethical beings" (p.39). Gorman adds to the contradiction of sociobiology that "...the underlying principle remains. When too many of the rules change, when what used to work doesn't anymore, your ability to reason takes a hit. Just being aware of your nervous system's built-in bias toward learned helplessness in the face of unrelieved stress can help you identify and develop healthy habits that



will buffer at least some of the load” (p. 59). There has been no evidence that genetic information, intent on survival, adjust to changing “rules” such that the previous information can be altered to fit new situations.

Pinker’s notion is that science, locating sentience in the brain, will destroy the social idea of soul, separate from physical brain, which will then eliminate our belief that we are free agents responsible for our choices (p. 48). For all our efforts to that end in the study of the brain, postmodern society has turned against such a “scientific” notion and focused even more on the passions of the soul as the “real” locus of person. Pinker’s utopian empathy that all people will exhibit when distinctions and differences are removed fails to consider the importance of the non-physical in humanity from which we draw our notions of ethics and morality. Wright confirms this idea. “We like to think our views on right and wrong are rational...but ultimately they are grounded in emotion” (p. 49).

Clearly, even evolutionists like Huxley sensed the rightness of morality, law and order in society, protection of children, peace in community with other persons, protection of property, and freedom. Evolution, according to Darwin, was heartless, mechanical, and meaningless. Huxley and others of his persuasion recognized that life must have meaning and must have other senses than survival. Evolution did not, and does not, provide the necessary explanations for these logical problems.

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# **A SOCIETY OF TRUTH: WHY DECEPTION IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE USE OF LANGUAGE**

***Lauren Mach***

St. Gregory's University, United States of America

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## **Abstract**

Society is built on communication, which is the union of individuals in truth. Truth is central to communication; without it, people have no commonality and society is impossible. Because of the centrality of truth to human society, offenses against truth (such as lying and deception) cannot be socially maintained. Although deception can be difficult or impossible to detect empirically, all of its forms are universally rejected and punished by society. People expect truth, indicating that truth is the norm of communication. The prevalence and ambiguity of deception cannot negate its essential inadequacy as communication.

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**Keywords:** Deception, truth, lying, social norms

## **Introduction**

The term “communication” implies and necessitates some act of union between people with regard to truth. When one person transmits a concept he holds in his mind to another person, who receives it, that is communication. This action relies on truth, which is the “convention crucially underpinning the ability to communicate” (Lewis, 1969). Humans, unlike other animals, converse and share in common rather than operating based on compatible instinctual drive. Because of this, “truth seems to be the cornerstone of the society in general and the communicative practice in particular” (Galasiński, 2000, 2). It is the essential element of cooperation and interaction. Man cannot trust in or advance with his neighbor unless he can believe that his neighbor speaks the truth. Universally, human society forbids all forms of lying, deceit, mendacity, criminality, and the like, “on the grounds of both morality and the potential success of communicative interaction” (Galasiński, 2000, 2). Every society (and, in his most natural or instinctual state, every man) demands that her members be honest because it is imperative for fidelity and cooperation within interpersonal human relationships.

## I.

From time to time, a person will convey a message which is different than the one that he intended and contrary to what he knows to be true. Such messages are not considered deceptive or untrue; instead, they are regarded as mere errors of speech (Buller & Burgoon, 1994, 191-223). When a speaker intentionally communicates a message which is not what he knows to be true, however, his message is referred to as deception or a lie (Galasiński, 2000, 18). A lie is defined as a statement which is in itself misleading and is intended to be so by the speaker (Zuckerman, DePaulo, & Rosenthal in Berkowitz, 1981, 1-59). Such communication is straightforward: the speaker understands a true concept, but wishes the listener to grasp a false one. He therefore defiles the concept by altering the message so that it is not completely true or does not completely fit the context of the conversation. Thus, the listener is led to believe completely a direct statement which in the context of a larger conversation is simply not true.

