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### The State of Human Nature

The state of human nature is a topic that has been debated and sought after for thousands of years. Some of the greatest minds that have walked this earth have tried to define human nature to no avail. Human nature can fall into three categories: human nature as good, human nature as evil, or human nature as neutral, meaning that human nature can be manipulated to be good or evil. Human nature is evil though, because humans have a natural distrust of other humans, and humans will act in good faith to gain the trust of others so they can manipulate the other into doing things the good of themselves. Humans simply cannot live among one another without distrust of each other, until they are influenced by a stronger, more manipulative outside force.

Humans cannot trust one another, there is no such thing as two or more humans cooperating for the good of each other, it is all for personal gain and not for the good of the group as a whole. Humans are in a constant battle of kill or be killed among other humans, there is a sense of everlasting war among everyone. "... every man is enemy to every man, the same is consequent to the time wherein men live without other security than what their own strength and their own invention shall furnish them withal" (Hobbes 122). Surely through man having to rely on their own strength, it would seem that they would want to rely on others to work towards the

same goal, because no man can truly trust another with their life, their security in knowing that they will make it to the next day. Within this notion that it is every man for themselves it “is consequent: that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justing and injustice, have there no place” (Hobbes 123). When there is no unified power between people there is no law, and with no law there is no justice, resulting in anarchy.

An argument to this stance is that all humans are the same, so couldn't a set of standard rules among all humans be placed in order to prevent anarchy. Mencius states “The forests were once lovely on Ox Mountain. But as they were near a great city, axes cleared them little by little. Now there's nothing left of their beauty” (Mencius 97). Once there are laws set in place, and some things are allowed, but others are not there becomes a removal of the beauty from humans, and this is what all humans are striving for beauty, and beauty is power.

Human nature defines that we will be manipulative in ways to be able to gain enforcement from others to build for personal gain of themselves and not as a group. It is in human nature to strive to be the strongest and to be greater than all other humans, they will not simply give up power after they have achieved it. “... taking power in the acts of conquest, which they pursue farther than their security requires, if others (that otherwise would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds) should not by invasion increase their power, they would not be able, long time, by standing only to their defense, to subsist” (Hobbes 121). They will maintain or support oneself, especially at a minimal level for a long length by standing at their own defense until they are forced to support another for their personal gain. Humans can be manipulated into being good, but they have a natural preference for being evil. “In good years, young men are mostly fine. In bad years, they're mostly cruel and violent. It isn't that Heaven

endows them with such different capacities, only that their hearts are mired in such different situations” (Mencius 96). Young men are shaped by the events that are occurring around them, whether they be good or bad, but more often than their hearts prefer to be evil.

Humans have an understanding that others are out to get them, and will in turn not trust people others like Hobbes said. Yet, there is a great source of ideas humans have, that wholly depend up their senses. They are completely derived by sensation. John Locke exclaims that “external objects furnish the mind with the ideas of sensible qualities, which are all those different perceptions they produce in us; and the mind furnishes the understanding with ideas of it own operations” (Locke 127). Outside forces can influence the ideas that we have, and influence our perceptions. An individual human’s perception is their reality. So if outside forces can influence how humans see their world, it would be beneficial to humans to trust one another. From this outlook is how humans with power are able to manipulate others to work towards their own personal goals. Hobbes states “nor can any law be made, till they have agreed upon the person that shall make it” (Hobbes 122). It takes one person to create the rules that all others must follow, and humans as a whole must determine who will create such laws. This is where human nature takes over, and will manipulate others to believe in the same things that they believe so that humans as a whole will work towards one goal that will benefit one singular person.

Human nature is evil, but is it truly as simple as one word. It took six months for the greatest minds before our time at Plato’s Academy to come up with a definition of humans as being a “featherless biped” only to be proven wrong when Diogenes of Sinope brought a plucked chicken to the school, thus proving that humans were the same as a plucked chicken (Austin 83).

Thus resulting in the definition being slightly changed so months of hard work didn't get disproven. Human nature can be theorized as being influenced by outside forces in the goal of power, and thus being evil.

Works Cited

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