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Body Paragraph Analyzing A Strength of Public Thinking

One of Thompson's biggest strengths in "Public Thinking" is the diversity of evidence and rhetorical strategies that he provides throughout the chapter. Thompson is able to augment his argument by deftly moving through different types of evidence and appeals: he provides a number of numerical statistics to support his claim about the explosion of contemporary textual writing (especially regarding the expansion of the digital audience), historical case studies to illustrate how writing has changed (including from historian David Henkin), anecdotes from contemporary writers (and how the new media has affected their thinking) and even testimonies from classic authors and philosophers (Sir Francis Bacon even makes an appearance). Thompson's credibility is significantly strengthened simply by his ability to apply and contextualize this diverse and eclectic set of evidence to his main argument. As a tech writer, which include bylines with *The New York Times* and *Wired*, his audience is likely aware that he approaches his book with significant expertise and experience in our new mediums; however, he also demonstrates an impressive knowledge of contemporary and popular issues (from his knowledge of Billy Beane's *Moneyball** to Sturgeon's Lawn and "handwaving") as well, establishing an authorial voice that is simultaneously academic and accessible. The most remarkable piece of evidence he provides to build his argument about the value of public thought and connection, is the anecdote he opens his chapter with. The story of Ory Okolloh's Kenyan blog, and how it adapted not only to develop her writing, but also its evolution into an accessible, immediate, tool for social justice and networking, provides an inspiring story about the potentialities of public connection. It's a very effective appeal to Thompson's audience's sense of pathos – how can the reader not be moved by the democratization possibilities of our new

communication forms? – and directly engages the reader's emotions and curiosity. At every turn, Thompson provides different types of information, appealing equally to our heart and mind, which present a comprehensive body of evidence supporting his main claim about the power of public thinking.

*Although it might be difficult to entirely forgive his mistake citing Beane as a baseball coach (who has little to no input on personnel decisions) instead of as his actual title as general manager of the Oakland Athletics.