Deception, on the other hand, has a more ambiguous definition. Consensus in literature and communication holds that in order for a message to be classified as deceptive, the speaker must have the intention of misleading the listener (Zuckerman, DePaulo, & Rosenthal in Berkowitz, 1981, 1-59). Following this, all lies may be classified as deceptive communication. The converse is not necessarily true since lies must be outright statements which are not true, while deception includes any communication transmitted in order to induce false beliefs. This includes aforementioned untrue statements (lies), but also omissions or failures to correct untrue information and statements made which are true but neglect defining or contextual elements that would prevent the listener from drawing a false conclusion (Galasiński, 2000, 19). Deception, then, includes a broad spectrum of communications, which makes it both difficult to define and difficult to detect.

Deception is, “at the core of noncooperation” (Galasiński, 2000, 115). The quintessential conceptualization of deception is seen in lying. Though lying is only one minor subset of deception, it is by far the most punishable. A major reason for this is that while it is relatively simple to determine whether someone knew the truth about something before telling lies about it, “it is impossible to find out empirically whether a speaker did or did not attempt to be deceptive” (Galasiński, 2000, 114), making it impossible to determine whether the speaker was actually deceiving or simply incorrectly reporting something he believed to be true. Furthermore, deception is “almost continually” present in human communication (Galasiński, 2000, 115). Because the classification of a specific statement as deceptive hinges on the intentions of the speaker, it is impossible to

determine certainly whether a statement made by another was or was not deceptive.

In a situation where accurate and complete communication is especially important (such as in the situation of a legal witness), special consideration is given to the fact that a person might lie, omit, or misrepresent some occurrence, which could have adverse effects beyond mere miscommunication. In ordinary interaction, however, one naturally assumes that whomever he is speaking with is telling the truth (Robinson, 1996). The listener is aware that the speaker could easily lie or misrepresent whatever information he is conveying, but customarily assumes that he is telling the truth. Typically, the listener does not even consciously consider that the speaker could be lying or attempt to verify his claims. Ordinary interactions (where one does not question that the other person is speaking the truth) lead people to develop a *truth bias*, that is, the assumption or “taking for granted” that others always mean what they say (Buller & Burgoon, 1996, 203-242). This bias makes everyday communication quicker and simpler while official, certain communication seems more foreign.

The prevalence of the natural human truth bias in interpersonal interaction speaks to the common opinion that communication should be holistic and truthful. If deception and lying were publicly accepted as norms in communication, witnesses would not be sworn to honesty and people would not unconcernedly and totally believe one another in everyday communication. In reality, truthfulness is a *de facto* element of communication. In keeping with this, “a liar is normally viewed as doing something morally wrong” (Galasiński, 2000, 115). Outright lying is condemned by society not only on religious grounds of violating the eighth commandment (Barnes, 1994), but even more so because, “a liar is someone who undermines the foundation on which human communication is built—the convention that we normally tell the truth” (Galasiński, 2000, 115). Someone who lies can be found out because it can be determined empirically whether a statement of his is false as well as whether he ought to have known the truth. He can be—and often is—tried and punished, if only at the very legalistic level of perjury (Galasiński, 2000, 115).

Although the intention of deception cannot be extrinsically determined (and thus cannot be penalized) with regard to a specific statement, the intrinsic pedagogy of deceptive communication can be examined. Deception is closely related to manipulation. Manipulation, as defined by Puzynina, is, “an attempt to affect the target in such a way that her or his behavior/action is an instrument of attaining the goals of the manipulator, who acts without using force but in such a way that the target does not know the goal of the manipulator's action” (Puzniya, 1992). Following this, deceptive conversation would utilize a combination of true

and/or false statements, as well as the inferences of natural language to prompt in the target some belief which the target does not identify with the manipulator. Puzniya regarded deception as essentially, “a type of linguistic manipulation, that is, manipulation by means of texts of natural language operating in the area of the truth and falsity of propositions” (Puzniya, 1992).

