

What degree of
addiction can be
considered a disease
medical condition,
excusable...

[Science](#)



Outline Introduction Key question: What degree of addiction can be considered a disease/medical condition, excusable for misconduct? Author's position: Addiction is not a clear cut medical condition and adopting the disease model of addiction has serious ramifications for American society. Macro level appraisal of author's argument Micro level appraisal of author's argument · Fallacious reasoning and claims · Usage of concepts and lack of definition · Unacceptability and insufficiency of claims Conclusion Passage Analysis In the passage selection entitled " Ain't Misbehavin" the subject of addiction being classified as a disease is addressed. The author, Stanley Peele, suggests that a problem exists due to the fact that addiction is being classified as a medical condition, and this he believes would have ramifications for American society. In the passage the author takes the position against addiction being termed a disease. In light of the problem presented and the position taken, I will analyze the passage. I will demonstrate that the author's position is not justified by critically evaluating logical fallacies, narrow usage of concepts and lack of definition, unacceptability and insufficiency of claims. A macro level appraisal of the passage will also be provided. Peele is not successful in defending his thesis as he does not substantiate enough to establish a stronghold for his thesis. His thesis is affected by several shortcomings which become evident to the reader. The argument may be convertible into deductive form with some changes. But an attempt to do so would give us an invalid argument, which is unsound as premises cannot be accepted as true. My rejection of the argument is not unconditional; the author fails to acknowledge varying degrees of the main concepts. The author's usage of concepts is absolute

and is not flexible to account for degrees of addiction which may be qualified as diseases and hence excusable. Neither is there any thought given to degrees of misconduct which may be excusable citing a medical condition. This makes the argument incomplete which ignores several aspects of the key question. At the micro level analysis of the passage we can find claims with logical fallacies which weaken the argument. The first claim in the passage is supported by an Appeal to authority to establish that addiction has acquired a medical status in society. The author goes on in the passage to state that the disease model of addiction will lead to anything being excusable. The claim is a hasty generalization which draws a conclusion about all addictions being excusable by law, by using the word anything. The main conclusion along with the intermediate conclusions seeks to establish how - if addiction is a disease, people are left unpunished for misconduct, and if more misconduct is dismissed as addiction it will lead to chaos. It follows the pattern if A then B, B then C, hence A then C, which shows us a slippery slope fallacy in the argument. The author can also be said to be special pleading as he does not look at counter positions to his claims and gives a one sided argument. He does not address possible criticisms and counter points to his views. The author could respond to this by saying the arguments are related to one another and flow into each other, therefore are not fallacious. However we need to realize that though the claims are relevant they are not adequately supported and do not establish the main conclusion satisfactorily. Peele does not explicitly define the main concepts (addiction, disease) in the passage. Very little is done to explore the concepts and their usage. The author takes an absolute stance in using the

concepts, he does not account for varying degrees of addiction or disease. Disease is used as a clear cut medical condition while addiction is identified with physical irritation in the absence of the substance being used. The concepts are thus used very narrowly and their usage does not throw much light onto their features and definition. This prevents the reader from fully understanding the concepts making it difficult for the reader to establish an opinion on the argument. The author could defend himself saying the concepts are self explanatory and do not need explanation/definition. We can respond to this by stating the importance of a definition considering the concepts can be used very differently. This is revealed to us in the conceptual analysis. An argument without clearly defined concepts lacks depth, and the author's usage of the concepts is quite absolute and narrow, which does not account for degrees of variance. We also find unacceptable and insufficient claims due to lack of evidence or empirical/statistical data to support them. The claims though relevant to the main conclusion make the argument invalid and unsound. Peele cites examples such as one from a magazine article, which are not sufficient to establish a claim. No studies or surveys are cited in order to establish claims in support of the intermediate conclusions relating to people being held unaccountable for misconduct due to addiction. In his defense the author may mention unavailability of data supporting his claims to provide as evidence and support. This however further strengthens the criticism as it accepts the lack of empirical data to support the author's claims. The above stated analysis identifies the shortcomings of the passage and counters the author's hypothetical responses to the criticisms. Thus we can conclude that the passage presents

a weak argument which can be rejected considering the identified problems in reasoning