

总之，这个论证逻辑不严密。为了加强论证，发言者必须说明照片里的 1000 位管理者在用的左手实际上正是他们的优势手，还要说明他们确实可以代表所有杰出的管理者，以及商业上的杰出成就通常都来源于管理者的经商之道。为了更好地评价这个论证，我有必要比较一下在商业领域成功的左撇子与在其他职业成功的左撇子的比率。我还需要更多有关左撇子的经商之道的信息，以确定他们是否采用相似的方法，以及在商业领域取得成功的惯用右手的人是否采用了不同的方法。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的三处缺陷：

1. 仅有照片并不能表明这些经理就是左撇子，而且这 1000 名经理也未必能够代表所有的知名经理，以及有些经理可能通过一些其他途径获得商业上的成功。
2. 由于天分、兴趣等诸多因素，左撇子可以有很多职业选择而未必都去参加商业活动。
3. 仅仅通过模仿左撇子的商业行为未必能够带来同样的商业成功，而且除了左撇子的商业模式以外还有很多可以取得成功的方法。

- 思路提示：本文所攻击的第一点其实包含了三个小点：照片不能说明这些人到底是左撇子还是右撇子；调查样本的代表性；获得商业成功的方式和原因可能是多种多样的。这三点的任意一点都可以单独成段展开论述。另外本题还可以攻击以下错误：作者没有提供切实证据表明左撇子这一现象与商业成功之间有因果联系，或者说作者没有具体分析导致这些经理人成功的真正原因。

### 【语言提示】

- 论证句式：(1) First of all, the study amounts to scant evidence of the speaker's implicit conclusion that ... (2) Just because ... does not necessarily mean that ... (3) ... from the study are not necessarily representative of the overall population of ... (4) In short, ... prove little about the causal relationship between ... and ... (5) Common sense informs me that ... depends on a variety of factors. (6) Thus, without clearer evidence that ... the speaker cannot justify such a sweeping recommendation for ...

## Argument 201 Have Forsythe citizens adopted healthier lifestyles?

The citizens of Forsythe have adopted healthier lifestyles. Their responses to a recent survey show that in their eating habits they conform more closely to government nutritional recommendations than they did ten years ago. Furthermore, there has been a fourfold increase in sales of food products containing kiran, a substance that a scientific study has shown reduces cholesterol. This trend is also evident in reduced sales of sulia, a food that few of the healthiest citizens regularly eat.

【参考译文】福赛思的居民选择了更健康的生活方式。他们对于最近一项调查的回答显示，他们的饮食习惯比十年前更加贴近政府的营养建议。而且，含有基伦的食品销量增长了四倍，在一次科学研究中发现基伦(kiran)是一种能够减少胆固醇的物质。素丽亚(sulia)的销量下降同样证实了这种趋势，素丽亚(sulia)是那些最健康的居民中极少有人经常食用的食品。

In this argument, the speaker concludes that Forsythe citizens have adopted healthier lifestyles. To justify this conclusion the speaker cites a recent survey of Forsythe citizens suggesting that their eating habits now conform more closely to government nutritional recommendations than they did ten

years ago. **The speaker also points out that** sales of kiran, a substance known to reduce cholesterol, have increased fourfold, while sales of sulia, which few of Forsythe's healthiest citizens eat regularly, have been declining. **This argument is unpersuasive for several reasons.**

**First, the survey must be shown to be reliable before I can accept any conclusions based upon it. Specifically, the responses must be accurate, and the respondents must be statistically significant in number and representative of the overall Forsythe citizenry in terms of eating habits. Without evidence of the survey's reliability, it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions about the current dietary habits of Forsythe citizens based on the survey.**

**Second, the argument relies on the dubious assumption that following the government's nutrition recommendations promotes health to a greater extent than following any other nutrition regime. It is entirely possible that the dietary habits of Forsythe citizens were healthier ten years ago than they are now. Thus, without evidence to substantiate this assumption, the speaker cannot reasonably conclude that the diet of Forsythe's citizens has become more nutritional.**

**Third, the speaker assumes too hastily that increasing sales of products with kiran indicates healthier eating habits. Perhaps Forsythe citizens are eating these foods in amounts or at intervals that undermine the health benefits of kiran. Without ruling out this possibility the speaker cannot reasonably conclude with any confidence that increased kiran consumption has resulted in improved health for Forsythe's citizens.**

**Fourth, the mere fact that few of Forsythe's healthiest citizens eat sulia regularly does not mean that sulia is detrimental to health—as the speaker assumes. It is possible that sulia has no effect on health, or that it actually promotes health. Lacking firm evidence that sulia affects health adversely, and that healthy people avoid sulia for this reason, the speaker cannot justify any conclusions about the health of Forsythe's citizens from the mere fact that sulia sales are declining.**

**Finally, even if the dietary changes to which the speaker refers are healthful ones, the speaker overlooks the possibility that Forsythe citizens have been making other changes in their dietary or other habits that offset these healthful changes. Unless all other habits affecting health have remained unchanged, the speaker cannot justifiably conclude that the overall lifestyle of Forsythe's citizenry has become healthier.**

**In sum, the argument is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen it the speaker must show that the survey accurately reflects the dietary habits of Forsythe's citizens, and that by following the government's nutritional recommendations more closely these citizens are in fact healthier. The speaker must also show that Forsythe's citizens have not made other dietary or other lifestyle changes that offset healthful changes. Finally, to better assess the argument I would need more information about the manner and extent to which Forsythe's citizens now consume kiran and about the healthfulness of sulia.**

#### 【参考译文】

在这个论证里，发言者断定福赛思市民的生活方式已经变得更加健康了。为了证明这个结论是正确的，发言者引用了一项最近的调查，其中福赛思市民回答说他们现在的饮食习惯和十年前相比越来越和政府的营养建议趋于一致了。发言者还指出基伦（kiran）——一种可以分解胆固醇的物质——的销售额已经翻了四倍，而那些福赛思的最健康的市民很少有人经常吃的素丽亚（sulia）的销售额一直下降。这个论证由于几个原因显得很不具有说服力。

首先，要使我相信以这个调查为基础做出的任何结论，调查本身一定要是可信的。特别是回

答一定要是准确的，并且回答者的人数应具备统计学上的意义，就饮食习惯而言，能代表全体福赛思市民。没有证据证明该调查的可信性，就不可能根据这个调查得出任何关于福赛思市民现在的饮食习惯的肯定结论。

其次，这个论证依赖于一个可疑的假定，即按照政府的营养建议比按照其他任何营养养生法能更好地促进健康。福赛思市民十年前的饮食习惯完全有可能比他们现在的要健康。因此，没有证据证明这个假设是正确的，发言者就不能想当然地断定福赛思市民的饮食已经变得更加营养了。

第三，发言者过于草率地认为含有基伦 (kiran) 的产品的销售额上升就表明了饮食习惯变得更加健康。或许福赛思市民正过量或者间歇地食用这些食物，以致破坏了基伦 (kiran) 对健康的好处。没有排除这种可能，发言者就不能理所当然地并有把握地得出结论，增长的基伦 (kiran) 消费已经产生了改善福赛思市民的健康的效果。

第四，福赛思的最健康的市民中很少有人常吃素丽亚 (sulia) 的这个事实并不意味着素丽亚 (sulia) 就如同发言者说的那样对健康有害。有可能素丽亚 (sulia) 对健康并没有影响，或者实际上它还能促进健康。缺乏有力的证据证明素丽亚 (sulia) 确实对健康有不良影响，并且健康的人们因此而排斥它，发言者就不能从素丽亚 (sulia) 的销售额在下降这个事实来证明他所做的关于福赛思市民的健康情况的结论是正确的。

最后，即使发言者提到的饮食变化确实是有益于健康的，但发言者也忽略了这种可能性，即福赛思市民的饮食或者其他习惯一直在变化，而这些变化正好抵消了有益于健康的饮食变化。除非影响健康的所有其他习惯均保持不变，否则发言者就不能无可非议地断定福赛思市民整体的生活方式已经变得更加健康。

总之，就目前情况看，论点不能令人信服。为了加强它的说服力，发言者必须证明那个调查能够准确地反映出福赛思市民的饮食习惯，以及通过更严格地遵循政府的营养建议，这些市民确实变得更加健康。发言者还必须证明福赛思市民没有在饮食或者生活方式上发生其他任何变化，会抵消有益于健康的变化。最后，为了更好地评价这个论证，我需要更多有关现在福赛思市民食用基伦 (kiran) 的方式与剂量的信息，以及素丽亚 (sulia) 是否有益于身体健康的信息。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的五处缺陷：

1. 调查样本的数量和代表性值得怀疑。
2. 政府推荐的营养建议未必比其他的饮食习惯更符合健康要求。
3. 含基伦食品销量的上升未必意味着人们的饮食习惯更加健康。
4. 素丽亚消费量少未必是因为它对健康有害。
5. 仅有饮食习惯的变化不足以判断人们的生活方式是否更健康，我们还需要考虑生活习惯的其他方面。

- 思路提示：本文攻击的出发点虽然比较多，但每个问题都没有做充分展开，而且使用了大量的抽象性逻辑描述语言来进行论证，这对于得分来说并不有利。因而本文主要以逻辑攻击点作为参考，同学们真正参加考试时可以选取其中的三到四点做更加充分的展开论证。

### 【语言提示】

- 攻击调查样本的语言：(1) The survey must be shown to be reliable before I can accept any conclusions based upon it. (2) Specifically, the responses must be accurate, and the respondents must be statistically significant in number and representative of the overall ... (3)

Without evidence of the survey's reliability, it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions about ... based on the survey.

