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### **Critical Thinking in the Film "The 12 Angry Men"**

A varied group of jurors must decide the destiny of a young man accused of murder in the classic movie 12 Angry Men. The film provides a potent illustration of the significance of critical and innovative thinking through their contentious arguments of the characters and disagreements in the face of group bias. Henry Fonda's portrayal of Juror Eight exemplifies this strategy since he employs logic, creativity, and a willingness to question the presumptions of his fellow jurors to get a fair conclusion (William n.p.). Therefore, it is crucial to examine the nature of critical and creative thinking and how these two skills must be employed in tandem for group problem-solving. It is also worth exploring how recent developments in the study of the brain hemispheres affect our comprehension of these processes. Juror Eight's use of logic and creativity to overturn his peers' presumptions and reach a fair decision in 12 Angry Men exemplifies how critical and creative thinking can overcome group bias.

The ability to analyze information, recognize biases and assumptions, and assess arguments using logic and supporting evidence is known as critical thinking. On the other hand, creative thinking entails coming up with original concepts and solutions by considering issues from several angles and utilizing imagination and intuition (Rear 665). In the movie 12 Angry Men, Juror Eight exemplifies both ways of thinking as he challenges the validity of the evidence placed before the jury, as he probes the witnesses' motivations, and as he proposes alternate

theories for the crime. To reconstruct the murder scene and evaluate the likelihood of other situations, he also employs his imagination (William n.p.). This kind of thinking is essential in the fight for justice because it makes it possible to analyze the evidence in greater detail and depth.

The significance of Logos, or evidence-based approaches to argument, is also emphasized throughout the movie. Throughout the discussion, Juror Eight provides evidence to back up his claims, such as the assertion that the murder weapon was not a special one and could have been acquired by anyone (William n.p.). He also questions the reliability of eyewitness testimony by pointing out contradictions in their testimonies. Juror Eight can establish a solid and convincing case for acquittal by relying on evidence rather than feelings or personal prejudices. Thus, when he challenges his other jurors to consider a situation where the prosecution's eyewitness testimony might be false, Juror Eight also demonstrates creative thinking (William n.p.). He believes that the witness might have been wearing glasses that blurred her eyesight or that she might have mistakenly identified the defendant because she saw him through a train that was passing. Juror Eight can plant the seeds of doubt in his other jurors' minds and persuade them to acquit the defendant by utilizing his imagination to challenge the presumptions of the prosecution's case.

The movie also serves as an example of the value of ethos, or authority-based strategies for argumentation. Early in the film, Juror Eight is shown to be a careful and courteous listener who is open to considering the perspectives of others. This establishes his trustworthiness. (Livingston 39). As the trial goes on, his fellow jurors appreciate him more and start paying closer attention to his arguments. Juror Eight successfully gets his peers to challenge their

original biases and presumptions by earning their confidence and demonstrating that he is a trustworthy person to listen to.

The role of pathos, or argumentative strategies based on emotions, is also highlighted in the movie. Even though these sorts of arguments can be deceptive and misleading, emotional appeals can be a potent weapon for persuasion. In *12 Angry Men*, the emotions of the jury members are running high as they consider the serious choice they have before them (Sapienza 7). By appealing to the jurors' sense of fairness and justice and pointing out that the defendant's life is on the line, Juror Eight is able to capitalize on this emotional energy. Additionally, he employs empathy to comprehend the intentions of the witnesses and the defendants, enabling him to construct a more complex and sympathetic case for acquittal.

According to recent findings in brain hemispheric science, critical and creative thinking are interrelated processes that utilize both hemispheres of the brain rather than being mutually incompatible (Velichkovsky et al. 548). While the right hemisphere is frequently linked to intuition, creativity, and imagination, the left hemisphere is typically connected with analytical and rational thinking. Iain McGilchrist contends in his TED Talk "The Divided Brain" that the two hemispheres must cooperate for problem-solving to be balanced and comprehensive (McGilchrist n.p.). Juror Eight is an excellent example of this strategy because he questioned the presumptions of his other jurors and arrived at a fair conclusion by combining both logical and creative thinking.

In this way, Juror Eight challenges his peers' presumptions and comes to a fair conclusion using critical and innovative thinking throughout the movie. As an illustration of what he is able to achieve, consider the passage in the film where he refutes the idea that the defendant's

switchblade knife is singular and therefore had to have been the murder weapon (William n.p.). He notes that similar knives are easily found in shops near where the murder happened and that the prosecution's case is predicated on the premise that the defendant must have bought the blade from a particular pawn shop, an assumption that hasn't been proven beyond a reasonable doubt. To quote Juror 8, "just because the boy bought a knife doesn't necessarily make him a killer."

The movie also highlights the perils of group bias and the value of personal critical thought. Many jurors have preconceived opinions about the case before they enter the deliberation chamber, so they are initially hesitant to explore other possibilities. For instance, Juror 3 denies proof that the defendant is innocent and is sure he is guilty based largely on his own emotional response. He nearly yells, "He's guilty! Don't you see it?" However, Juror Eight's persistent probing and argumentation eventually helps his fellow jurors to reevaluate their presumptions and biases. Juror Nine observes, "This gentleman chose to stand alone against the ridicule of others. That's his right. It takes a great deal of courage to stand alone even if you believe in something very strongly" (12 Angry Men).

The development, analysis, and comprehension of the arguments provided in the movie all depend on using evidence-based argumentation (logos), authority-based argumentation (ethos), and emotion-based argumentation (pathos) as a combined set of persuasive tools. The use of reasoning by Juror Eight illustrates an evidence-based strategy, as he bases his claims on the testimony given in court (Alazas 1). He uses his creativity to appeal to his peers' emotions and ask them to think about how their judgment would affect the defendant and his family emotionally. This is an illustration of an emotion-based strategy as well. His willingness to respect other people's knowledge, like Juror 12, who mentions his employment in the advertising

sector and points out the errors in the prosecution's presentation of the evidence, also demonstrating use of authority.

Strong critical and creative thinkers should also practice intellectual humility and restrain their terror when faced with the potential of being incorrect. Juror Eight exhibits intellectual humility by being open to considering different viewpoints from his own and accepting that everyone of us has limitations on knowledge and experience. Additionally, he is ready to admit when he is mistaken, as when he modifies his opinion regarding the date of the witness's testimony (William n.p.). Many of his fellow jurors by contrast, are more concerned with appearing correct than actually reaching a just and true conclusion.

The film *12 Angry Men* provides a powerful illustration of the value of critical and original thought in the face of prejudice. The just verdict reached by Juror Eight happens because of his careful application of logic, creativity, and his readiness to question the assumptions of his fellow jurors. This case serves as a reminder of the value of these abilities in group problem-solving. We must develop critical and creative thinking skills and combine them to create honest answers as we traverse complex social concerns. We can follow in the footsteps of Juror Eight and work to create a more just and equitable world by approaching problems with intellectual humility, grounding our arguments in sound reasoning and authoritative support, and being ready to consider multiple perspectives and change our minds when new evidence arises.

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