Puzniya’s definition of manipulation, as it applies to deception, shows that although deceptive communication often involves lies from the speaker and false belief in the listener, these elements are not essential to the deceptive-manipulative act. So long as the speaker intends to deceive and manipulate, both the means and the end of whatever conversation he has may be pure of outright lying. However, deception naturally involves some form of non-truth. This exists in the mind and intentions of the deceiver, even if nowhere else (Galasiński, 2000, 21).

Persuasion, like deceptive manipulation, is interested in compliance-gaining. Both, “are attempts at discursive representation,” and, “can be seen as strategies that language users employ in laying out, or imposing, a preferred version of reality” (Galasiński, 2000, 21). The distinction between them is that deception is a subset of persuasion, which itself is a subset of manipulation, much like lies are a subset of one’s broader attempt at deception. The persuader, as a manipulator, “sets out to induce a belief or attitude or, indeed, action on the part the addressee, and does it also without the addressee’s realizing it” (Puzniya, 1992). However, the persuader has a particular method for causing his aim to come about, while the manipulator does not necessarily. He constructs a value system, through which he leads the target to conclude that some options or actions are “good,” whereas others are “bad.” In deception, these labels are narrowed to “true” and “false.” The real difference between persuasion and manipulation is that the manipulator may use any means, any authority, and any method toward the discursive representation he desires in the target; the persuader appeals only to the authority of whatever is “better” and uses a definite, limited system to compel the target to move toward the same end (Galasiński, 2000, 21).

Outside of outright persuasive and manipulative statements, deception can occur through inference and implication. This is most commonly recognized in the phenomena of leading questions (Galasiński, 2000, 21). An experiment performed by Elizabeth Loftus and coworkers evidenced that when participants were asked a question about an event they experienced which contained elements that were not present in the original event, their response (and their memory) incorporated the false elements and used them to form conclusions (Loftus, 1979). A similar experiment showed that the alteration in emphasis of value of a single word (in this case, *hit* versus *smashed*) changed how participants regarded the occurrence of the event (Loftus and Palmer, 1974). Other experiments about police



lineups (Malpass & Divine, 1981), child abuse remembered as an adult (Loftus, 1993), and post event witness questioning at crime scenes (Chan, Thomas, & Bulevich, 2009) have shown that even slight inferences and implications in questions can influence and even modify the memories and ideas of the people being questioned.

These are all excellent examples of deception, because they follow the deformative pattern of deceptive communication. In the aforementioned instances of manipulation, persuasion, and questioning, the deceiver began with two concepts. The first was the true reality of whatever situation he wished the other to be deceived about. The second was a distortion of the first; this one was the concept which he wished the other to hold as true and to act upon. This was represented (or misrepresented, as the case may be) to the target not as it really was (that is, a maligned copy of the first, true concept), but as that which the target needed or wanted to know (the undeformed first concept). If the manipulation, persuasion, or directed questioning were carried out efficiently, then it caused the target to perceive the false concept as if it were the true concept, accept it, and indicate belief in it. Because the listener received the misinformation as the speaker intended, the interaction is classified as deception.

## Conclusion

Deception, though prevalent in language and especially in the coercive efforts of those bent on manipulation, is not limited to verbal or linguistic communication. In itself, deception is simply the attempt and promoting a false concept; therefore, it can be found in, “any symbolic activity of human beings” (Galasiński, 2000, 116). In every social atmosphere, “deception in human relations is not only abundant but normal” (Aitchison, 1996). However, the prevalence and acceptance of deception as a social norm cannot overcome the fact that it is intrinsically disordered and incomplete as a method of communication. Deception may become widely accepted—it may even become expected—but it will not replace truth in human communication. “Every lie contains a homage to the truth” (Tischner, 1990); that is, without some concept of truth no communication has value. In the same way, a lie or a line of deceptive manipulation is only believed because the target holds that it is true. The target expects the truth, and without some fragments of truth the deception is not believable and is cast out. In the same way, if deception departs from truthful norms (i.e. if it is not coherent) it will not be seen as communication at all (Tischner, 1990). In other words, without truth, even deception ceases to be.

