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Natasha Phillips

CUNY New York City College of Technology.

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What does it mean to be human?

By: Natasha Phillips

Professor Laureen Park
ENG 1773 ID: Weird Science

Abstract

This Poster will go in depths of the different elements, that will allow readers to understand from the author's perspective on the question, what does it mean to be human? Various elements that will be discussed will include the following: wealth, social media, and religion. These three elements alone play a huge role in the lives of individuals all across the world. Furthermore, while discussing these elements, there will be critical concepts that readers will be able to think about based on additional facts being provided about each element. Lastly, the different types of resources that will be discussed in this poster will help readers to understand how each element affects our lives.

Methods Used

The method that I have used in order to do this research is merely searching scholarly sources such as books, articles, and journals on topics that were mentioned in class. Also, I was able to broaden my research on the topics that were similar to what was taught in class to find a different perspective.

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Self-Interest

An example of self-interest is in the book, "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" it talked about Henrietta Lacks, who was an individual who had cancer. Scientists were able to find out that her cells can reproduce every 24 hours based on the test tubes volume doubling in size overnight. Once this discovery was made, her cells were labeled HeLa cells which of course was short for her name. "Not long after Henrietta's death, planning began for HeLa factory-a massive operation that would grow to produce trillions of HeLa cells each week." (Skloot, P. 93) By selling her blood for profit before and after her death without her families consent they became extortionist in order to further their career. It is human nature to want to push yourself to become better as a human being. However, in this case, they are portraying the negative aspects, which is to do something that is deemed immoral to better their own careers.

Survival Of The Fittest

Survival of the fittest is a concept based on animals being able to adapt to their environment. One of the most notable examples taught in classes is with a giraffe. In the example, it showed that one giraffe is tall enough to reach a tree, and the other giraffe is shown dying as a result of not being tall enough to eat from the same tree. With this being mentioned, some people might say that survival of the fittest for humans is based on having specific necessities, such as food, water and having clothes all while trying to adapt to the current environment. In the article, "Why African History?" author Dr. Clarke talked about how Africa was a civilization that some people overlooked even though it has not only flourished but survived through darkest of times. In the article, Africa was referred to as a "man-made mystery." The man-made mystery could be defined as something that only locals would be able to understand. With this discovery, there is a quote stating that "It is unfortunate that so much of the history of Africa has been written by conquerors, foreigners, missionaries, and adventurers." (Clarke, 1997) What can be interpreted from this quote is that even though Africa was able to survive as a whole, there are people that do not know about most or some of the rich history behind it. Secondly, some people may not factually provide accurate information on specific historical events in Africa. Furthermore, author Clarke talked about Africa being able to survive through devastation by enabling a critical event such as black history month that is designed to educate people on horrific events that allowed African Americans to gain equality and recognition.

Wealth

When it comes to wealth, there are those who are considered to be fortunate to have money; Whether it is because of parents or something that occurred in life that ignited a flame in an individual to become successful. "Economic Freedom has been the institutional characteristic with the highest level of consensus amongst researchers." (Amate-Fortes et al., 2017) There are different types of economic freedom that someone can have based on the kind of country that an individual lives in. For example, if someone were to live in a developing country such as Brazil the amount of money one can get would be scarce especially with the job opportunities within that country. Whereas, someone who lives in a non-developing country like Spain would be able to have a higher chance of becoming financially stable. Aristotle is a famous philosopher that has been talked about and studied for thousands of years. In the book I of *Nicomachean Ethics*, it talked about certain situations in life occurring from events. Some activities in life could be based on humans having self-desire, which causes an effect on the daily life of a human being. "The life of money-making is one undertaken under compulsion, and wealth is evidently not the good we are seeking; for it is merely useful and for the sake of something else." (Aristotle, 350 B.C.E) The reason why it affects humans is that it will influence people's decision-making skills. Furthermore, cash changes human beings because it tests their skills on having both rational and irrational decisions based on the self-interest that one may have.

Social Media

When talking about how social media can affect people in everyday lives. There was a study that was conducted to see how social media can influence college undergraduates and to what extent. The research was conducted to see whether people were able to find out if an individual is different based on how they account for themselves on social media. "Many social media platforms, especially microblogs such as Twitter, are frequently used for real-time information sharing." (Sin, P. 1795) When talking about social media, many people are using this platform to allow their voices to be heard whether it is about a product, political or even to talk about their everyday lives (vlogs). These are just some of the many ways that social media allows us to stay in tune with the world that we live in. Human existence has multiple different structures but wanting to communicate and fit in is one way that humans survive.

Religion

In an article from Pojman states that when making decisions people think about the justified belief or a truth related to mathematics. "A person has a duty to believe exactly according to the available evidence. Hence there is no excuse for anyone to believe anything on insufficient evidence." (Pojman, P. 160) With this said, many of us make rational decisions based on information that is accurately given to us. Having a religious viewpoint on specific issues in life can help to allow someone the opportunity to come up with a rational decision. Being able to be rational involves an individual to find the truth behind statements. Furthermore, the article gives a perspective based on both a religious believer and a non-believer. In the article, it talked about how a religious believer would find themselves in a deep thought where they can test their findings along with drawing out conclusions based on the truth that they currently know. Religion plays a huge role in decision making primarily when it is based on an individual's morals. Besides, someone who does not practice religion, on the other hand, would still try to make rational decisions based on their ethics and morals.

Results

When looking at all the articles, I noticed that there is a constant theme. One consistent idea that I have to see is that money affects human beings' way of life in modern times. Money might have an overall effect on human behavior. Another theme I have noticed is that money ties into decision-making skills that one can acquire. Some people would do an action based on their self-interest. In the book, "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks," the scientist used their authority to abstract cells in order to create a business because of their selfishness to not only gain popularity but also to acquire money. Finally, when thinking about humanity, I feel that in years to come people are going to be invested in trying to find ways to make money based on self-desires.