- 其他论证句式: (1) Thus, without evidence to substantiate this assumption, the speaker cannot reasonably conclude that ... (2) Without ruling out this possibility the speaker cannot reasonably conclude with any confidence that ... (3) The mere fact that ... does not mean that ...—as the speaker assumes. (4) Lacking firm evidence that ..., and that ..., the speaker cannot justify any conclusions about ... from the mere fact that ...

## Argument 202 Extinction of mammals in the Kaliko islands

Humans arrived in the Kaliko Islands about 7,000 years ago, and within 3,000 years most of the large mammal species that had lived in the forests of the Kaliko Islands had become extinct. Yet humans cannot have been a factor in the species' extinctions, because there is no evidence that the humans had any significant contact with the mammals. Further, archaeologists have discovered numerous sites where the bones of fish had been discarded, but they found no such areas containing the bones of large mammals, so the humans cannot have hunted the mammals. Therefore, some climate change or other environmental factor must have caused the species' extinctions.

【参考译文】大约 7000 年前，人类到达了卡里口岛，在 3000 年内曾经生活在卡里口岛的树林中的大型哺乳动物绝大多数已经灭绝了。然而人类并不是导致这些物种灭绝的因素，因为没有证据表明人类与这些哺乳动物有重要的接触。而且，考古学家发现一些有大量鱼骨被抛弃的场所，而他们并没有发现存在大型哺乳动物骨头的类似场所，因而人类并没有猎杀这些哺乳动物。因此，一定是一些气候上的变化或其他环境因素导致了这些物种的灭绝。

In this argument the speaker concludes that humans could not have been a factor in the extinction of large mammal species in the Kaliko islands 3,000 years ago. To justify this conclusion, the speaker points out that no evidence exists that humans hunted or had other significant contact with these mammals. The speaker also points out that while archeologists have found bones of discarded fish in the islands, they have not found any discarded mammal bones there. For three reasons, this evidence lends little credibility to the speaker's argument.

First, the argument concludes too hastily that humans could not have had any significant contact with these mammals. In relying on the lack of physical evidence such as bones, the speaker overlooks the possibility that humans exported mammals—particularly their bones—during this time period. Without ruling out this alternative explanation for the disappearance of these species from the islands, the speaker cannot justify the conclusion that humans were not a factor in their extinction from the islands.

Secondly, the argument relies on the assumption that without significant contact with these other species humans could not have been a factor in their extinction. But the speaker provides no evidence that this is the case. Moreover, perhaps humans drove these other species away from their natural habitat not by significant contact but merely by intruding on their territory. Or perhaps humans consumed the plants and animals on which these species relied for their subsistence. Either scenario would explain how humans could have been a factor in the extinction of these species despite a lack of significant contact.

Thirdly, the speaker assumes that the bones of fish that archeologists have found discarded on the island were discarded by humans, and not by some other large mammal. However, the speaker provides no evidence to substantiate this assumption. Given other possible explanations for these discarded fish bones, this evidence in itself lends little credible support to the speaker's theory about the extinction of large species of mammals.

In conclusion, the argument is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen it, the speaker must rule out the possibility that humans exported the bones of these other species. To better evaluate the argument, we would need more information about the diet of humans and of the now-extinct mammals during that time period; particularly, we would need to know whether those other mammals also fed on the fish whose discarded bones have been found on the islands.

### 【参考译文】

在这篇论证里发言者断定，人类不是 3000 年以前卡里口岛上的大型哺乳动物物种灭绝的原因。为了证明这个结论是正确的，发言者指出没有证据表明人类捕猎这些哺乳动物，或者与这些哺乳动物有其他重要的接触。发言者也指出，考古学家已经在岛上找到丢掉的鱼骨头，而没在那里找到任何丢掉的哺乳动物的骨头。由于以下的三个原因，发言者的论证缺乏可信度。

首先，论证太轻率地断定人类不可能与这些哺乳动物有任何重要的接触。在缺乏例如骨头等物证的基础上，发言者忽略了一个可能发生的情况，这就是在这段时间内这些人出口哺乳动物，特别是骨头。如果没有排除这些物种从岛上消失的这另一种解释，发言者就不能证实人不是这些物种从岛上灭绝的一个因素的结论。

第二，论证基于这样一个假设，即如果与这些物种没有重要的接触，人就不可能是导致它们灭绝的一个因素。但是发言者没有提供证据证明情况确实如此。而且，或许人把这些物种从它们的天然栖息地驱逐走，不是通过直接的接触，而仅仅是通过侵入他们的领土。或者，也许人消耗了这些物种生存必需的植物和动物。尽管缺乏重要的接触，两假定中的任一假定都可以解释人是如何成为这些物种灭绝的一个因素的。

第三，发言者假定岛上考古学家找到的被丢掉的鱼骨头是被人丢掉的，而不是被其他一些大型哺乳动物丢掉的。但是，发言者没有提供证据证明这个假定。考虑到对这些被丢掉的鱼骨头的其他可能的解释，这个证据本身不能为发言者关于大型哺乳动物物种灭绝的理论提供可靠的支持。

总之，就目前情况来看，论证并不使人信服。为了加强其说服力，发言者必须排除人们出口这些物种的骨头的可能性。为了更好地评价此论证，我们需要更多的关于那段时期内人和现在已绝种的哺乳动物的饮食信息；我们尤其需要知道那些其它的哺乳动物是否也以鱼为食，那种鱼的骨头已在岛上被发现。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的三处缺陷：

1. 没有发现哺乳动物的骨头不能说明人类与这些动物没有接触。
2. 人类与这些动物不直接接触也有可能导致它们的灭绝。
3. 没有证据表明文中提到的鱼骨是被人类抛弃的。

### 【语言提示】

- 论证句式：(1) Without ruling out this alternative explanation for ..., the speaker cannot justify the conclusion that ... (2) However, the speaker provides no evidence to substantiate

this assumption. (3) Given other possible explanations for . . . , this evidence in itself lends little credible support to the speaker's theory about . . .

### Argument 203 Small **nonprofit hospitals** vs. large for-profit hospitals

The following appeared in a newspaper feature story.

"At the small, nonprofit hospital in the town of Saluda, the average length of a patient's stay is two days; at the large, for-profit hospital in the nearby city of Megaville, the average patient stay is six days. Also, the cure rate among patients in the Saluda hospital is about twice that of the Megaville hospital. The Saluda hospital has more employees per patient than the hospital in Megaville, and there are few complaints about service at the local hospital. Such data indicate that treatment in smaller, nonprofit hospitals is more economical and of better quality than treatment in larger, for-profit hospitals."

【参考译文】在撒路达镇的小型非赢利医院，患者平均逗留时间是两天；在邻近的麦哥维勒市的大型赢利医院，患者平均逗留时间为六天。而且，撒路达医院患者的治愈率大约是麦哥维勒医院的两倍。撒路达平均每个患者对应的医务人员的数量比麦哥维勒医院多，而且地方医院关于服务的投诉也较少。这些数据表明小型非赢利医院的治疗比大型赢利医院更加经济，质量更高。

**This newspaper story concludes that** the small, nonprofit hospital in Saluda provides more efficient, better-quality care than the for-profit hospital in Megaville. **To justify this conclusion the author cites the following comparisons between** the Saluda hospital and the Megaville hospital: At the Saluda hospital the average length of a patient's stay is shorter, the cure rate and employee-patient ratio are both higher, and the number of complaints from patients is lower. **However, careful consideration of these facts reveals that they fail to justify the author's conclusion.**

**In the first place, the author unfairly assumes that** a shorter hospital stay indicates a quicker recovery and therefore better care. **It is equally possible that** the Saluda hospital simply cannot afford to keep patients as long as it should to ensure proper care and recovery. **Perhaps** the hospital sends patients home prematurely for the purpose of freeing up beds for other patients. **Since the author has failed to rule out other possible explanations for this shorter average stay, I remain unconvinced based on this evidence that** the Saluda hospital provides better care than Megaville's hospital.

**In the second place, the mere fact that** the rate of cure at the Saluda hospital is higher than at Megaville's hospital **proves nothing about** the quality of care at either hospital. **It is entirely possible that** more Saluda patients suffer from curable problems than Megaville patients do. **Without considering this possibility the author cannot justifiably rely on cure rates to draw any conclusions about comparative quality of care.**

**In the third place, a higher employee-patient ratio at Saluda is weak evidence of** either better care or greater efficiency. **Common sense informs me that** it is the competence of each employee, not the number of employees, that determines overall quality of care. **Besides, it is entirely possible that** the comparatively large staff at Saluda is the result of organizational inefficiency, and that a smaller staff of more effective, better managed people would provide better care.

**Finally, the mere fact that** the Saluda hospital receives fewer patient complaints than Megaville's hospital **proves nothing about** either efficiency or quality of care. **Even though** the number of com-

plaints is smaller, the percentage of patients complaining might be higher. Also, Megaville's staff might openly encourage patient feedback while Saluda's does not. This scenario accords with my observation that for-profit organizations are generally more concerned with customer satisfaction than non-profit organizations are.