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## STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF WILLIAM BLAKE'S POEM "A POISON TREE"

*Ahmed Rameez Ul Huda*

*Roshan Amber Ali*

*Shoaib Mahmood*

University of Sargodha

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### Abstract

Style varies from text to text depending on various factors like the form, meanings, grammar and structure. Stylistic analysis examines various aspects of the style of a text. This article aims to analyze William Blake's poem "A Poison Tree" from a stylistic point of view. The analysis is made under the aspects of graphological, syntactical, semantic and phonological patterns. This analysis is helpful in understanding the basic concept of poem that is human beings, along with the ability to reason and question, possess the capacity to hate, and yet also to forgive. Furthermore it highlights the difference between ordinary languages used in daily life compared to the literary language that is used in poetic text. This depicts the variation in style and the impact of this variation on the reader.

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**Keywords:** Stylistic analysis, style, William Blake, poem

### Introduction

The word stylistics is derived from style. Stylistics is a branch which defines different styles. It refers to the study of appropriate use of words or language in a sentence or writing. Widdowson (1975, p 3) defines stylistics as —the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation. He added by saying that stylistics is the link between literary criticism and linguistics. And has (as yet at least) no independent branch of its own. He also says that stylistics involves both literary criticism and linguistics, as its morphological construction suggests: the style- is relating it to the former or shape and the - istics to the method of writing.

Style has different meanings for different people. Carter (1989, p 14) believes that style is generally depends on linguistic levels. Due to these levels every text and writing is different from the other, hence every genre is different. Haynes (1989, p.3) is of the view that the study of style is the study of distinctions: looking at what was said against what might have been said.

Style is also called as variety. Style refers as the manner of expression which is different in various contexts. Style, being a versatile field, is defined depending on one's field of study.

### **Stylistics**

According to Leech and Short (1981, p.13) —Stylistics is the (linguistic) study of style, is rarely undertaken for its own sake, simply as an exercise in describing what use is made of language. They also said that the major aim of studying the stylistics is to explore the meanings and understand the linguistic features of the text. Short and Candlin (1989, p.183) said that —stylistics is a linguistic approach to the study of the literary texts. It thus embodies one essential part of the general course - philosophy; that of combining language and literary study. Widdowson (1975, p.3) defines stylistics: —the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation. He said that which differs stylistics from the literary criticism and linguistics is its linking technique. He also suggests that stylistics is in between linguistics and literary criticism and its function is to link between two. So, generally, it deals with both the literary and linguistic factors. Carter (1988, p.161) also thinks as Widdowson thinks. He also said that stylistics is a bridge (link) discipline between linguistics and literature. Stylistics is the study of the devices in languages such as rhetorical terms and syntactical devices that are taken to produce expressive or literary style. Stylistics is, therefore, a study which conjoins both literary criticism on the one hand and linguistics on the other as its morphological structure suggests: the 'style' is relating to literary criticism and the 'istics' is to linguistics. Widdowson (1975, p.3) said that stylistics expresses means whereas language and literature as a subjects

### **Style**

The concept of style has variety of meanings in and outside the literary text. It is commonly an issue that we use the term 'style' without knowing its meaning. According to Leech (1969) —style is the way in which something is spoken, written or performed. It refers to use of words, sentence structures and speaking style. Broadly, style is related to the personality of the person. Style reflects the thoughts of person's mind. It describes the way of person's speaking and writing. It is derived from the Latin word "elocutio" which means "style" and means "lexis" in Greek. Elocutio refers to the oral and written style of the language. Leech and Short (1981, p. 10) is of the view that the word —style has an uncontroversial meaning. It is a way in which language is being used in a given context for a given purpose. Birch (1989, p. 10) believes that both language and style cannot move beyond a limit on the supremacy of words. He strongly believes that these words contain specific meanings which differs it from the ordinary

