



Critical Analysis Essay Examples

Discussion Board Posting:

My impression of Dennett's location throughout the story is that he is where he is told. When the experiment started, he was supposed to be in Houston, then he was sent to Tulsa for the radioactive device, and at last he returned to the laboratory in Houston. During all the time of the experiment, I believe that Dennett was where his body was, and not where his original brain was because he was still living the scenarios where he was without feeling that he was in the laboratory. Additionally, the only theory that in my opinion can relate to Dennett's experience is the Memory Theory. In this theory is said that we exist throughout time as long as we have memories from the past. In the experiment, Dennett clearly remembers what his favorite music was along with other events from the past. In this case, although his brain was outside of his body he is still himself if we relate to the Memory Theory. Lastly, Dennett's thought experiment deals directly with the problem of personal identity. In the beginning, he understands who he is and why he is taking decisions. Then, when his brain is taken out of his body, and it develops two sides with different personalities, he doesn't know who to be. The last part of the essay is about deciding which part of the brain he wants to be the responsible adult or the adventurous human. At the ending, he decides to keep both aspects of himself, but this decision took him much thinking because he was dealing with the problem of personal identity.

General overview

Dennett's condition brings the understanding of the philosophy behind human's brain and body. The philosophical topic to be analyzed is the relationship between an individual's body and brain. The body of a person, though controlled by the brain, can exist without the existence of the brain. The experiment done to Dennett proves this outcome. Also, an individual's common sense views that

personally identify of a person is tied intimately to the brain. To explain the statement, thoughts of a person occur in the brain. Any interruption to the brain would lead to the disruption in the reflections. Through the analysis of memory theory and personal identity, it will be possible to understand the relationship between body, brain, and thoughts of a person, as explained by the author.

Restatement of the author's argument

According to the author, an individual can be where the body is but not where the brain is. The whole experiment is proved by Dennett's case when his brain was removed. The fictional account of Dennett as explained by narrated by the author involves series of body and brain surgeries. This series aims at illustrating the theory of personal identity. In describing the whole scenario, Dennett's body had to be separated with the brain, because of the secret government mission which he was to fulfill. Upon the separation of the brain and the body, his brain was replaced to an artificial brain, connected to his primitive brain via the radio waves. From the author's illustration, Dennett's body, though not connected directly to the brain, is associated with the brain via the artificial brain. It receives all the signals from the brain for action and sends stimuli to the back of the brain as well. Through Dennett's hypothesis, he claims that he is not where his body is, and this is the center of the author's argument. Human personality is preserved in the brain even if the body is separated from the brain, and even when a different body has connected to the brain again, the individual's personality is retained. As the author argues, Dennett's personal identity remains and was not interrupted when his brain was connected to a different body after the government mission. The theory applies to every individual in that human brain controls the thoughts and personality of an individual, even if the body is changed, just like in the case of Dennett.

Critical Analysis

From the author's posting and argument, it is true that personal identity is determined by the brain and not the body. Therefore, there is a no relationship between the body and the brain whatsoever. However, to counteract the argument, the

action of the body is determined by the brain. Though it clear that personal identity of an individual is all determined by the brain, will the behavior of the individual affect the body in any way? Biologically, the stimulus impulse from the body is transmitted to the brain, and concurrently the response pulses are again sent to the body for action to be taken by the same body (Perry et al. 125). Taking an example of where the individual's personality leads to being talkative and fast moving when it comes to action, there will be a possible measure in the case that the brain sends impulses to the body.

Through Dennett's experimental case, upon getting an accident, his whole body ceases to function with the artificial brain. Therefore, the process led to the shifting of the point-of-view from the location of his body at this time of the accident to the vat where the brain sits. It all means that there is a close relationship between the body's action and the brain's activity. The relationship between the body and the brain is as well depicted when an individual senses that he has been given a new body, as in the case of Dennett.