In sum, the facts that the story cites amount to weak evidence that the Saluda hospital provides more efficient, better-quality care than Megaville's hospital. To strengthen the argument, the author must provide clear evidence that at the Saluda hospital patients are released earlier because they have received better care—rather than for some other reason. To better assess the argument, I would need to compare the percentage of Megaville's hospital patients who suffer from curable problems with the percentage of Saluda patients who suffer from similar problems. Also, I would need more information from each hospital about complaint procedures and the percentage of patients who lodge complaints.

### 【参考译文】

这篇报纸上的报道下结论说撒路达的非赢利的小医院比麦哥维勒的赢利的医院提供了更有效率、更优质的护理。为了证明这个结论是正确的，作者引用了在撒路达医院和麦哥维勒医院之间的以下比较：在撒路达医院，病人停留的平均时间更短，治愈比率以及护理员和病人的比率都更高，并且病人的抱怨也更少。但是，通过对这些事实的仔细考虑，我们会发现它们不能证明作者的结论是正确的。

首先，作者不公平地假定在一所医院停留时间越短就表明恢复得越快，因此得到了更好的护理。同样可能的是，撒路达医院只不过没有条件使病人呆在医院里足够长的时间，来保证适当的护理和恢复。或许医院为了为其他病人腾出床位，过早地送病人回家。因为作者没有排除对更短的平均停留时间的其他可能的解释，基于这个论据，作者不能使我信服，撒路达医院比麦哥维勒医院提供了更好的护理。

其次，仅凭撒路达医院的治愈率比麦哥维勒医院高这一事实并不能证明两所医院中的任一所的护理质量。完全可能与麦哥维勒的病人相比，更多撒路达的病人患的是可医治的病痛。如果没有考虑到这个可能性，作者不能无可辩驳地凭借治愈率来得出关于护理质量比较的任何结论。

再次，撒路达更高的医务人员和患者的比率既不能有力地证明它有更好的护理，也不能证明它有更高的效率。常识告诉我每个雇员的能力，并非雇员的数量，决定着护理的总体质量。而且，完全可能的是，撒路达相对庞大的医务人员队伍是组织效率低下的结果，并且一个人数量更少的，更有效的，管理得更好的医务人员队伍可以提供更好的护理。

最后，仅凭撒路达医院比麦哥维勒医院收到更少的来自病人的抱怨这一事实既不能证明它的效率，也不能证明它的护理质量。即使抱怨的数量较少，有抱怨的病人的百分比却可能更高。此外，麦哥维勒的人员可能公开地鼓励病人反馈，而撒路达的人员却不这么做。这种推测符合我所观察到的赢利组织通常比非赢利组织更关注客户的满意度的现象。

总之，报道所引用的事实不能有力地证明撒路达医院比麦哥维勒医院提供了更有效率、更优质的护理。为了加强此论证，作者应当提供清楚的证据来证明撒路达医院病人更早出院是因为他们受到更好的护理，而不是其他一些原因。为了更好地评价此论证，我需要比较患可治愈的疾病的麦哥维勒医院的病人的百分比与患相似疾病的撒路达的病人的百分比。此外，我需要来自每所医院的关于投诉程序和投诉的病人所占的百分比的更多的信息。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的四处缺陷：

1. 患者在医院逗留的时间长短并不是治疗质量和效果的标志, 可能有其他因素导致逗留时间的长短。

2. 由于患者情况不同, 治愈率的高低也不能说明医疗护理的质量。

3. 医患比例的高低也不能说明医疗护理的质量。

4. 撒路达医院受到的患者投诉较少可能由其他原因导致, 而且投诉人数少并不能说明投诉的比例也一定小(比例与总量混淆, 数据模糊性的错误)。

● 逻辑思路提示: 本题所用的论据形式主要是对比(comparison), 通过两家医院几方面的比较来说明其医护质量的高低。攻击对比和攻击类比(analogy)的方式类似, 都是指出作者进行对比的双方在其他方面还有哪些被作者忽视的可能差异。本文作者即指出两家医院的设备条件、患者所患疾病情况、医院对于投诉的态度可能存在差异从而导致了文中的现象, 而未必是医护质量的高低所致。

#### 【语言提示】

● 开头段句式: However, careful consideration of these facts reveals that they fail to justify the author's conclusion.

● 论证段句式: (1) Since the author has failed to rule out other possible explanations for ..., I remain unconvinced based on this evidence that ... (2) Without considering this possibility the author cannot justifiably rely on ... to draw any conclusions about ... (3) This scenario accords with my observation that ...

● 结尾段句式: In sum, the facts that the story cites amount to weak evidence that ...

### Argument 208 The need for more electric generating plants

The following appeared in a memorandum from the planning department of an electric power company.

“Several recent surveys indicate that homeowners are increasingly eager to conserve energy and manufacturers are now marketing many home appliances, such as refrigerators and air conditioners, that are almost twice as energy-efficient as those sold a decade ago. Also, new technologies for better home insulation and passive solar heating are readily available to reduce the energy needed for home heating. Therefore, we anticipate that the total demand for electricity in our area will not increase, and may decline slightly. Since our three electric generating plants in operation for the past 20 years have always met our needs, construction of new generating plants should not be necessary.”

【参考译文】一些最近的调查表明, 私房房主越来越强烈地希望节省能源, 并且生产商现在正在推出很多比十年前的电器几乎节能两倍的家用电器, 比如冰箱和空调。而且, 更好的房屋隔热和被动式太阳能采暖的新技术已经可以用于减少家庭采暖所需的能源。因此, 我们预计我们地区的用电需求总量不会增加, 而可能有轻微下降。由于我们的已经运作了20年的三座发电站一直能够满足需求, 我们无需建造新的发电厂。

The author of this memo concludes that there is no need for an additional electric power plant in the area because total electricity demand in the area is not likely to increase in the future. To support this conclusion the author cites the availability of new energy-efficient appliances and systems for homes, and the eagerness of area homeowners to conserve energy. However, the argument relies on several doubtful assumptions, and is therefore unpersuasive as it stands.



**First, the author's projection for flat or declining total demand for electricity ignores business and commercial electricity usage. It is entirely possible that area businesses will increase their use of electricity in the future and that total electricity consumption will actually increase despite flat or declining residential demand. The author's projection also ignores the possibility that the number of area residents will increase in the future, thereby resulting in an increase in electricity usage regardless of whether more efficient appliances are used in area homes. Without taking into account these possibilities, the author cannot persuade me that total demand for electricity will not increase in the future.**

**Secondly, the author's conclusion relies on the assumption that area residents will actually purchase and install the energy-saving appliances and systems the author describes. Admittedly, the author points out that homeowners are "eager to conserve energy." Nevertheless, these homeowners might not be able to afford these new systems and appliances. Moreover, the energy-efficient insulation that the author mentions might be available only for new home construction, or it might be a gas system. In either case, the mere availability of this system might have no effect on total electric usage in existing homes.**

**A final problem involves the assertion that no new electric power plants are needed because the three existing plants, which are 20 years old, have always been adequate for the area's electric needs. The author fails to account for the possibility that the old plants are themselves less energy efficient than a new plant using new technology would be, or that the old plants need to be replaced due to their age, or for some other reason. Besides, this assertion ignores the possible influx of residents or businesses in the future, thereby increasing the demand for electricity beyond what the three existing plants can meet.**

**In conclusion, the argument is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen it the author must show that area residents can afford the new energy-efficient appliances and systems, and that area commercial demand for electricity will not increase significantly in the foreseeable future. In order to better evaluate the argument, we would need to know whether the new energy-efficient technologies are available to businesses as well, and whether area businesses plan to use them. We would also need more information about expected changes in the area's population, and about the condition and energy-efficiency of the three current electric power plants.**

### 【参考译文】

这个备忘录的作者断言没有必要再在这个地区建造另一个发电厂，因为将来该区的电力总需求量不可能增加。为了支持这个结论，作者引用了获得家用的节能电器和系统的可能性，以及该区自己拥有住房的居民渴望节约能量的愿望。但是，这个论证依赖于几个可疑的假定，并因此变得没有说服力。

首先，作者在预测电力总需求量会持平或者下降的时候，忽视了商业和贸易用电。这个地区的商业用电将来完全有可能增加，那么尽管家庭用电量持平或者下滑，实际上总的电量消耗也会上升。作者的预测还忽略了这么一种可能性，即该区居民的人口数将来也会增长，那么不管该区的家庭里是不是有更多的节能电器，用电量也会增多的。没有考虑到这些可能性，作者不能让我相信将来对电力的总需求量不会上涨。

第二，作者的结论是建立在这个假设上的，即该区的居民确实会购买并安装作者所描述的节能电器和系统。无可否认，作者确实指出房主“渴望节约能量”。虽然如此，这些房主也可能无法承担这些新器具和系统的费用。而且，作者提到的节能隔热材料可能只适用于新的家庭建

筑物, 或者它也可能就是一个燃气系统。无论是上述哪种情况, 这个系统的存在对现有家庭的总用电量可能毫无影响。

最后一个问题与这个断言有关: 因为现有的三家有 20 年历史的发电厂一直能够满足这个地区的电力需求, 所以没有必要再建新的发电厂。作者没有考虑到这种可能性, 也就是旧的发电厂无法比使用新技术的发电厂更加节能, 或者由于时间太长或其他什么原因, 旧发电厂有必要被取代了。此外, 这个断言忽略了将来有居民或者商业机构流入, 致使原有的三家发电厂不能满足电力需求的可能性。