language. Leech and Short (1981, p.11) also said that it is the selection of the words from a grand linguistic vocabulary. Style is involved in both, spoken and written, literary and nonliterary types of language but it is particularly associated with written form of the literary texts. Leech and Short (1981, p.15) further elaborates that style is the —dress of thoughts. It is the way of the writer to convey the message to the readers. It is upon the writer that how he makes his text understandable that the meanings are conveyed. Style or stylistic variations may also be analyzed in linguistic terms for example sentence types, phonological devices, lexical varieties, morphological varieties, rhetorical terms, semantic terms, and even semiotic terms and utterance.

### **Levels of stylistic analysis**

The levels of stylistics analysis are identified as:

#### **Graphology**

Leech (1969, p.39) claims that graphology exceeds orthography. —It refers to the whole writing system: punctuation and paragraphing as well as spacing. According to Crystal and Davy (1969, p.18) —Graphology is the analogous study of a languages writing system or orthography as seen in the various kinds of handwriting or topography. These are the formalized rules of writing. Alabi (2007, p.170) added that "a graphological discussion of style among other features entails the foregrounding of quotation marks, ellipses periods, hyphens, contracted forms, special structures, the full stop, the colon, the comma, the semicolon, the question mark, the dash, lower case letters, gothic and bold prints, capitalization, small print, spacing, italics etc". In other words, it deals with the systematic formation, structure and punctuation in the sentence.

#### **Phonology**

Lodge (2009, p.8) is of the view that —phonology is the study of linguistic systems, specifically the way in which sound represents, differences of meaning in a language. Ofuya (2007, p.14) believes that —phonology describes the ways in which speech sounds are organized in English into a system. Phonology basically deals with the sound patterns, the rhyming scheme and utterance of the word in the sentence.

#### **Phonological**

Devices are: rhyme elements, alliteration, consonance and assonance.

## **Morphology**

Mark and Kirsten (2005, p.1) said that —Morphology refers to the mental system involved in word formation or to the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure, and how they are formed. Morphological level deals with the construction of the word by adding prefixes and suffixes to the root words.

## **Lexico-Syntax**

It is the combination of two different words —Lexis and —syntax. Lexis means the vocabulary which is used in a language or in any writing for any purpose. Syntax means ‘Sentence construction’: how words group together to make phrases and sentences. So, it is used in the construction of the sentence as stylistics is used in literary style.

Lexico-Syntactic patterns may be obtained through various means which include unusual or inverted word order, omission of words and repetition. According to Tallerman(1998, p.1), "Lexico-Syntactic choices are obtained through devices such as piling of usual collocates, unusual collocates, archaic words, particular parts of speech, metaphor, simile, oxymoron etc".

## **Elements in stylistic analysis**

The elements of the levels of analysis are discussed briefly:

### **Graphological Devices**

#### **Punctuation**

Punctuation are the marks used in writing that divide sentences and phrases. It is the system of using the punctuation marks. These marks include full stop, comma, colon,semicolon, question mark, exclamation mark, apostrophe, hyphen, ellipsis, quotation marks, parentheses, brackets, etc.

#### **Paragraphing**

Paragraph means a separate part which contains information, usually of several lines or sentences. The first sentence of a paragraph starts on a new line.

### **Phonological devices**

#### **Rhyme elements**

It consist patterns of rhymes, the stressed pattern and the rhyming scheme which are followed in the poetry.



### **Alliteration**

It is the use of same letters or sounds at the beginning of words that are close together. It was used systematically in Old English poetry but in Modern English poetry is generally used for a particular effect.

### **Consonance**

It is a half rhyme in which final consonants are repeated but with different preceding vowels.

### **Assonance**

It is the effect created when two syllables in words that are closed together have the same vowel sound but different consonants or the same consonants but different vowels.

