

THE LOGICAL FALLACIES

THIRTY OF THE MOST COMMON ERRORS IN ARGUMENTATION



Any time you make a claim, the credibility of that claim is open for debate. One of your primary goals ought to be making logical arguments that people can agree with. Avoid errors (or “fallacies”) in logic by studying this list of of the most commonly made logical fallacies.

Description

Fallacy

Example

Ad Hominem: Attacking a person or their character rather than making a claim based on reasoning. Ad hominem arguments include name-calling, labeling, and being offensive and show little intelligent thought.

1

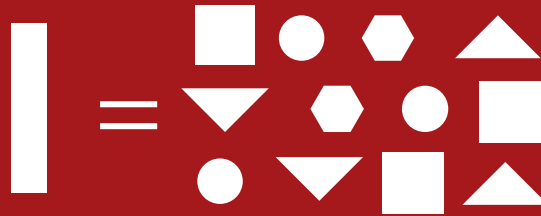


Ad Hominem

Ad Hominem: “Vegetarians don’t have a clue about culinary sophistication. When it comes to food, you just can’t trust a tree-hugger.”

Anecdote: Using a personal or isolated experience as compelling and worthwhile evidence; suggesting that a personal or unique experience can be applied to other circumstances.

2



Anecdote

Anecdote: Chevy trucks are the biggest waste of money! I owned one for four years and had to replace my transmission twice. Don’t buy that garbage!

Appeal to Ignorance: Using human ignorance or the inability to prove something in order to make a claim.

3



Appeal to Ignorance

Appeal to Ignorance: No one’s ever been able to prove that ghosts exist, so it’s obvious that they don’t.

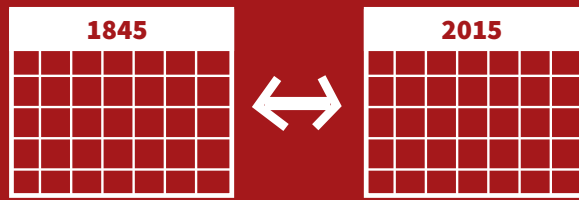
Description

Fallacy

Example

Appeal to Tradition: Using tradition or cultural belief to suggest that something is true or accurate; suggesting that, because something has long been done a certain way, it must be the correct way.
(Similar to Bandwagon.)

4

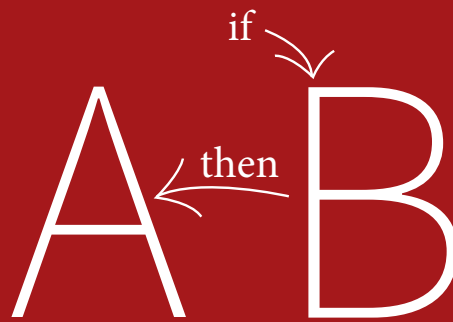


Appeal to Tradition

Appeal to Tradition: We've been giving grades in school for over a century. Moving away from the grading model seems ridiculous! It's been the right way for over a hundred years; it must be right.

Appeal to Consequences: Concluding that a premise is either true or false based on what the consequence of that premise would be.

5



Appeal to Consequence

Appeal to Consequences: If we made a law that children weren't allowed to watch television, they wouldn't be exposed to all that garbage on TV; removing television from the lives of children, therefore, is the best way to keep kids innocent.

Argumentum ad Baculum: Making an argument by inciting fear or making threats.

6



Argumentum ad Baculum

Argumentum ad Baculum: If you don't start getting on board the No Child Left Behind policies, you'll lose your job; it's clearly the best avenue for education in your classroom.