总之, 就目前情况看, 该论点不能使人信服。为了加强它的力度, 作者必须证明这个地区的居民能够承担新式的节能器具和系统的费用, 并且在可预见的将来该区的商业电力需求量不会有显著的增加。为了更好地评价这个论证, 我们需要知道新式的节能技术是否也能应用于商业机构, 并且该区的商业机构是否打算采用这些新式的节能技术。我们还将需要更多有关该地区人口的预期变化, 以及有关现有的三家发电厂的条件和节能率的信息。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的三处缺陷:

1. 作者仅仅考虑了居民用电而没有考虑工业、商业用电 (考虑问题不够全面的错误); 以及没有考虑本地区居民数量可能增加 (没有与时俱进的错误)。
2. 作者仅仅提出现在已有节能电器和建筑, 但没有考虑人们是否能够承受这些新技术的花费。
3. 作者没有考虑现有的三座老发电厂的能源效率可能不如新型电厂, 也没有考虑这些老电厂可能在近期到达使用年限的情况 (没有与时俱进的错误)。

#### ● 逻辑思路提示:

- 1) 没有与时俱进的错误: 即作者忽视了时间变量的存在, 仅仅看到现有情况就下结论, 而没有考虑很多条件和情况会随着时间变化。
- 2) 经济承受力的问题: 在很多题目中都会出现类似的论证形式, 即作者只看到现有某种措施、条件和设备可以解决某问题, 但没有考虑它们所需费用的经济问题, 从另一方面来说, 这也可以看成是结论缺乏客观可行性。在本题中, 作者就是只提出现有节能电器和建筑, 而没有考虑有多少人买得起而选择它们。在缺乏使用节能设备的居民的确切比例的情况下是无法判断这些电器和技术的出现是否真的能减少用电量的。

### 【语言提示】

- 论证句式: In either case, the mere ... might have no effect on ...

## Argument 210 Increasing factory efficiency by using robots

The following is a letter to the editor of a news magazine.

"Clearly, the successful use of robots on missions to explore outer space in the past 20 years demonstrates that robots could be increasingly used to perform factory work more effectively, efficiently, and profitably than human factory workers. The use of robots in factories would offer several advantages. First, robots never get sick, so absenteeism would be reduced. Second, robots do not make mistakes, so factories would increase their output. Finally, the use of robots would also improve the morale of factory workers, since factory work can be so boring that many workers would be glad to shift to more interesting kinds of tasks."

**【参考译文】**显然，过去 20 年中机器人在探索外层空间任务中的成功使用证明，机器人可以更多地用于工厂，它们工作起来比人类工作人员更有效、更有利可图。工厂中机器人的使用将带来若干好处。首先，机器人从不生病，从而旷工将会减少。其次，机器人不会出错，因此工厂产量将会增加。最后，使用机器人同样也会提高工厂工人的精神状态，因为工厂的工作有时如此枯燥，以至于很多工人将会乐于转换到更有趣的任务。

**This editorial concludes that using robots for factory work would improve factory efficiency. To justify this conclusion the editorial's author cites the fact that robots have been used effectively in many space missions. Also, the author claims that the use of robots in factories would (1) reduce absenteeism because robots never get sick, (2) improve output because robots do not make errors, and (3) improve factory-worker morale because these workers could be reassigned to less boring jobs. However, the author's argument is problematic in several critical respects.**

**To begin with, the argument depends on the hasty assumption that the kinds of tasks robots perform in space are similar to the ones they would perform in factories, and that there are no differences between the two environments that would render robots less effective in factory jobs than in space missions. Perhaps the effectiveness of robots in space missions is due largely to the weightless environment of space. Or perhaps the average space-mission robot performs less work than a typical factory robot would be required to perform. In either case, the fact that robots are effective in space would amount to scant support for the author's argument.**

**As for the author's claim that the use of robots would decrease absenteeism, although robots clearly do not get sick, in all likelihood factory robots would break down from time to time—which is tantamount to absenteeism. Without accounting for this likelihood the author cannot rely on this claim to conclude that the use of robots would improve overall factory efficiency.**

**Also questionable is the author's claim that the use of robots would increase factory output because robots do not make errors. Unless the author can provide clear evidence that human errors result in a lower rate of factory output, and not just a lower quality of product, I cannot be convinced that using robots would in fact increase the rate of output.**

**Two final problems involve the author's claim that using robots would improve the morale of factory workers, thereby improving factory efficiency. First, the author provides no assurances that if factory workers are reassigned to other types of jobs their morale would improve as a result. Although the new jobs might be less boring, these jobs might pose other problems that would adversely affect worker morale. Secondly, even if the morale of the workers improves as a result of reassignment, overall factory efficiency will not necessarily improve as a result. These workers might be ill-suited for their new jobs and thus be extremely ineffective in them.**

**In sum, the editorial relies on a potentially weak analogy as well as on a series of unwarranted claims. To strengthen the argument that the use of robots would improve factory efficiency, the editorial's author must at the very least provide clear evidence that factory robots would perform the same types of tasks, and just as well, as the tasks robots have performed in space missions. To better assess the strength of each of the author's three unwarranted claims, respectively, I would need to know: (1) the expected downtime—i.e., absenteeism—for factory robots; (2) the extent to which human error decreases the rate of factory output; and (3) the extent to which human factory workers would be happy and effective in the new jobs to which they would be assigned.**

### 【参考译文】

这篇社论断定在工厂工作中使用机器人将提高工厂效率。为了证明这个结论是正确的，社论的作者引用了机器人已经在很多太空任务中有效地使用的事实。此外，作者声称在工厂使用机器人将：(1) 减少缺勤，因为机器人从不会生病；(2) 增加产量，因为机器人不会犯错误；并且 (3) 提高工厂工人士气，因为这些工人可能被再分配去做不那么令人厌烦的工作。但是，作者的论证在几个关键的方面是有疑问的。

首先，论证所依靠的是草率的设想，即空间作业机器人在太空执行的任务与它们在工厂内将要执行的任务是类似的，而且两种环境之间没有任何能导致机器人在工厂工作没有太空工作那么有效的差别。或许在太空执行任务的机器人之所以有效，主要是由于太空失重的环境所导致的。或者普通的太空作业机器人比一个典型的工厂机器人被要求执行更少的工作。无论是哪种情况，机器人在太空中有效的事实并不能成为对作者论证的支持。

至于作者认为使用机器人将减少缺勤，虽然很明显机器人不会生病，但是很可能，工厂机器人不时会出现故障，这等于缺勤。如果没有考虑这个可能性，作者就不能依靠这个论据来断定机器人的使用将提高工厂总的效率。

除此之外的可疑之处是作者声称因为机器人不会犯错误，使用机器人将增加工厂的产量。除非作者能够提供清楚的证据证明人的错误会导致更低的工厂产量，而并非次等产品，我不能确信使用机器人实际上将增加产量。

最后两个问题与作者主张使用机器人将提高工厂工人士气，从而改进工厂效率有关。首先，作者没有提供保证，如果再分配工厂工人做其他类型的工作，他们的士气将因此而得以提高。虽然新工作可能不那么令人厌烦，但是这些工作可能引起其他问题而对工人士气产生不好的影响。第二，即使那些工人的士气由于重新分配而提高，工厂总效率将不一定因此而改进。这些工人可能不适合他们的新工作，因此做这些工作时效率极低。

总之，社论所依据的是一个不太有说服力的类比以及一系列无根据的主张。为了加强使用机器人将提高工厂效率的论证，社论的作者必须至少提供清楚的证据证明工厂机器人将执行和太空任务相同类型的任务，并且表现也一样好。为了更好地评定作者这三个无根据的主张的力度，我将需要分别知道：(1) 工厂机器人的预期停工期，即缺勤的情况；(2) 因人的错误而减少的工厂产量的程度；以及 (3) 工厂工人将愉快、有效地从事他们被分配的新工作的程度。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的四处缺陷：

1. 由于工作环境等种种条件的不同，在太空使用机器人获得成功未必说明在工厂使用机器人也同样有效（错误类比的错误）。
2. 机器人可能会出现故障，不一定提高效率。
3. 机器人的使用未必带来更高的产量（缺乏比较的错误）。
4. 工人调换岗位后未必带来精神状态的提高，而且有可能因为不胜任新工作而导致工厂效率的下降。

#### ● 逻辑思路提示：

本文还有以下缺陷可以攻击：

- 1) 作者没有考虑使用机器人的花费，没有考虑成本与收益的比较。
- 2) 使用机器人可能会导致大量工人失业，从而产生很多社会和其他问题。
- 3) 机器人出现故障以及日常的维修保养会大大增加成本。

## 【语言提示】

- 论证段句式: (1) Without accounting for this likelihood the author cannot rely on this claim to conclude that ... (2) Also questionable is the author's claim that ... (3) Unless the author can provide clear evidence that ..., I cannot be convinced that ...
- 结尾段句式: (1) In sum, the editorial relies on a potentially weak analogy as well as on a series of unwarranted claims. (2) To strengthen the argument that ..., the editorial's author must at the very least provide clear evidence that ...