### **Onomatopoeia**

It is the effect produced when the words used contain the similar sounds to the noises they describe: "murmuring of innumerable bees".

### **Morphological devices**

#### **Affixes**

It is a process of forming new words by putting morphemes before some words. It further divides into prefixes or suffixes. These are two popular types of morphological operations. Prefixes generally alter the meanings of the words and suffixes changes its part of speech.

#### **Coinages**

It is the process of forming new words from the existing ones.

### **Lexico-syntactic devices**

#### **Anastrophe**

Anastrophe is the inversion of the natural or usual word order'. The use of anastrophe secures emphasis and focuses the readers' attention.

#### **Parenthesis**

It entails the insertion of some verbal unit (extra information, and after thought or a comment) in a position that interrupts the normal syntactical flow of the sentence'.

#### **Ellipsis**

Ellipsis entails the deliberate omission of a word or words, which are readily implied by the content: It is used to create brevity reemphasis or ambiguity'.

### **Asyndeton**

This is the deliberate omission of conjunctions between a series of related clauses. Asyndeton produces a hurried rhythm in the sentence.

### **Anaphora**

The use of words that refers to or replaces another word used earlier in the sentence

### **Epizeuxis**

Repetition of a word or phrase without any breaks at all.

### **A poison tree**

#### **Introduction to the Poem**

In "A Poison Tree", William Blake critically discusses the two opposing forces, uncovering the inherent weakness in humans and the effects of these innate flaws. Through the use of extended metaphors and vivid imagery Blake symbolically portrays this fundamental flaw through the poem. The central theme in the poem is hatred and anger, dominating much of the author's thoughts. Blake expresses this through the introduction of a clever parallelism the treatment of anger between a friend and a foe.

Through this, Blake emphasizes the nature of anger – while expressing and letting go of wrath ends it, suppression nurtures it. Blake startles the reader with the clarity of the poem, and with metaphors that can apply to many instances of life. A Poison Tree is an allegory. The tree here represents repressed wrath; the water represents fear; the apple is symbolic of the fruit of the deceit which results from repression. This deceit gives rise to the speaker's action in laying a death-trap for his enemy. The deeper meaning of the poem is that aggressive feelings, if suppressed, almost certainly destroy personal relationships.

### **Biography of the Poet**

William Blake was an English poet, painter, and printmaker. Largely unrecognized during his lifetime, Blake is now considered a seminal figure in the history of both the poetry and visual arts of the Romantic Age. His prophetic poetry has been said to form "what is in proportion to its merits the least read body of poetry in the English language". His visual artistry has led one contemporary art critic to proclaim him "far and away the greatest artist Britain has ever produced". Although he lived in London his entire life except for three years spent in Felpham he produced a diverse and symbolically rich corpus, which embraced the imagination as "the body of God", or "Human existence itself".

## Methodology

This chapter will provide a stylistic analysis of the poem 'Early Spring' of Wordsworth. The lexico-syntactic patterns and choices, phonological, graphological and morphological levels of analysis are going to form the basis of the analysis.

## Text of the poem

### A poison Tree

*William Blake*

I was angry with my friend;  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears,  
Night and morning with my tears:  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night.  
Till it bore an apple bright.  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,  
When the night had veil'd the pole;  
In the morning glad I see;  
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

## Stylistics analysis

### Graphological Level

#### i. **Foregrounding:**

Title of the poem is written in bold letters and name of the poet in italic.

#### ii. **Paragraphing:**

This poem is consisting on 04 quatrains (stanzas). There is double spacing among all paragraphs.

#### iii. **Punctuation:**

a. **Full stops:** 07 times

Full-stop is used to end a complete thought not necessarily the end of a stanza; it is also used to end the whole poem.

**b. Commas: 05 times**

The poet employs comma for very short pause and to separate sentential elements in the poems.

