

Argument Analysis Week 2

by ~~Samuel Johnson~~

FILE	ARGUMENT_ANALYSIS_WEEK_2.DOCX (16K)		
TIME SUBMITTED	30-MAR-2014 11:44PM	WORD COUNT	696
SUBMISSION ID	411399616	CHARACTER COUNT	4269

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Argument Analysis – Week 2: Is Stereotyping Inevitable?

Devine (1989) challenged the argument that prejudice is inevitable. She claimed that while stereotypes, a component of prejudice, are known to all or most people within a culture, people have the capability to actively reject stereotypes. Devine supported this claim with three empirical studies. In Study 1, subjects were rated on both their knowledge of Black stereotypes and their degree of prejudice (high or low). The data indicated that all subjects were familiar with the common characteristics of Black racial stereotypes, but there was no relationship between knowledge of the stereotype and degree of prejudice. Study 2 also lends support to Devine's claim. In this study, subjects were primed with words related to the Black racial stereotype. Subjects were unable to discern the content of the priming exercise. Despite being unaware of the priming effect, both high- and low-prejudice subjects were more likely to rate a fictional person as hostile, a major component of the Black racial stereotype. This finding indicates that prejudice is an automatic process, meaning that low-prejudice individuals must have some conscious means of overriding prejudiced behavior. Study 3 specifically examined this idea. In this study, subjects were asked to list alternate labels for Black Americans (e.g. African Americans, Negroes) and then to list personal thoughts about Black Americans as a group (e.g. "They are hostile"). Similar to Study 1, participants in Study 3 showed a general knowledge of alternate labels for Blacks but their degree of prejudice (high vs. low) significantly affected their willingness to attribute negative traits and beliefs to Blacks. This indicates that low-prejudice individuals actively controlled their behavior in order to avoid supporting the racial stereotype. Together, these three studies give strong support to Devine's claim that knowledge of stereotypes does not equate to prejudiced behavior. The studies offer empirical

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So the evidence is strong?

evidence based on established, reliable measures and well-controlled experiments. It is likely that the results are generalizable to the American population.

Okay.

Lepore and Brown (1997) conducted a study that acts as a counterpoint to Devine's (1989) study. Lepore and Brown (1997) claimed that Devine's study, especially Study 2, was flawed because participants were primed simultaneously, rather than separately, with stereotype and category content. They hypothesized that high- and low-prejudice participants would respond similarly after being primed with stereotype content but differently after category activation priming. *What is the difference between content and category activation?* Similar to Devine's (1989) Study 1, Lepore and Brown's (1997) Study 1 indicated that degree of prejudice is not related to knowledge of a stereotype. In Study 2, participants were specifically primed with category content (e.g. Blacks, colored, rap). As predicted, after this type of priming, high-prejudice subjects were more likely to rate a hypothetical person with Black stereotype-congruent and negative attributes while low-prejudice subjects were more likely to rate the person as possessing positive and stereotype-noncongruent attributes. This empirical evidence supports the researchers' claim that people with different degrees of prejudice respond differently following category activation. Finally, in Study 3, the researchers primed participants through stereotype *and* category activation, much like Devine (1989). The results were similar to those found by Devine. Participants' rated the hypothetical person more negatively and attributed stereotype-congruent traits to the person regardless of the participants' level of prejudice. Between these three studies, Lepore and Brown (1997) support their claim that category activation and stereotype activation affect prejudiced behavior differently. However, there are some weaknesses in their study that make it difficult to definitively state that Devine's (1989) claims were flawed. First, Lepore and Brown (1997)

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*Are there any other problems with
either of the research papers?*

Do you think this adds to the findings or detracts from

the study conducted in a different country that presumably has a different culture. Second, while their methods were similar to previous studies, the researchers used different measures. Finally, the researchers divided participants into high- and low-prejudice groups at the midpoint of the measure rather than taking the top and bottom third. Due to these differences, further research would need to be conducted to generalize the results to the population examined in Devine's (1989) study.

References

- Devine, P. G. (1989). Stereotypes and prejudice: Their automatic and controlled components. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 56*, 5-18.
- Lepore, L., & Brown, R. (1997). Category and stereotype activation: Is prejudice inevitable? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72*(2), 275-287.

Argument Analysis Week 2

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE

/50

GENERAL COMMENTS

Instructor

Overall, this is a well written and thoughtful paper. I would encourage you (as you had with argument 1 and to a good extent here) to critically evaluate the papers thoroughly.

PAGE 1

Text Comment. Good. Claim ID

Text Comment. Good explanation of the evidence

Text Comment. Good explanation.

Text Comment. Great summary

PAGE 2

Text Comment. So the evidence is strong?

Text Comment. Okay.

Text Comment. What is the difference between content and category activation?



Comment 1

Although the evidence is explained quite clearly, it is not clear how they align with the idea that prejudiced people have stronger associations to negative content than non-prejudiced people.

PAGE 3

Text Comment. Are there any other problems with either of the research papers?

Text Comment. Do you think this adds to the findings or detracts from them?

Text Comment. good point

RUBRIC: ARGUMENT ANALYSIS

MAIN CLAIMS

Good

Identified and described main claims

UNACCEPTABLE o Inappropriate o Incorrect o Incomplete

PROBLEMATIC o Relevancy vague o Major inaccuracies o Lacking completeness

SATISFACTORY o Relevancy implied o Minor inaccuracies o Too broad

GOOD o Relevancy described o No inaccuracies o Thorough

SUPPORT EVIDE

Good

Identified and described supporting evidence

UNACCEPTABLE o Inappropriate o Incorrect o Incomplete

PROBLEMATIC o Relevancy vague o Major inaccuracies o Lacking completeness

SATISFACTORY o Relevancy implied o Minor inaccuracies o Too broad

GOOD o Relevancy described o No inaccuracies o Thorough

EVALUATE EVID

Satisfactory

Evaluated supporting evidence in terms of internal and external validity

UNACCEPTABLE o Inappropriate o Incorrect o Incomplete

PROBLEMATIC o Relevancy vague o Major inaccuracies o Lacking completeness

SATISFACTORY o Relevancy implied o Minor inaccuracies o Too broad

GOOD o Relevancy described o No inaccuracies o Thorough

INTEGRATION

Good

Concise, coherent, well written and free of grammar, mechanical, or spelling errors

UNACCEPTABLE o Improper format for question o Several grammatical/spelling errors o Unclear or haphazard organization

PROBLEMATIC o Improper format for question o Several grammatical/spelling errors o Unclear or haphazard organization

SATISFACTORY o Proper format for question o Few grammatical/spelling errors o Focused and integrated organization

GOOD o Proper format for question o Few grammatical/spelling errors o Focused and integrated organization

