

any other characteristic, where "circumstance" is the only deciding factor in whether a person ends up committing evil acts. This seems to pose a problem of agency; the lived experience of people is of some sort of interrogation into their own psychology. Arendt's theory does not reify evil, but instead reifies interrogation as she characterises Eichmann's "sheer thoughtlessness" (ibid.) as what led him to act as he did. Bernard Bergen in his book about Arendt refers to this as "the problem of thinking" (1998: 39) that, Eichmann did not have the "ability to see himself by thinking about the meaning of who he is" (ibid: 49)

Secondly, Arendt's interpretation broadens the meaning of evil to even the most innocuous actions such as the signing of a piece of paper. This redefinition certainly fitted Arendt's experience of Eichmann and was summed up well in Leonard Cohen's poem *All There Is to Know about Adolf Eichmann* (1964: 78 See Note 1) as not only was Eichmann "Medium" (ibid.) in every way but, he also "*merely...never realized what he was doing*" (Arendt, H. 1963: 287). His *involvement* in what could be classified as evil sentiments are put into doubt by the use of the word "merely".

Finally, there are two problematic consequences to Hannah Arendt's understanding of evil. Idi Amin as a subject of similar processes of academic literature helps to illustrate these problems. On one hand, the evil of society or the broad circumstances that lead to evil acts, are left untouched by Arendt's focus on the individual and their actions. The individual's responsibility is not totally absolved, but the problem still remains of what, if anything, makes a given situation evil. The case of Idi Amin in this sense is heavily influenced by Arendt's argumentation. His roots in the Kakwa tribe of Northwest Uganda and his military upbringing have often been cited as having imbued certain values (or lack thereof) during Amin's youth, though this is rarely seen as excusing his behaviour. A way of illustrating this problem would be to ask: What is evil in what makes someone evil?

On the other hand, Eichmann's guilt according to Arendt is based on the logic of 'an eye for an eye' or as is written in her book "just as you supported and carried out a policy of not wanting to share the earth with the Jewish people and the people of a number of other nations ... no member of the human race, can be expected to want to share the earth with you." (1963: