

## FALLACIES IN ARGUMENTS

### Fallacies of Emotional Arguments (PATHOS)

- Scare tactics
  - ~ “exaggerating possible dangers well beyond their statistical likelihood”
  - ~ e.g., In all probabilities mosquitoes may very well carry the HIV virus.
- Either-Or-Choice
  - ~ Binary options which are unrealistic; kind of scare tactics; 2 options only
  - ~ e.g., Either buy AAA auto road plan or be stranded on the road someday
- Slippery Slope
  - ~ “Casts today’s tiny misstep as tomorrow’s avalanche.”
  - ~ “exaggerates the future consequence of an action, usually to frighten”
  - ~ e.g., Failing this class will definitely lead you to failure in the University.
- Sentimental Appeals (also, appealing to people’s prejudices)
  - ~ “[...] use emotions excessively to distract readers from facts.”
  - ~ e.g., emotional images; [make or usually “force” people to contribute w/ something.
- Bandwagon Appeals
  - ~ “[...] “urge people to follow the same path everyone else is taking...”
  - ~ e.g., obesity and its obsessions; Profiling is needed; etc.

### Fallacies of Ethical Arguments (ETHOS)

- Appeals to false authorities or misquotes or misjudgements
  - ~ “[...] draw on the authority of [...] respected people, institutions, and texts.”
  - ~ e.g., The New York Times has written ....[bla] “; or John Smith says: ... [bla].
- Dogmatism
  - ~ “there are no arguments to be made: the truth is self-evident to those who know better” ; “A particular position is the only way.”
  - ~ e.g., The only way to win the war on terrorism is to “nuke” Iran and Syria
- Moral equivalence
  - ~ “serious wrongdoings don’t differ in kind from minor offenses”
  - ~ e.g., How could a Deacon be a Christian if his computer was found to have pornography? OR Senator Smith might be a good senator but when he was young he smoked pot, or, was dismissed from High School for being a liar.

- Ad hominem
  - ~ “attacks directed at the character of a person (personal attacks) rather than at the claims he or she makes” ; “destroy the credibility of your opponent, and either you destroy their ability to present reasonable appeals or you distract from the successful arguments they may offer.”
  - ~ e.g., 1) She is unfit to be a minister because she is divorced, 2) He is unfit to be a driving instructor because he was caught speeding, or 3) How could she be a good dietician when she is overweight and obese?

### Fallacies of Logical Arguments (LOGOS)

- Hasty generalizations
  - ~ “an inference drawn from insufficient evidence.”
  - ~ e.g., “Ellen is a poor student because she failed her first history test” (Hodges)
- Faulty causality (Post hoc) (cause and effect)
  - ~ “assumption that because one event or action follows another, the first necessarily cause the second.”
  - ~ e.g., When Mr. Smith turned 70 the football team had a losing season (Hodge).
- Begging the question
  - ~ “Stating a debatable premise as if it were true” (Mandell); circular reasoning
  - ~ e.g., Stem-cell research should be banned because nothing good can come from something so inherently evil” (Mandell).
- Equivocation
  - ~ “And equivocation, then, is an argument that gives a lie an honest appearance; it is a half-truth”; ALSO, “shifting the meaning of a key word or phrase during an argument) (Mandell).
  - ~ e.g., I never plagiarized the paper; I wrote it.
- Non-sequitur (illogical connection from “what comes before”
  - ~ “Arriving at a conclusion that does not logically follow from what comes before” (Hodge).
  - ~ e.g., Mr. Smith is an excellent lawyer, so she will make a good senator” (Mandell)
- Faulty analogy
  - ~ analogies “pushed too far or taken too seriously.”
  - ~ e.g., Our mind is like a universe, or Our mind is like a garden!   :)