From the memory theory, once a person is the same self and rational being, he retains the same personal identity. However, this can be refuted by the fact that self is formed of the body and the results of a person's self-are reflected in the body actions. With any small change in an individual's self, there will be a concurrent shift in the personality or the personal identity. Once there is a change in the personal identity, there will be an absolute change in the body actions. Since the brain is capable of realizing the individual's body, one's identity can only be fully expressed in the original body but not with a counterfeit or a different body. According to Perry et al. (2015, 130), the individual's personal identity can extend as far as one's consciousness, and hence the effect might only be seen in the original body but not the counterfeit (Perry et al. 130). From a psychological view, the consciousness of an individual has an equation with the memory and hence the personality also depends on the knowledge. Most of the times, a person is defined to be conscious when his body is with the brain at the same place. The definition remains to be literal as well as mental. The functions of the body are properly managed by the brain and hence there is an association in their functions and activities. Mentally, the thoughts of an

individual should be determined by the existence of the brain and the body in the same location.

From the reality of an individual's personality, various values and virtues come with it, and they are all reflected in the body activities. For instance, a person who is mean, unkind and unhappy, the actions and words would depict the same characters (Hood, 15). Therefore, someone is not only his body, his emotions, his personality but also his brain, because all the thoughts and decisions are determined by the brain. However, the body serves as a reflection and a practical part of human that does according to the brain's response to the stimuli.

Defense of the philosophical position

Everyone tends to associate the body with the brain, but by just removing the body and connecting the brain to another body would dispute this statement. However, according to Hood (2012, 21), the brain is simply being determined with the stimuli from the body. As humans are thinking of shedding off their physical bodies for some remote-controlled artificial bodies, there is an effect in the brain. Philosophically, the questions tend to arise regarding the immateriality of the soul (Hood, 21).

In the same view and argument, each person's identity is tied to some particular perspective of perceiving thoughts and ideas. The perception in a real sense has to have a close and immediate intersection with the body. As the brain tends to think and reveal the real person's identity, it remains a fact to have the accurate perception of ideas in the behavior of the individual. Though the behavior might as well have an interaction with the brain, it is much related to the body response as well. Therefore, any response of the body will be determined by an individual's perception of any thought as pictured by the brain. The body seems to be the center of relations defining one's view of the world. As the brain forms the subject of the perceptions' content, the body determines the viewpoint of which a person tends to perceive the world (Perry et al. 130). It will be at rare instances that the perspectives and identity switch back to the brain at times that the body ceases to be the center of relations that ties an individual to the world. Just the same way that the body brings a

close relationship between a person and the world, it is the same way that the brain bears a close relation between one's perception and the world. Therefore, this close interrelation cannot be refuted, but integrated so that the body and the brain work for the wellbeing of an individual. Relating the argument to Dennett's case, his perspective was not tied to the body, and once the body was separated from the brain, he could not tell exactly where he is. The same case still retains to every individual. When the body and the brain do not work for the same cause, a person tends to be unconscious, and it will be complicated to understanding the place of existence and the reason for existence. Hence, though the identity of an individual is determined by the brain, it would be expedient to understand that the cooperation between the brain and the body makes the person conscious, both physically and psychologically.

Hood, Bruce. *The self-illusion: How the social brain creates identity*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
Perry, John, Michael Bratman, and John Martin Fischer. "Introduction to philosophy: Classical and contemporary readings." (2015).



Critical Analysis Of Civilizations And Food Production

Introduction

Agriculture triggered a significant change in the society. For many years, people used to hunt and gather food from the local environment. They depended on plants and animals provided by nature. Farming was invented around 200 years ago, and this enabled individuals to access new sources of food and energy that transformed the way people lived. The increase in the production of food resulted in a rise in population that helped the humans to develop settlements. The increase in population led to the development of civilizations. Civilizations enabled people to practice agriculture which resulted in increased food supply, attain economic stability and began a settled life.

African Civilization

The introduction of new methods of new crops and methods of food production from South Asia, agriculture changed many societies in Africa (McKay 271). The range of changes was dependent on geography and climate variations. Some of the communities such as Bantus grasped an opportunity of domestication of animals and agriculture. They also took advantage of skills of iron working that developed in western and northern Africa that later spread across the southern and central part of Africa. In Africa Agriculture started very early and the knowledge of cultivating plants moved from ancient Judea to the west. Improved agriculture helped farmers to cultivate crops such as sorghum, millet, and sorghum among others (Guissepi 05). A majority of African communities started a sedentary lifestyle gradually that include clearing the villages, depending on root crops such as cassava and yams, fishing and clearing fields. Those who were hunters and gatherers only lived in the separate parts of African continent.