**Argument 214 Funding public schools in Blue City and Parson City**

In each city in the region of Treehaven, the majority of the money spent on government-run public school education comes from taxes that each city government collects. The region's cities differ, however, in the value they place on public education. For example, Parson City typically budgets twice as much money per year as Blue City does for its public schools—even though both cities have about the same number of residents. It seems clear, therefore, that Parson City residents care more about public school education than do Blue City residents.

【参考译文】在特里黑文地区的每个城市，政府用于公立学校教育的开支大部分都是从各市政府征收的税收而来的。然而，该地区不同城市对公共教育的重视程度是不同的。举例而言，帕森市每年用于公立学校的预算通常是布鲁市的两倍，尽管两城市居民数量基本相同。因此，帕森市的居民显然比布鲁市居民更关注公立学校教育。

**This argument concludes that Parson City residents value public-school education more highly than Blue City residents do. To justify this conclusion the argument points out that** in both cities the majority of funds for public schools comes from taxes, and that Blue City budgets only half as much money per year for its public schools as Parson City, even though the population in both cities is about the same. **The argument relies on a series of unsubstantiated assumptions, which considered together render the argument wholly unconvincing.**

**One such assumption is that** the total budget for the two cities is about the same. **It is entirely possible that** Blue City's total budget is no more than half that of Parson City. **If so, then the fact that** Blue City budgets only half as much as Parson City for its public schools **would suggest** at least the same degree of care about public-school education among Blue City's residents as among Parson City's residents.

**Even if** Parson City devotes a greater percentage of its budget each year for its schools, **the argument relies on the additional assumption that** this percentage is a reliable indicator of the value a city's residents place on public-school education. **Yet it is entirely possible, for example, that** Blue City's schools are already well funded, or that Blue City has some other, extremely urgent problem which requires additional funding despite a high level of concern among its residents about its public schools. **Absent evidence that** the two city's various needs are similar, **any comparison between** the level of concern about public schools among residents in the two cities based simply on funds spent for public schools **is dubious at best.**

**A third assumption upon which the argument rests is that** the percentage of residents who attend public schools is about the same in both cities. **The argument indicates only that** the total population of

the two cities is about the same. If a comparatively small percentage of Blue City residents attend public schools, then the comparatively small amount of money Blue City devotes to those schools might be well justified despite an equal level of concern about the quality of public-school education among residents in the two cities.

Finally, although the argument states that in both cities “the majority” of money spent on public schools comes from taxes, perhaps the actual percentage is smaller in Blue City than in Parson City, and other such funds come from residents’ donations, earmarked for public education. Compliance with tax laws is scant evidence of taxpayer support of public-school education, while voluntary giving is strong evidence. Thus, it is possible that Blue City residents donate more money per capita for public-school education than Parson City residents do. If so, this fact would seriously weaken the argument that Blue City residents place a comparatively low value on public-school education.

In sum, the argument is unpersuasive as it stands. To strengthen it the argument’s proponent must provide clear evidence that the percentage of the budget allotted to public schools, as well as the percentage of money spent on public schools and derived from taxes, is about the same in both cities. To better assess the argument I would need to compare the neediness of Blue City’s public schools with that of Parson’s public schools. I would also need more information about other urgent financial needs in each city, and about the other sources of the money applied toward public-school education in each city.

#### 【参考译文】

这个论证认为帕森市的居民比布鲁市的居民更重视公立学校教育。为了证明这个结论是正确的，这个论证指出两座城市的大部分公立学校的资金都来自税款，然而布鲁市每年预算投入它的公立学校的资金仅为帕森市的一半，尽管两座城市的人口大概相当。这个论证依赖于一系列无确实根据的假定，而这些假定合起来导致这个论证完全不能使人信服。

其中一个假定是假设两个城市的总预算大致都是一样的。布鲁市的总预算完全有可能不超过帕森市预算的一半。如果是这样的话，布鲁市投在公立学校的预算只是帕森市的一半那么多这个事实至少是在暗示布鲁市居民和帕森市居民一样关心公立学校教育。

即使帕森市每年都把它的预算中的更大份额投给了它的公立学校，这个论证还依靠另外一个假设，即这一份额就能可靠地显示出一个城市的居民对其公立学校教育的重视程度。然而，事实却完全有可能这样，例如，布鲁市的学校的资金已经充足，或者尽管它的居民非常关心公立学校，但是布鲁城市还有其他一些特别急迫的问题需要更多的资金。由于缺乏证据证明两个城市的各种需求是相似的，那么仅基于投在公立学校的资金多寡来对两个城市的居民关心公立学校的程度进行比较，无论如何是值得怀疑的。

该论证所依据的第三个假设是两个城市中就读于公立学校的居民比例几乎相同。这个论证只是表明两座城市的总人口几乎一样。如果相比之下布鲁市的居民中只有较小比例的人上公立学校，那么尽管两个城市的居民对公立学校的教育质量关心程度一样，布鲁城市投在那些学校的资金相对少一些也是有理由的。

最后，虽然论证说明两座城市投在公立学校的大部分资金都来自税款，但是有可能布鲁市所得的实际比例比帕森市要小，而这些资金的其他部分都来自居民专门为公立教育捐献的款项。因遵从纳税法而把资金投给公立学校无力证明纳税者对公立学校教育的重视，然而自愿支付才是更强有力的证据。因此，有可能按人口平均计算，布鲁市的居民为公立学校教育所捐的款比帕森市的居民多。如果是这样的话，它将严重削弱有关布鲁市的居民对公立学校教育的重视程度

相对较低这一论点。

总之，就目前情况看，论证是不具有说服力的。为了加强它的力度，论证的支持者必须提供明确的证据证明两个城市分派给公立学校的预算资金份额，以及公立学校花费的资金份额和从税收所得的资金份额都是几乎一样的。为了更好地评价这个论证，我需要比较布鲁市和帕森市的公立学校对资金的需求量。我还需要了解更多有关各个城市的其他重要财政需求的消息，以及各个城市投给公立学校教育的资金的其他来源的信息。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的四处缺陷：

1. 两个城市的财政预算总额可能不同，从而教育经费在其中所占的比例即无从比较（总量与比例混淆，数据模糊性的错误）。
2. 教育经费在财政预算中所占的比例也并不是人们对于教育的关注程度的指标。
3. 两个城市参加公立学校的人数可能不同，因而所需的教育经费不同（错误类比的错误）。
4. 作者没有考虑除了政府预算以外的其他经费来源。

#### ● 逻辑思路提示：

- 1) 比例与总量混淆的问题：本文有两个段落是攻击这个数据混淆的错误的，首先是指出在不知道财政预算总额这一基数（base amount）的情况下，我们无法判断每个城市教育经费在总额中所占的比例，因而不能仅从教育经费总量的多与少来衡量它们对于教育的重视程度；其次是指出两个城市尽管居民总量相近，但需要在公立学校受教育的人所占比例不同，因而受教育者人均教育经费的数值有可能仍然是相当的。
- 2) 逻辑错误的相通性：我们曾经提到过，不同的错误形式之间并不是截然对立非此即彼的，有些错误互相包含互相融合。比如本文攻击的第三点，从论证根本来说攻击的是两个城市的情况不同不存在类比关系的错误类比的错误，但在具体展开时使用是总量与比例混淆的论据。因此，我们自己写作时也不必把错误分得那么绝对，有些错误是相互交织、本质共通的；有时同一个问题也可以从几个不同的方面来展开论证。
- 3) 本题还有一个可供攻击的点，就是在原文中仅仅提到公立学校的经费情况，而公共教育（public education）显然不仅仅包括公立学校教育（public school education），还要考虑私立学校的经费情况。

### 【语言提示】

- 开头段句式：The argument relies on a series of unsubstantiated assumptions, which considered together render the argument wholly unconvincing.
- 论证段句式：(1) Absent evidence that ..., any comparison between ... is dubious at best.  
(2) A third assumption upon which the argument rests is that ...

## Argument 217 A fitness-gym franchise opportunity

The following appeared in a brochure promoting the purchase of local franchises for a national chain of gyms.

“Now is the time to invest in a franchise so that you can profit from opening one of our gyms in your town. Consider the current trends: Power-Lift Gyms are already popular among customers in 500 locations, and national surveys indicate increasing concern with weight loss and physical fitness. Furthermore, last year’s sales of books and magazines on personal health totaled more than \$ 50 million, and purchases of home exercise equipment almost doubled. Investing now in a Power-Lift Gym fran-

chise will guarantee a quick profit.”

