

Article Comparison

For this assignment, each student will locate two articles on one of the topics listed below. One article must be from a scholarly journal and one from the popular press (both articles must be on the same topic). Once located, each student will write a critical review of the articles using the questions below.

Instructions:

1) *Locate two articles.*

- a. Each student must locate one scholarly/peer-reviewed anthropological article and one popular magazine article on one of the topics listed below.
- b. Both articles must be about the same topic. If you are unsure as to what constitutes a scholarly/peer-reviewed article, check out the following.
 - What does peer-reviewed mean? <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/tutorials/pr/>
 - How do you know what you have is peer-reviewed?
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeyR30Yq1tA>
- c. The articles must be on one of the following topics: evolution, ethnic-related diseases, cloning, primate ecology, primate evolution, primate intelligence, any hominin, origins of modern humans, or origins of culture.

2) *Analyze the articles and write your critique.*

- a. Give yourself plenty of time to read the articles. If you are not used to reading scholarly journal articles, it may take you some time to work through the article. You may want to have a dictionary handy to look up unfamiliar words – don't just skip the words you don't know.
- b. Analyze the article using the questions listed below (drawn from <http://library.uwb.edu/guides/reading.html>).

1. What question is posed by the author?
2. Thesis/position/argument
 - a. What is the primary argument made by the author?
 - b. Where do you first find the argument?
 - c. What language indicates to you that this is the primary argument?
3. Context
 - a. Why is the argument significant?
 - b. What other positions does the author indicate are debated regarding this topic?

- c. When was the article written? Where was it published? Who is the intended audience?

4. Evidence

- a. What evidence does the author offer in support of the position put forth? (Identify all pieces of evidence you find.)
- b. What is the nature of each piece of supporting evidence? For example, is it based on empirical research, ethical consideration, common knowledge, or anecdote?
- c. How convincing is the evidence? For example, does the research design adequately address the question posed (#1 above)? Are the ethical considerations adequately explored and assessed? Have you read/heard anything on the subject that confirms or challenges the subject from a scientific point of view?

5. Counter arguments

- a. What arguments are made in opposition to the author's views?
- b. Are these arguments persuasively refuted?
- c. What evidence is used in the refutation?

6. Effectiveness

- a. What are the strengths of the article?
- b. Is it difficult to read and understand the article? If so, why? If not, why not?
- c. Are you able to follow the moves of the article from thesis to evidence? In other words, was the article logically organized so that it flowed easily from topic to topic?
- d. Do the structure of sentences and paragraphs and the overall organization guide you and help you follow the author's intent?
- e. Does all of the material seem relevant to the points made?

3) Upload your written assignment to ANGEL in the assignment folder.

Course Outcomes

The following highlighted course outcomes are met by this assignment.

- A. Illustrate their level of cultural literacy by:
 - i. Demonstrating a working knowledge of holism (the multiple aspects of humankind across time and space) (1.a)

- ii. Interrelating individual experiences and societal forces in the context of anthropology (1.a, 1.c)
- iii. Identifying ethnocentrism through an examination of human variation and cultural diversity (1.c)

B. Demonstrate their critical thinking and problem solving skills by:

- i. Recognizing key principles of human biology and behavior (2.a)
- ii. Synthesizing and critically assessing anthropological scholarship and claims about humankind and the natural world from an anthropological perspective (1.a, 1.b)
- iii. Recognizing, identifying and addressing possible multiple perspectives on issues related to biological anthropology (2.b, 3.a)
- iv. Drawing conclusions about human behavior and biology that are consistent with anthropological theory (1.a, 1.b)
- v. Generalizing from qualitative and quantitative data and assumptions (2.a, 2.b)
- vi. Navigating the intricacies of team-based discussion, activities, and assignments (3)

C. Illustrate their level of information literacy by:

- i. Searching scholarly research databases and formulating simple research questions (2.b, 2.c)
- ii. Recognizing differences in the quality of information presented in the popular press from that of the scholarly literature (2.b)
- iii. Demonstrating the ability to find and evaluate anthropological information in general and scholarly sources with instructor and librarian support (2.a)

D. Show their communication skills by:

- i. Conducting fieldwork and observation through the utilization of technology-enhanced simulations or real-world research and presenting their findings through written and/or verbal means (2c, 4)
- ii. Communicating ideas and information that demonstrates an understanding of connections between biology, paleoanthropology, geology, psychology, etc., both verbally and through the written word (1a, 2b)
- iii. Working with peers to successfully participate in and/or complete team-based discussion, activities and assignments (3)