

From Author to Audience:

Misattribution and Social Reception of the poem “Colour” in Digital Media Activism

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## ABSTRACT

In the fast-evolving age of Digital Media, the originality of authorship is no longer given much prominence. Even misattribution in digital media platforms finds its way in promoting a social concern. And the receptors of these misattributed literary works show no great significance towards the credibility of the literary piece, but rather find a way to add on more contextual details to make it reach a wider audience to foster digital media activism. In doing so, as Roland Barthes puts it, it leads to the Death of the Author. The poem “Colour” or “U called me Coloured” is one such misattributed poem that is being circulated in social media platforms for a long while without knowing its original author or any other credible contextual information regarding that poem. Even when the poem is wrongly accredited, the poem serves its social purpose in exposing the brutalities of racism. This shows how Post-Structuralism works in this digital era. The poem can also be analysed through the lens of Reception Theory. The reader’s reception of the poem adds on more misinformation to it, making it look more appealing to its readers. Digital Misattribution decenters the authority of the Author and the power shifts onto the audience, enabling them to respond and promote a literary piece. This paper intends to show how misattribution of the poem “Colour” affects the reception of the readers in a progressive way.

Keywords: Digital misattribution, Social reception, Post-structuralism, Racism, Reception theory,  
Decentering.

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