
Education Inequalities in America

Segregation in America is a concept that many believe ended after the 1964 Supreme Court ruling of *Brown v. The Board of Education*. However, what a majority of Americans fail to realise is that segregation is just as prevalent in America as it was in the 1900s. Due to recent climax of issues in the past decade, more people are beginning to see that the same segregation that stopped children from getting a quality education in the past is what is preventing poor children from getting what is constitutionally owed to them today. In Susan Dynarski's "Why American Schools Are Even More Unequal Than We Thought", she writes about how children who are poor are at a disadvantage because of certain factors like government programs that are designed to help children but ultimately do not. In Sean F. Reardon, Jane Waldfogel and Daphna Bassok's article "The Good News About Educational Inequality" they discuss how the academic gap between rich and poor children has begun to narrow over time. Although both articles make convincing arguments, Dynarski's article is stronger because it uses emotion, statistics and logic to support their claim, while Reardon et al.'s article only uses facts and reasoning.

One of the main reasons Dynarski's argument is stronger than Reardon's is because she uses emotion to garner her audience (parents, schools, and government officials) to support her claim and want to make a change in the education system. For example, in paragraph 8 she writes that 14 percent of students in Michigan have been eligible for free or reduced-price lunch which makes them "persistently disadvantaged" (Dynarski). This information is used in her article so her audience can feel empathy for children who fall under the category of persistently disadvantaged that the government is supposed to be helping but in reality they are not. It might even cause them to think about their own experiences if they were able to relate to the article which might make them support her argument more. Dynarski's use of such words like poor and disadvantaged are also supposed to make her audience realize that children whose family are not financially well off end up getting less because of factors they cannot control. Moreover, the mere fact that Dynarski uses children as her focus point in her article is going to cause her audience to feel bad because America is impacting the education of poor children which will affect them later on in life.

In Reardon et al.'s essay, the lack of emotion makes their audience (parents and schools) less likely to care about what they are stating in their article. Reardon et al.'s article also blames parents in some ways for the quality of the education they receive. For example, in paragraph 17, they write how changes in parenting will help improve the education of children (Reardon et al.). By focusing on parenting instead of the injustices the education system does to poor children, Reardon et al. might make parents feel like it is their parenting techniques are at fault for their children not receiving the best education when in reality it might be due to economic or financial reasons. Reardon et al.'s article used more statistics which might make their audience think more logical instead of with their emotions. Furthermore, their article is more focused on the improvements in children's education which does not invoke the sense of urgency for change within the reader like Dynarski's article did.

Another reason Dynarski's article is stronger than Reardon et al.'s because she is more credible as an author. For example, both of her parents were high school dropouts so she

probably had experiences like the children she talks about in her article. Dynarski also seems more credible because her article makes it seem she cares deeply about the education of students. For instance, in paragraph 5 of her article, Dynarski states that, “eligibility for subsidized school meals is clearly a blunt indicator of economic status” (Dynarski). While many people might see this as a flaw in her article because it is too opinionated and not supported by facts, this shows how involved Dynarski is with the topic which might be because of her experiences and her personal research about the topic. With Reardon et al., their article is more implicit than Dynarski’s; so even though they have a lot of facts it might be difficult for their audience to understand what they are referencing in the article. Their article makes it feel like they are just sharing their findings about the education of children which makes it feel like they are not as passionate about the topic like Dynarski is. Each of the authors also seemed to have lived better lives as children than Dynarski so their audience might feel like they have no personal connection to the topic discussed in the article.

Although Dynarski’s article does not have as many statistics as Reardon et al’s, the information she does use is explained clearly so her reader knows what she is talking about. For example, in paragraph 10 she writes math scores for disadvantaged and persistently disadvantaged eighth graders were lower than those of their classmates (Dynarski). She then explains what this means in context of her argument and even goes into more detail in the next paragraph about how children’s scores do not get lower as they experience more years of disadvantage and that instead their low test scores become prominent earlier on in life when they are not at that much of a disadvantage with their classmates. In Reardon et al’s article, a lot of the data used goes unexplained which might make the article harder to ingest for the audience. For example, in paragraph 4 they write, “the school readiness gap narrowed by 10 percent in math and 16 percent in reading” (Reardon et al.). Then they later go on to say that the gaps narrowed because poor children’s skills gott better but they do not mention what those skills were which might leave their audience feeling like they are leaving out important information. However, the Morgan 3 data they do use in their article helps support their argument nevertheless because they reference back to different articles that contain more detailed information about the things they mention.

Overall, both Dynarski and Reardon et al. both make very convincing arguments about the education of young children. Each of the authors were able to use a different type of rhetoric that helps support their arguments in the articles that helped establish their authority and credibility. They both were able to bring to light issues with the education system and offer solutions for those problems which helped accomplish their own individual goals. For Reardon et al. their use of facts and logic helped support their claims but their lack of emotion might not cause their audience to believe that there is problems with the education system when in reality it needs to be reformed. For Dynarski, her use of rhetoric helped create a strong sense of emotion in her audience and her use of facts and logic furthermore helped support her claim making it a better article than Reardon et al’s.

Works Cited:

1. Dynarski, Susan. “Why American Schools Are Even More Unequal Than We Thought.” The New York Times, The New York Times, 12 Aug. 2016, www.nytimes.com/2016/08/14/upshot/wh-y-american-schools-are-even-more-unequal-than-we-thought.html.
2. Sean F. Reardon, Jane Waldfogel and Daphna Bassok. “Opinion | The Good News About

Educational Inequality.” The New York Times, The New York Times, 20 Jan. 2018,
www.nytimes.com/2016/08/28/opinion/sunday/the-good-news-about-educational-inequality.html.

eduzaurus.com