**c. Colons: 02times** The mark ( : ) used to introduce a list, a summary, an explanation, etc. or before reporting what somebody has said.

**d. Semi colons: 03 times**

It has been used by the poet for a longer pause than that of a comma but not as long as that of the full-stop.

**iv. Contracted forms:**

The poet employed the above contracted forms to create an illusion of speech. In this poem poet has used contracted form in line number 14 and 16.

**Phonological Level**

**v. Alliteration:**

This is generally taken to be the repetition of the initial consonant in two or more adjacent words.

1. I was angry with my friend;

3. I was angry with my foe:

6. Night and morning with my tears:

7. And I sunned it with smiles,

8. And with soft deceitful wiles.

10. Till it bore an apple bright.

**vi. Consonance:**

It is a half rhyme in which final consonants are repeated but with different preceding vowels.

I was angry with my friend;

I told my wrath, my wrath did end.

I was angry with my foe:

I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I waterd it in fears,

Night and morning with my tears:

And I sunned it with smiles,

And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night.

Till it bore an apple brightt.

And my foe beheld it shine,

And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,  
When the night had dveil' d the pole;  
In the morning glad I see;  
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

vii. **Assonance:**

The poet has been able to use the repetition of sounds of words in linking related words to reinforce meaning. They provide tone and musical colour and they aid memorability.

2. I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
4. I told it not, my wrath did grow.
5. And I watered it in fears,
6. Night and morning with my tears:
7. And I sunned it with smiles,
8. And with soft deceitful wiles.
10. Till it bore an apple bright.
11. And my foe beheld it shine,
12. And he knew that it was mine.

**Morphological level**

No affixation and coinage have been found in the poem.

**Lexical Level**

No such elements of lexical analysis have been found in the poem which includes anastrophe, parenthesis, ellipsis, asyndeton, anaphora and epizeuxis etc.

**Rhyme scheme & meter**

All the verses of the poem have the same syllable pattern, so that their meter is the same and it has tetrameter. All the stanzas of the poem are also rhymed.

I was angry with my friend;	<b>A</b>
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.	<b>A</b>
I was angry with my foe:	<b>B</b>
I told it not, my wrath did grow.	<b>B</b>

And I watered it in fears,	<b>A</b>
Night and morning with my tears:	<b>A</b>
And I sunned it with smiles,	<b>B</b>
And with soft deceitful wiles.	<b>B</b>

And it grew both day and night.	<b>A</b>
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Till it bore an apple bright.	<b>A</b>
And my foe beheld it shine,	<b>B</b>
And he knew that it was mine.	<b>B</b>

And into my garden stole,	<b>A</b>
When the night had veil'd the pole;	<b>A</b>
In the morning glad I see;	<b>B</b>
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.	<b>B</b>

## Conclusion

The choice of words by the writer or the poet plays a very important in meaning making. It helps the reader or the hearer to understand the intention and the message the poet is trying to pass across. Stylistics, by this analysis has shown that there is a distinction between poetic and non- poetic language as a means of defining literature, language manipulated in ways that signal it as different from 'ordinary' language.

## Pedagogical implications

The ultimate aim of this work is to explore ways in which language use has been integrated in the poem. It is also aimed at analyzing some of the specific characteristics that give the poem its identity. This refers to the recurrent features of stylistics employed by the writer. In other words, this work will be concerned with striking and marked use of words in the poem in order to enhance effective transfer of message. The effects and functions of the stylistic elements as regards the poem will be looked at in the analysis.

## Scope of the study

This work shall be exclusively stylistic, and analysis will be conducted through the use of the following levels of analysis: lexico-syntactic patterns and choices, phonology, graphology and morphology. Analysis will be conducted using the stylistic elements in each of the above mentioned levels of analysis, such that it could provide a guide and be relevant to future researchers in a related field.

## Limitations of the study

The time is too short to deal properly with the analysis of the poem. The material is not as much as it should be.

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