Settle agriculture continued to spread in different parts of Africa particularly East Africa between 1500 and 1000 B.C.E. People in this region raised cattle, grew cereals and used tools made of stones and woods. The practice of keeping livestock spread rapidly compared to the cultivation of crops. Cattle were highly prized by people of this region. Most of the agreements of trade, political compacts, and marriage alliances involved cattle in negotiation. The spread of ironworking also influenced early societies in Africa. Better tools were improved that helped in the clearing of bush and other activities that led to the increase in food production (Guisepe 08).

Civilization had a negative impact as it caused displacement of some communities (McKay 272). With the rise in population due to increase in food production, there was a strain of natural resources including land for farming. As a result, some communities moved to search for greener pastures as the conflicts broke. As the people developed a settled life, they caused a change in climate as a result of cutting vegetation. Some communities found the change in climatic conditions as unfavorable, and hence they moved to other areas (New World Civilizations 02).

Modern life is still affected by African civilization. Agriculture remains the backbone of many parts of Africa. Most of the communities cultivate crops and domesticate animals. However, due to the limited resources including land, most of the people opt to do zero grazing especially on the part of livestock. The livestock is meant for milk or meat, and this has improved production to feed the population in developing countries in Africa.

Western Ancient Civilization

Communities in different parts of America started gathering wild food and cultivating crops around 800 B.C.E. (McKay 303). Some of the earliest crops include avocados, chilies, and beans. At one point those who were living what is now Mexico on southern part began raising maize that was recognized as an important crop. Different types of maize were bred for a variety of use.

Maize was considered as the source of life for human and hence had a religious meaning. In America, farming was not limited to the food stuff. Some of the communities that had settled along the coast practiced irrigation to grow crops such as cotton and beans among others. Advancement of agriculture had a significant impact on the people. Land cultivation brought a steady and reliable supply of food that contributed to high rate of fertility. The population of Americans increased steadily that gave room to the rise of first urban societies. Political and religious structures began to be built in South America. It was a sign that people had already developed a settled life. Further, the surplus of agricultural produce gave rise to the trade, and this enabled the individuals to get what they did not have as far as food was concerned (McKay 304).

The development of agriculture brought slavery and slave trade (The Age of Discovery 07). Individuals from African and other countries were sold to provide labor to the agricultural fields. This caused immense suffering to those who were under slavery. There was disruption of natural selection. For instance, a variety of various hybrid of maize were produced for different purposes. Some of the hybrids could not do well with fluctuating climatic conditions (McKay 305).

Western Ancient still affects the modern life. For instance, communities especially those along the coastal areas used irrigation to increase food supply. Today, irrigation is still practiced in arid and semi-arid areas. Some parts still experience low precipitation, and hence irrigation plays an important role in supplying crops with water to cater for the growing human population.

Middle East Civilization

The full civilization emerged about 300 B.C. in the Middle East in Tigris-Euphrates. Later on, it developed along the Nile region and spread to different parts of Middle East. Civilization provided a framework for the majority of developments that took place in the world history (McKay 367). Agricultural civilization led to the emergence of cities as people did not live in towns. The rise

of cities had a significant influence and power into the countryside. Further, cities depended on wider attributes of civilization among them political organization and trade which was extensive. Cities were not founded until when the Middle East produced enough food for consumption and surplus for trade. Merchants played the role of transporting food to the city to feed the growing population and carried goods from the city to other places. A solid political organization led to the formation of a legitimate government that helped in regulating the relationship between countryside and the cities (The New World 07).

Middle East civilization had a negative impact on the societies. It created classes in the society as some people especially the merchants who were involved in providing transport of the agricultural produce became wealthy (The Age of Discovery 06). Even though farming increased food supply to many, a significant proportion of the farmers remained poor.

The civilization has an effect on modern life. As the agriculture developed, some of the farmers opted large scale farming whereas others chose small scale farming. Those who engaged in large-scale agriculture benefit a lot as they could sell their produce in large scale. The same practice exists today as there are small-scale farmers and large-scale farmers in the Middle East and other parts where agriculture developed (Craig 14).

Maya civilization

The civilization changed the practices used in the production of food (New World Civilizations 03). It enabled the communities to start reliable food production which was crucial to their well-being. The cycle of farming was linked to religion and astronomy. Since a majority of the Maya population engaged in agriculture for means of livelihood, management of natural resources including land resulted in a harvest that was more dependable and hence supporting economic growth. The increase in food production caused the Maya population to increase that forced people

to look for other settlements. The quantity of agricultural production depended on the location. Some parts were more fertile than others, and this caused the people to raise fields to collect deposits of silt to improve soil fertility.

Nevertheless, Maya civilization on agriculture had also a bad effect. As more land was cleared to plant crops, soil lost its fertility quickly. As a result, the productivity to feed the growing population decline. Other activities that depended on agricultural produce such as trade also reduced due to the decline in the quantity of agricultural output (Craig 18)

Today, Maya community still practices agriculture to feed its population (New World Civilizations 04). Some of the methods used during the process of civilization are still practiced. For instance, waste management was critical especially during summers. Water is still managed through modern ways such as storage in tanks and other places for use when there is a dry spell.

Conclusion

From the analysis, it is apparent that the four civilizations have similarities as well as differences in food production. The development of agriculture enabled them to start urban settlements. Agricultural productivity increased, and there was a growth of cities. However, they employed different methods of agriculture which still affect the modern life.

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Critical Article

The article by Nick Bilton (*Internet Pirates Will Always Win*) points out the immense development in online piracy and the infringement of copyright issues. A one major concern of the writer is the recurrent challenges faced by authorities seeking to curb piracy sites on the internet, such as the BitTorrent. As much as content owners seek to fight such websites as BitTorrent, the author provides case examples to show that the problem will persist as long as internet remains active. Bilton seems to agree with respondents' views on the inadequate goodwill by media companies to solve piracy challenges. The general opinion of the author is that content owners should disregard the efforts of stopping illegal downloading from the internet, and instead seek alternative solutions. Similar sorts of sentiment are shared by Andersson where a Pirate Bay's press spokesman revealed that the Swedish authorities could not stop their distribution activities. Conversely, content owner may lose while attempting such impossible tactics.

In relation to the article by Jonas Andersson (*For the Good of the Net: The Pirate Bay as a Strategic Sovereign*), Bilton insinuates that the general Internet public has become proactive in setting new standards of digital content. Both articles agree to the argument that online pirate entities have gained an upper hand in the creation and determination of technical protocols for content distribution. The superior aspect of Internet pirates renders the Entertainment industry as an inferior entity that is forced to react to pre-determined terms and conditions of distribution. Andersson's article provides that the immense control by online entities puts legitimate content owners as visible perpetrators who facilitate some forms of actions.

Both articles are based on credible information obtained from interviews and comments from file-sharers. Through online interviews, the articles sought to justify the actions behind pirate activities. Irrespective of the content authenticity, the actions of illegal sharing or downloading represented a norm that online community exhibit across the world population. As an extension of Bilton view on the fight against this vice, Andersson emphasizes on politicization of the issue which ultimately frustrates the efforts attain a competitive entertainment industry. According to Andersson, strategic instantiations of distribution increasingly replaces the tactical of consumption as consumers take control of content distribution

Contrary to Bilton's article, Andersson utilizes a vast range of literature relating post-humanism conditions of online distributors. Such sources includes "(Haraway, 1991)" and "(cf. Linde, 2006)" which elicit certain understanding of some of "free-content movement" by highlighting positive externalities while sorting out the negative ones. The sources used by Andersson provide a wider view of the global situation compared to the narrow focus of Bilton which revolves around a few online distributors such as BitTorrent and pirates Bay. Andersson's article provides a detailed view of the wider perspective relating to websites and server locations.

A comparison of the two articles reveals that Andersson's paper provides a global view as entertainment industry is regarded as a public affair where the role of p2p-based content sharing exhibits a public nature and therefore, content distributors such as The Pirate Bay are obliged to fulfill some public responsibilities.

As counter measures, Bilton does not provide clear guidelines on resolving the illegal sharing and content distribution. However, he out-rules ancient legal frameworks as ineffective in the current generation. Conversely, Andersson propose the use of Network Effect and Political solutions. The author suggests that creation of more political entities such as Piratbyran and Pirate Bay may aid in attaining a social cohesion and serving as discursive nexus. Piratbyran, an affiliated website to the Pirate Bay provides guidelines on how to execute file sharing besides other academic and intellectual significance.

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