

Concepts

1. What is a fallacy of relevance? Be sure to be able to explain how they differ from weak induction.
2. What is the relationship between the genetic fallacy and the various ad hominem fallacies?
3. Can you think of an possible argument that would look superficially like an ad hominem circumstantial, but would in fact not be fallacious?
4. Explain the psychological principle that makes arguments that are guilty of appeal to pity or spite to nevertheless be effective? Basically, why do they work?
5. Explain the difference between a straw man fallacy and an alternate description fallacy?
6. If an argument commits a begging the question fallacy, then what do you know about it formally (meaning, is it deductive, inductive, valid, invalid, etc.)? COuld such an argument be sound or cogent? If so, then why are such arguments being described in the text as fallacious?

Analysis:

Read the following passages. Then provide a brief discussion of the following points: does the passage contain an argument or possibly more than one? Is it ambiguous in that regard? For each argument that could might be expressed in the passage, explain what the conclusion and premises are, whether they are overt or assumed, and so forth. Finally, discuss whether the argument commits any of the informal fallacies we have covered so far.

7. I find it interesting that all the Senators who voted for drafting 18 year olds into the military are themselves well beyond draft age.
8. Everyone is selfish; everyone is doing what he believes will make himself happier. The recognition of that can take most of the sting out of accusations that you're being 'selfish.' Why should you feel guilty for seeking your own happiness when that's what everyone else is doing, too?
9. Bill Gates has argued against further regulation of the software industry. But

remember that Bill Gates is the CEO of Microsoft, one of the largest software manufacturers. So, Gates' argument can't be a good one.

10. This logic course must be a good course because most people believe it is.
11. Stan: This report says that cigarettes are actually good for you.
Kyle: Look where the guy who wrote it works. He's a scientist employed by the tobacco industry. He probably gets paid to say that cigarettes are healthy.
12. Of course people think that taxes are too high. In a recent poll, over 80% of all Americans said that they thought taxes are too high. What better proof could you want?
13. Bob said that these education reforms were made possible by modern liberal democratic ideals. But if you do some research, you will find these same reforms being championed by John Locke in the 17th century, while living in the British Monarchy.
14. Beth: I think you should tell your fiancé that you're having second thoughts. You shouldn't just start seeing other people without telling him.
Megan: I don't recall *you* being the paragon of honesty when you and Charles started having troubles.
15. It's no surprise that Grush thinks that critical reasoning is important for everyone. That's his job. If we stopped having to take these classes, he'd have to go back to his previous job as an erotic dancer.