

ARGUMENTATIVE (LOGICAL) FALLACIES

Now, although the overall scheme of an argument has changed, there are some aspects of argumentation which have not. There are still fallacious forms which cannot be considered as successful argumentative strategies. Most of these are called fallacies.

For example, when a person uses feelings or prejudices of an audience to support an argument, then the argument is not entirely valid. We call this an Appeal to the People.

And, there are a few other common instances similar to this one:

Appeal to Authority - Using an expert in a field other than the one being discussed is also a fallacy.

Appeal to Force - When you threaten or intimidate someone to accept a position or its support, you do not have a valid argument. This situation is similar to "Take out the trash." Why? "I told you too."

Personal Ridicule - When someone ridicules their opponent instead of addressing the real argument, the individual is being fallacious.

Non-Sequitur - When someone puts support in such a way as to not connect to the thesis, a person uses this fallacy. EX: Kids like broccoli. Kids eat broccoli regularly. They must love carrots.

Insufficient or Suppressed Evidence - When someone makes an argument without sufficient evidence, then the argument is not necessarily a substantial argument.

Straw Man - When an opposing position, viewpoint, or subject matter is misrepresented, then you may have a fallacious argument. The name comes from soldiers attacking a scarecrow or a straw man to demonstrate their strength instead of a real target.

Verbosity - Whenever a person overwhelms another person with too many facts or figures or other forms of support, then the argument is considered to be unstable and fallacious.

Red Herring - When a person distracts or misdirects attention away from their argument to point out something else which is valid, and then uses the attention to point to their argument as correct is fallacious. The name of this fallacy comes from training hunting dogs to follow the scent of Red Herring in their training. Oftentimes, the scent was so strong that the dogs would be distracted from real game.