【参考译文】现在是投资于力量举重体育馆特许权的良好时机，你可以在你们城市开设一家体育馆，从中赢利。考虑一下当前的潮流：力量举重体育馆已经在500个地点的消费者中相当流行，全国调查表明对于减肥和健身的关注越来越多。而且，去年关于个人健康的书籍和杂志销售总额超过了5000万美元，家庭健身器具的购买量几乎翻了一番。现在投资力量举重体育馆特许权将保证快速致富。

**This brochure for Power-Lift Gym claims that by investing in a Power-Lift franchise an investor will earn a quick profit. To support this claim the brochure cites a variety of statistics about the current popularity of physical fitness and of Power-Lift Gyms in particular. However, careful scrutiny of this evidence reveals that it lends no credible support to the claim.**

**One problem with the brochure's claim involves its reliance on the bare fact that revenue from last year's sales of health books and magazines totaled \$ 50 million. This statistic in itself proves nothing. Health magazines do not all focus on weightlifting or even physical fitness; it is possible that very few sales were of those that do. Besides, it is entirely possible that in previous years total sales were even higher and that sales are actually declining. Either scenario, if true, would serve to weaken the brochure's claim rather than support it.**

**Another problem with the brochure's claim involves the fact that more and more consumers are purchasing home gyms. It is entirely possible that consumers are using home gyms as a substitute for commercial gyms, and that the number of Power-Lift memberships will decline as a result. Without ruling out this possibility, the brochure cannot convince me that a new Power-Lift franchise would be profitable.**

**A third problem with the brochure's claim involves its reliance on the fact that 500 Power-Lift franchises are now in existence. It is entirely possible that the market has become saturated, and that additional Power-Lift Gyms will not be as successful as current ones. Moreover, it is possible that the number of competing gyms has also increased in tandem with the general interest in health and fitness. Without addressing this supply-and-demand issue, the brochure cannot justify its conclusion that a new Power-Lift franchise would be a sound investment.**

**In conclusion, the brochure is unpersuasive as it stands. To strengthen its claim that a new Power-Lift franchise would be profitable, the brochure should provide stronger evidence that the general interest in physical fitness, and weightlifting in particular, will continue unabated in the foreseeable future. The brochure must also provide evidence that home gyms are not serving as substitutes for commercial gyms. Finally, to better evaluate the argument we would need more information about the extent to which the fitness-gym market has become saturated, not only by Power-Lift franchises but by competing gyms as well.**

#### 【参考译文】

这个力量举重体育馆的小册子声称，投资力量举重特许权将使投资者很快赢利。为了支持这个主张，小册子引用了大量关于当前对身体健康的普遍关注程度，特别是力量举重体育馆的流行程度的统计数据。但是，通过对这个证据的细察，我们发现它没有给予这个主张以可信的支持。



小册子的主张所涉及的第一个问题是它所依靠的事实，即去年健康书籍和杂志的销售收入共达 5000 万美元。这个统计本身没有证明任何东西。健康杂志并不全都关注举重或者身体健康；很可能那些关注这个问题的刊物销售量很少。而且，完全可能在前些年，总销售量甚至比这还要高，所以销售量实际上正在下降。如果两个假定中的任何一个成立的话，小册子的主张将被削弱，而不是被支持。

小册子主张的另一个问题与越来越多的消费者正在购买家庭健身房的事实有关。完全可能消费者把家庭健身房作为一种商业体育馆的代用品，并且力量举重的成员数量将因此下降。如果没有排除这种可能性，小册子不能使我信服新的力量举重特许权将是有利可图的。

小册子主张的第三个问题在于它依靠现在有 500 个力量举重特许权这一事实。完全可能市场已经变得饱和，新增加的力量举重体育馆将不会像当今的那样成功。而且，很可能为了迎合大众对健康的普遍兴趣，与它相竞争的体育馆的数量也有所增加。如果没有处理供应与需求的问题，小册子就不能证明新的力量举重特许权将是一项合理投资的结论是正确的。

总之，就目前情况看，小册子是没有说服力的。为了加强它的主张，即新的力量举重特许权将是有利可图的，小册子应该提供更强有力的证据证明对身体健康，尤其是举重的普遍兴趣将在可预知的将来继续保持而不衰退。小册子也必须提供证据证明家庭健身房不会作为商业体育馆的代用品。最后，为了更好地评价论证，我们将需要更多的信息。这些信息是关于健身房市场现有的饱和程度，包括力量举重体育馆以及其他与此竞争的场馆设施。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的三处缺陷：

1. 健康杂志和书籍的销售额并不能说明人们对于健身的关注程度。
2. 家庭健身器械购买量的增加有可能导致对于健身场馆的需求下降。
3. 现有的 500 家场馆可能已经造成市场的饱和，并且市场竞争将会越来越激烈。

● 逻辑思路提示：本题还有以下缺陷可以攻击：

- 1) 作者没有提供关于已开设的 500 家场馆所在城市的信息，也许这些场馆都集中于那些对健康和健身的热衷程度非常高的城市，这些城市的经营状况并不能说明 Power-Lift Gym 在所有城市都能取得成功（草率推广的错误）。
- 2) 全国性调查所得到的人们关注减肥和健身的结果未必适用于每一城市（草率推广的错误）。
- 3) 作者没有提供关于 Power-Lift Gym 具体功能的任何信息，因而就算城市居民有减肥和健身的要求，也不能认定这些场馆就能用于满足这些要求（信息不完整的错误）。
- 4) 作者没有告知投资于 Power-Lift Gym 所需的成本，因而我们无法判断通过这一途径是否能够致富（没有考虑成本与收益之比的错误）。

### 【语言提示】

- 开头段句式：However, careful scrutiny of this evidence reveals that it lends no credible support to the claim.
- 论证段句式：(1) One problem with the brochure's claim involves its reliance on the bare fact that ... (2) This statistic in itself proves nothing. (3) Either scenario, if true, would serve to weaken the brochure's claim rather than support it. (4) Without addressing this supply-and-demand issue, the brochure cannot justify its conclusion that ...

**Argument 220 The rewards for book writers vs. television writers**

The following appeared in an article in a magazine for writers.

“A recent study showed that in describing a typical day’s conversation, people make an average of 23 references to watching television and only 1 reference to reading fiction. This result suggests that, compared with the television industry, the publishing and bookselling industries are likely to decline in profitability. Therefore, people who wish to have careers as writers should acquire training and experience in writing for television rather than for print media.”

【参考译文】最近一次研究显示，当描述日常对话的时候，人们平均有23次提到看电视，而只有一次提到读小说。这一结果说明，与电视行业相比，出版和书籍销售行业的赢利能力可能会下降。因此，想要以作家为职业的人应该接受为电视而不是为印刷媒体写作的训练，并得到相关的经验。

This article cites a recent study showing that during a typical day people make an average of 23 references to watching television but only one reference to reading fiction. From these statistics the author reasons that the television industry must be far more profitable than the book-publishing industry, then concludes that people seeking careers in writing should acquire training and experience in television writing. This argument is flawed in several critical respects.

First of all, the article’s author has not shown the study upon which the argument depends to be statistically reliable. The people studied must be representative of the overall population of people who buy books and watch television; otherwise the author cannot draw any firm conclusions about the comparative profitability of the television and book-publishing industries based on the study’s results.

Secondly, the author’s argument depends on the assumption that the frequency with which a person refers in conversation to television, or to fiction books, is a good indication of how much television a person watches, or how many fiction books a person reads. Yet this is not necessarily the case. Perhaps people tend to refer many times in daily conversation to the same television show. If so, then the statistics cited would overstate the amount of television people watch compared to the number of fiction books they read.

Thirdly, even if the statistics cited accurately reflect the amount of television people watch compared to the number of fiction books they read, it would be hasty to infer based merely on this fact that the television industry is more profitable than the book-publishing industry. To begin with, the study’s results excluded any data about nonfiction books—a category that might very well constitute book publishers’ main profit source. Moreover, the author has not shown any correlation, let alone a cause-and-effect relationship, between the number of hours a person spends watching television and that industry’s profits. In any event, lacking financial statistics about the profitability of the two industries the editorial’s author cannot convince me that writers should follow the author’s recommendation.

Finally, even assuming that the television industry is more profitable than the book-publishing industry, the author’s implicit claim that television writers enjoy more secure and lucrative careers than book writers is without support. It is entirely possible that television writers are paid comparatively low wages; in fact, low writer compensation might partially explain why the television industry is relatively profitable. Without better evidence that television writers are better off than book writers it might be folly to follow the author’s recommendation.

**In sum, the argument relies on several poor assumptions and is therefore unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen it the article's author must provide clear evidence that the study's subjects reflect the overall population, and that their conversational habits accurately reflect how much television they watch compared to how many books they read. The author must also show that the disparity between the two contributes to far greater financial rewards for the television industry, as well as for its writers, than for the book-publishing industry and its writers.**

### 【参考译文】

这篇文章引用了一项新近的研究，该研究表明在日常谈话中，人们平均有 23 次提到看电视，只有一次提到读小说。根据这些统计数据，作者做出如下推论，电视行业一定比图书出版业更加有利可图，从而得出结论，欲从事作家这一职业的人应该获得电视写作的训练和经验。这篇论证在以下几个关键的方面是有缺陷的。

首先，文章的作者没有说明论证所依据的研究统计数据的可靠性。这项研究的对象必须能够代表全部买书和看电视的人；否则，作者不能基于研究的结果得出任何关于电视和图书出版业的赢利比较的可靠结论。

第二，作者的论证依据一个假设，即一个人在谈话中所提及的看电视或是读书的频率，可以说明他看了多少电视或者读了多少小说。但是情况并不一定是这样。或许人们倾向于在日常对话中多次提到相同的电视节目。如果是这样的话，那么所引用的统计可能夸大了人们看电视的数量与读小说的数量之比。

