

Fallacies of Reasoning & Logic: "The Art of The Argument & Critical Thinking"

Edited by Paul F. Kisak

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In philosophy, a formal fallacy is a pattern of reasoning rendered invalid by a flaw in its logical structure that can neatly be expressed in a standard logic system, for example propositional logic. An argument that is formally fallacious is always considered wrong. A formal fallacy is contrasted with an informal fallacy, which may have a valid logical form and yet be unsound because one or more premises are false. The presence of a formal fallacy in a deductive argument does not imply anything about the argument's premises or its conclusion. Both may actually be true, or even more probable as a result of the argument, but the deductive argument is still invalid because the conclusion does not follow from the premises in the manner described. By extension, an argument can contain a formal fallacy even if the argument is not a deductive one; for instance an inductive argument that incorrectly applies principles of probability or causality can be said to commit a formal fallacy. "Fallacious arguments usually have the deceptive appearance of being good arguments." Recognizing fallacies in everyday arguments may be difficult since arguments are often embedded in rhetorical patterns that obscure the logical connections between statements. Informal fallacies may also exploit the emotional, intellectual, or psychological weaknesses of the audience. Having the capability to recognize fallacies in arguments is one way to reduce the likelihood of such occurrences. The understanding of and ability to recognize logical fallacies in arguments, dogma, ritual and dialogue are key to successful critical thinking skills. This book gives the tools to recognize fallacious dialogue which is essential to critical thinking skills used in make logical, true and meaningful arguments.

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