Here are 5 fallacies that are frequently articulated and rarely refuted properly.

### **I do not fear death because I had been dead for billions of years before I was born.**

To state the general fallacy:

*Past death is what I remember.*

*Future death is the same as past non-existence.*

Perhaps it is true non-existence in the future is the void we conceptualize as our previous non-existence. However, perhaps there was existence and consciousness and we’ve forgotten? Perhaps memories were intentionally removed? Perhaps consciousness will continue to exist now that it has begun -- the past does not necessitate the future.

**TLDR; It is fallacious to be comforted by past non-existence for our future death.**

### **Twenty people have testified against Z therefore Z is likely guilty.**

To state the general fallacy:

*More testimony increases accuracy.*

*An overwhelming number of people say X therefore X is more likely than not X.*

This section is not about testimonies, but rather the general fallacy of numbers and confidence.

Consider the following hypothetical example of a robbery. There is a difference between

* one eye-witness indicting one person with a personal story
* a million eye-witnesses indicting one person with a personal story

The former is important to take seriously while the latter should raise skepticism. Skepticism is valid for this example because it’s unlikely one million people are at the singular location and all observed the perpetrator commit the crime.

There is a difference in our confidence between 1 person and 1,000,000 people. This spectrum illustrates that there is a threshold where eventually more evidence begins to cast doubt on previous evidence.

Past a threshold, more evidence *decreases* our confidence.

It is natural to believe that the more people on one side of a statement, the more likely that statement is to be correct -- however this only works for simple systems. For complex systems, the more unanimous the results, the more skeptical we should be of unanimity.

An example is the U.S. elections. Given the complexity of the system and what data has shown us about voting behaviors, if one party were to win by a landslide it would be more likely that the voting was rigged and fraud was committed than millions of voters changing their voting profile and behaviors.

There is no clear metric for the complexity of a system or where the threshold lies. More evidence is either true or false. When there is a murder, finding a box with the victim's wallet, the spouse's gun which was the murder weapon, and the spouse's clothes with the victim's blood is damning and clear evidence the spouse was the perpetrator. There's no other option. Except, of course, the abundant evidence is falsified and the spouse has been framed.

**TLDR; There exists a threshold where more evidence *decreases* confidence.**

### **Life is too complex to have arisen by chance.**

To state the general fallacy :

*X is so complex it’s impossible for it to occur randomly.*

“Everything is a 50/50. It either happens or it doesn’t.”

This is a great joke about randomness however it illustrates an important point: an outcome always happens.

When you deal a deck of cards, the probability for it to occur in that specific order is 52! or 1 in . This was so unlikely, yet we dealt the cards in such an unlikely order. How did this happen?

While it’s incredibly unlikely that this specific combination occurred, it’s not unlikely that an unlikely combination occurred -- it’s always the case that there’s outcome and every outcome is equally as unlikely.

Probability is contextualized through consciousness ahead of time. It is unlikely we’re on Earth contemplating evolution. In another dice roll we’re contemplating meaning underwater on another plant. In another dice roll we'd not exist and there would be no contemplation. Regardless, here we are in this particular reality, in this particular dimension. Time is linear and there is no randomness because the past is uncompromising.

**TLDR; The present necessitates the past.**

### **If I became a doctor I would be wealthy now. I wish I made that decision.**

There are so many aspects of fallacy I’ll tackle each with a separate example.

*I’m happy I went to UCSD. It was the correct decision.*

Perhaps it was correct. However perhaps, one would be just as happy at another college? Perhaps one would be happier at UCLA?

*I took the job and it didn’t end well. It was the wrong decision.*

In poker one can play perfectly to the probabilities and still lose. All indicators point to rain so it’s forecasted, however it turns out incorrect. In a complex (or unfair or random) system bad results do not necessitate bad decisions. Conversely, good results do not necessitate good decisions.

*If we invested 3 hours in the past it would save 300 hours now. We should have made a different decision.*

Perhaps the 3 hours we spent in the past saved us 500 hours in the present time? It is foolish to be confident we made the incorrect decision.

There’s a lot more to the deathbed fallacy but I’ll stop.

**TLDR; The present necessitates the past. Results-oriented thinking is a common fallacy.**

### **Money compounds therefore invest money earlier.**

To state the general fallacy :

*Unlike other things money compounds, therefore invest earlier.*

To quote [Wealth - Part 1](https://spencers.dev/posts/init/2020-04-01-wealth-1/):

Money compounds therefore saving earlier is optimal to optimize for money. However it is fallacious to believe that only money compounds. All things compound making all things are underrated.

There is a difference between buying the car at twenty and buying the car at fifty. Putting aside all the circumstantial differences, the remaining difference is that the twenty year old has compounded buying the car over thirty years.

It’s difficult to connect all the dots however one can imagine thirty years of being able to discuss owning a car, responsibility, design, opinions, etc. Having an experience earlier is more valuable than having an experience later; having X earlier is more valuable than having X later when X is an asset.

**TLDR; Time is linear, therefore all things compound. Compounding is not unique to money.**

Sometimes the cure for restlessness is rest.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Emyj2Gv64GA>

Goo Goo Dolls - Acoustic #3