第三，即使所引用的统计准确地反映出人们看电视的数量与人们读的小说的数量的比较，仅仅基于这个事实推断出电视行业比图书出版业更加有利可图也是很草率的。首先，研究的结果没有考虑其他非小说类书籍的数据，而这类书籍可能是组成图书出版商利润的主要来源。而且，作者没有揭示在一个人看电视所花费的时间和那个行业的利润之间有任何相互关系，更不用说一种因果关系。无论如何，缺乏关于这两个行业赢利的财务统计，社论的作者不能使我信服作家应该遵循他的建议。

最后，即使假定电视行业比图书出版业更加有利可图，作者所暗示的电视剧作家这一职业比为出版业写作的作家的职业更安全，更有利可图的主张是缺乏支持的。完全可能电视剧作家获得相对较少的薪酬；而实际上，支付给作家低薪可以部分解释为什么电视行业会相对赚钱。如果没有更好的证据证明电视剧作家的经济状况比写书的作家更好，遵循作者的建议可能很愚蠢。

总之，就目前情况看，论证依据的是几个没有根据的假定，因此不具有说服力。为了加强论证，文章的作者必须提供清楚的证据表明研究的对象能够代表全部人口，并且他们的会话习惯准确反映出他们看电视与读书数量的比较。作者也必须证实，与图书出版业及其作家相比，人们看电视和读书所花时间的差异将会导致电视行业及其作家获得更多的经济报酬。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的四处缺陷：

1. 作者没有提供文中提到的调查所采取的样本的信息，因而样本的代表性值得怀疑。
2. 人们在日常谈话中提到电视和小说的频率并不是他们看电视和小说的真正数量的指标（差异概念的错误）。
3. 作者没有考虑除了小说以外的其他出版物的情况，也没有建立观众看电视的时间与电视行业赢利情况之间的因果关系。
4. 即使电视行业赢利确实更多，但为电视写作的作者的收入未必更高。

- 思路提示：本题还有一个可以攻击的错误，就是非此即彼的错误（either-or fallacy）：电视和印刷媒体并非互相排斥非此即彼的选择，为这两种媒体写作的训练和经验可能并不矛盾。另一方面，可选择的媒体也并非只有这两种，想以写作为职业的人也可以有其他选择，比如网络、电影等等。因此作者不能简单地认为不为出版业写作就只能为电视行业写作。

### 【论证展开】

攻击差异概念的方式：攻击差异概念的最基本思路是先指出作者所提出的哪两个概念不能划等号，然后再具体说明它们之间有那些不同。我们可以使用 The argument depends on the assumption that A is a good indication of B. 来指出 A 和 B 是差异概念，也可以使用 The author simply equates A with B. 这样的句子。

### 【语言提示】

- 论证段句式：攻击调查样本的句式：(1) The article's author has not shown the study upon which the argument depends to be statistically reliable. (2) The people studied must be representative of the overall population of people who ...; otherwise the author cannot draw any firm conclusions about ... based on the study's results. 攻击差异概念的句式：Secondly, the author's argument depends on the assumption that ... is a good indication of ... 其他句式：(1) Even if ..., it would be hasty to infer based merely on this fact that ... (2) Moreover, the author has not shown any correlation, let alone a cause-and-effect relationship, between ... and ... (3) In any event, lacking financial statistics about ... the editorial's author cannot convince me that ... (4) Without better evidence that ... it might be folly to follow the author's recommendation.
- 结尾段句式：In sum, the argument relies on several poor assumptions and is therefore unconvincing as it stands.

## Argument 221 Jobs for Hooper's social science majors

The following article appeared in a recent issue of a college newspaper.

"Among all students who graduated from Hooper University over the past five years, more physical science majors than social science majors found permanent jobs within a year of graduation. In a survey of recent Hooper University graduates, most physical science majors said they believed that the prestige of Hooper University's physical science programs helped them significantly in finding a job. In contrast, social science majors who found permanent employment attributed their success to their own personal initiative. Therefore, to ensure that social science majors find permanent jobs, Hooper University should offer additional social science courses and hire several new faculty members who already have national reputations in the social sciences."

【参考译文】在过去五年，从胡珀大学毕业的所有学生中，自然科学专业的毕业生在毕业一年内找到固定工作的人数要多于社会科学的毕业生。在一次对于胡珀大学最近的毕业生的调查中，多数自然科学专业的学生说，他们认为胡珀大学自然科学学科的声望在他们找工作的过程中起到了极大的作用。相比之下，找到固定工作的社会科学毕业生则把他们的成功归因于他们自己的能动性。因此，为保证社科毕业生找到固定工作，胡珀大学应该提供更多的社科课程，并雇用一些已经在社科领域获得全国声誉的新教员。

**This article concludes that** in order to help its new social-science graduates find permanent jobs Hooper University should enhance its reputation in this field by adding courses and hiring eminent faculty. **To support this claim the letter points out that** more physical-science than social-science students find permanent jobs within a year after graduation. **The letter also cites a survey** in which the former group of graduates attributed their job finding success to the prestige of Hooper's physical-science department, while the latter group attributed their job-finding success to their own initiative. **However, careful scrutiny of the argument reveals various statistical and other logical problems, which render it unconvincing.**

**To begin with, the survey that the argument cites is potentially problematic in three respects.** First, we are not informed whether the survey's respondents were representative of the overall population of recent Hooper graduates in these two fields. **The smaller the sample, the greater the possibility for biased results, and the less reliable the survey.** Second, the survey reflects the graduates' subjective "beliefs" about why they obtained jobs; yet it is entirely possible these beliefs are not in accord with the true reason why they obtained jobs. **Third, we are informed that** the survey involved "recent" Hooper graduates; however, if the only graduates surveyed were those from last year's class, then the survey results would be less reliable than if the survey embraced a wider range of graduating classes. **The smaller the range the less reliable any general conclusions drawn from the survey.**

**Even assuming the statistics that the letter cites are reliable, the letter's claim that** the proposed course of action will achieve its intended result assumes a sufficient job market for social-science graduates. **However, it is entirely possible that** the number of jobs for physical-science graduates greatly exceeds the number of jobs for social-science graduates, and that this is the reason for the disparity in job-finding success between the two groups. **In fact, real-world observation suggests that** this is a reasonable explanation for the disparity. **Moreover, the letter fails to account for the possibility that** the latter group of graduates are less likely than the former group to be interested in immediate employment—electing instead to pursue graduate-level study. **Without accounting for these possibilities, the letter's author cannot justifiably conclude that** the proposed course of action will boost the employment rate of new social-science graduates.

**A third problem with the argument is that it unfairly infers that** the proposed course of action is the only means of achieving the desired result. **The letter's author overlooks other possible means of** ensuring that social-science students find immediate employment—such as co-op programs, job seminars, and so forth. **Without ruling out alternative means of achieving the same goal, the author cannot convince me that** the proposed course of action is needed.

**In conclusion, as it stands the argument is unconvincing. To strengthen it the author must provide strong evidence that** the survey's respondents were statistically representative of all recent Hooper graduates in these two fields of study. **The author must also rule out all other possible explanations for** the disparity between job-finding success between the two groups of Hooper graduates. **Finally, to better evaluate the argument I would need more information about** the portion of graduates in each field pursuing immediate employment, and what alternative means are available to help ensure that Hooper's new social-science graduates find permanent employment.

#### [参考译文]

这篇文章断定，为了帮助新的社会专业毕业生找到固定职业，胡珀大学应该通过增加

课程和雇用有名气的教员来提高其在这个领域内的声望。为了支持这个主张,这封信指出与社会科学专业学生相比较,更多的自然科学专业学生在毕业后一年内找到了固定职业。那封信也引用了一个调查,在这个调查中,自然科学专业的学生将找到工作归功于胡珀自然科学院系的威望,而社会科学专业的学生将找到工作归功于他们自己的主动性。但是,通过对论证的细察,我们发现有很多统计和其他逻辑问题,使这篇文章不能令人信服。

首先,这篇论证所引用的调查在三个方面有潜在问题。第一,文章没有告诉我们调查的回答者是否能代表这两个领域内新近的胡珀毕业生的总群体。这个样本越小,结果有偏差的可能性越大,调查就越不可靠。其次,调查反映出毕业生关于他们为什么获得工作的主观的“看法”;然而完全可能这些看法并不与他们获得工作的真实原因相一致。第三,文章告诉我们调查是有关“新近”的胡珀毕业生的;但是,如果那些被调查的毕业生仅仅是去年那届的,那么比起调查对象包括更多几届的毕业生的调查,这个调查结果就更不可靠了。调查的范围越小,由调查得出的任何概括性的结论的可靠性就越差。

即使假定这封信所引用的统计是可靠的,它关于通过建议的行动方针将达到其预定目标的论断仍假定社会科学专业的毕业生就业市场足够广阔。但是,完全可能适合自然科学专业毕业生的岗位数量远远超过适合社会科学专业毕业生的岗位数量,并且这是这两组毕业生就业状况有所不同的原因。实际上,现实社会观察表明这是对两者之间存在的差异的一个合理解释。而且,这封信没有考虑到社会科学专业毕业生比起自然科学专业毕业生来,立即就业的兴趣相对小一些,而有可能选择继续研究生的学习。如果没有解释这些可能性,这封信的作者不能无可非议地断定他所提倡的行动方针将提高新的社会科学专业毕业生的就业率。

此论证的第三个问题是它不公平地假定所提议的行动方针是取得预期效果的惟一方法。这封信的作者忽视了确保社会科学专业学生立即找到工作的其他可能的方法,例如合作计划,工作讨论会等等。如果没有排除其他可达到相同目标的方法,作者不能使我信服被提议的行动方针是必需的。

总之,就目前情况来看,这篇论证是不能令人信服的。为了加强论证,作者必须提供强有力的证据来证明调查的回答者是这两个学科领域所有新近的胡珀毕业生的代表。作者也必须排除有关这两组胡珀毕业生找工作的成功率不同的所有其他可能的解释。最后,为了更好地评价这篇论证,我需要更多的关于各个学科寻求立即就业的毕业生所占比例的信息,以及能够确保胡珀的社会科学专业的新毕业生找到固定工作的其他可能的方法的信息。

### 【逻辑问题提纲】

本文作者一共攻击了原文的三处缺陷:

1. 文中引用的调查样本的代表性、回答真实性和覆盖范围值得怀疑。
2. 增加作者所说的课程未必能增加就业,就业人数的差异可能由别的原因所导致。
3. 作者没有考虑除了文中提到的方式以外的其他增加就业率的手段。

● 思路提示:本文还有一个数据模糊性的错误可以攻击:作者没有提供关于两个系毕业生总数(基数)的信息,因而尽管自然科学系学生找到工作的总数大于社科系学生,但由于学生基数不同,就业比例的高低可能正好相反。

### 【语言提示】

- 开头段句式: However, careful scrutiny of the argument reveals various statistical and other logical problems, which render it unconvincing.
- 论证段句式: (1) The survey that the argument cites is potentially problematic in three respects. (2) We are not informed whether the survey's respondents were representative of the

overall population of ... (3) The smaller the sample, the greater the possibility for biased results, and the less reliable the survey. (4) The smaller the range the less reliable any general conclusions drawn from the survey.

### **Argument 224 Governor Riedeburg's candidacy**

The following appeared as part of a letter to the editor of a local newspaper.

"During her three years in office, Governor Riedeburg has shown herself to be a worthy leader. Since she took office, crime has decreased, the number of jobs created per year has doubled, and the number of people choosing to live in our state has increased. These trends are likely to continue if she is reelected. In addition, Ms. Riedeburg has promised to take steps to keep big companies here, thereby providing jobs for any new residents. Anyone who looks at Ms. Riedeburg's record can tell that she is the best-qualified candidate for governor."

**【参考译文】**在州长瑞德勃格在位的三年中，她证明了自己是一个优秀的领导者。自从她就任以后，犯罪减少了，每年创造的就业机会数量翻了一番，选择在本州居住的人数也增加了。如果她再次当选，这种趋势很可能将会继续下去。而且，瑞德勃格承诺说要采取措施使大公司留在这里，从而为新居民提供就业机会。任何目睹了瑞德勃格工作成就的人都会认为她是州长的最佳人选。

**This letter concludes that Governor Riedeburg is the best-qualified candidate for the job of state governor. To justify this conclusion the letter points out various statewide trends since the governor was elected, and the fact that she has promised to keep big companies in the state, thereby providing jobs for any new residents. However, close scrutiny of the argument reveals various logical problems, which render it unconvincing.**

**One problem with the argument is that the letter's author might be assigning a false cause to these statewide trends. The author provides no evidence that Riedeburg's policies and actions as governor were indeed the reason for these developments. Without such evidence, it is equally possible that other factors are instead responsible for the trends. For instance, perhaps the crime rate has declined due to legislative or judicial action over which Riedeburg had no control. Perhaps the rise in the state's population is the result of sociological trends that have nothing to do with Riedeburg's policies as governor. Or perhaps people are moving to the state for other reasons, such as the state's climate. Moreover, the argument assumes that an increase in population is a positive development in the first place; yet it is entirely possible that the state's residents properly view this trend as a negative one. If so, and if Riedeburg's policies have contributed to this trend, then the author cannot reasonably conclude based on this evidence that Riedeburg is the best-qualified candidate.**

**Another problem with the argument involves Riedeburg's promise to keep big companies in the state, thereby providing jobs for any new residents. Assuming that Riedeburg keeps her promise in the first place, the author provides no evidence that these employers would be either willing or able to hire new residents. Perhaps these employers plan to curtail new hiring in any event; or perhaps they plan to hire new employees only among current state residents. Moreover, whether these employers are able to hire new employees depends on a variety of extrinsic economic factors over which Riedeburg might have no control. Without accounting for these possibilities, the author cannot rely on**

Riedeberg's promise to conclude that she is the best-qualified candidate for the job of state governor.

**Finally, the author's conclusion that Riedeberg is "the best-qualified candidate" raises two problems in itself. First, regardless of Riedeberg's record as governor it is entirely possible that one or more other candidates are actually better qualified. Second, the letter fails to adequately define what makes a candidate for state governor qualified. Without indicating what the ideal qualifications would be and ruling out the possibility that another candidate better meets these qualifications, the author cannot make a convincing case that Riedeberg is the best-qualified candidate.**

**In conclusion, the argument is unpersuasive as it stands. To strengthen it the author must provide clear evidence that it was Riedeberg who was responsible for the current trends, and that the current population trend is desirable in the first place. The author must also show that the state's major employers would be willing and able to hire new residents in the future. Finally, to better evaluate the argument we would need more information about what defines an ideal governor and how well other candidates meet that definition.**

### 【参考译文】

这封信断定瑞德勃格州长是适合州长工作的最佳候选人。为了证明这个结论是正确的，这封信指出了州长当选后全州范围内的很多方面的趋势，并指出了她已经许诺留住州内的大公司，从而为新居民提供工作。但是，通过对论证的细察，我们发现它有很多方面的逻辑问题，使其不能令人信服。

这篇论证的一个问题是此信的作者对这些全州范围内的趋势所做的解释可能是错误的。作者没有提供证据证明瑞德勃格作为州长时的政策和行动的确是引起这些发展的原因。如果没有这样的证据，其他因素造成此趋势也是同样可能的。例如，或许犯罪率下降是由于瑞德勃格无法控制的立法或者司法举措。或许全州人口数量的升高与瑞德勃格作为州长所推行的政策无关，而是社会趋势变化的结果。或者也许人们由于其他原因而迁移到本州，例如，因为本州的气候。并且，论证首先假定人口的增加是一个积极的现象；但是，也可能那个州的居民实际上将这个趋势视为消极的发展。如果这样的话，并且如果瑞德勃格的政策导致了这个趋势，那么作者不能基于这个证据合理地做出瑞德勃格是最佳候选人的结论。

这篇论证涉及的另一问题是瑞德勃格关于留住全州范围内的大公司，从而为新居民提供工作的许诺。首先假定瑞德勃格能够遵守她的诺言，作者也没有提供证据证明这些雇主将愿意或者能够雇用新居民。或许这些雇主计划无论如何要缩减新的招聘计划；或者也许他们计划只在目前全州范围内的居民中雇用新雇员。而且，这些雇主是否能够雇用新雇员取决于多种外部经济因素，而这些可能是瑞德勃格无法控制的。如果没有考虑这些可能性，作者就不能凭借瑞德勃格的许诺断定她是适合州长工作的最佳候选人。

最后，作者关于瑞德勃格是“最佳的候选人”的结论本身还存在两个问题。首先，尽管瑞德勃格曾有当州长的经历，但完全可能有其他候选人更具资格。其次，这封信没能充分地阐明州长候选人的资格定义。如果没有说明什么才是理想的资格，并且排除另一个候选人更好地具备这些资格的可能性，作者不能使人信服瑞德勃格是最佳候选人。

总之，就目前情况看，论证是不具有说服力的。为了加强论证，作者必须提供清楚的证据证明瑞德勃格是造成目前趋势的原因，并且当今的人口趋势正是人们想要的。作者也必须说明将来州内主要的雇主将愿意并且能够雇用新居民。最后，为了更好地评价这篇论证，我们需要更多的关于理想州长的定义和其他候选人是否适合那个定义的信息。



**【逻辑问题提纲】**

本文作者一共攻击了原文的三处缺陷：

1. 作者没有提出直接证据表明瑞德勃格的领导是产生文中所述现象的原因。
2. 留在本州的大公司未必雇用新居民。
3. 作者没有考虑到可能有其他比瑞德勃格更加胜任的候选人，也没有对于合格与否的条件做出明确定义。

**【论证展开】**

攻击因果关系错误的语言：在批判作者没能建立 A 与 B 两件事之间的因果联系时，我们可以使用最基本的 the author fails to establish the causal relationship between A and B 和 the author fails to convince us that A contribute to B，以及 the author provides no evidence that A is the reason for B；也可以使用本文的句型：One problem with the argument is that the letter's author might be assigning a false cause to ... 或 Without such evidence, it is equally possible that other factors are instead responsible for ...

**【语言提示】**

- 论证句式：(1) One problem with the argument is that the letter's author might be assigning a false cause to ... (2) The author provides no evidence that ... were indeed the reason for ... (3) Without such evidence, it is equally possible that other factors are instead responsible for ... (4) If so, the author cannot reasonably conclude based on this evidence that ... (5) Without accounting for these possibilities, the author cannot rely on ... to conclude that ... (6) Finally, the author's conclusion that ... raises two problems in itself.

**Argument 236 Will business incentives help Beauville's economy?**

The following appeared as part of an article in a local Beauville newspaper.

"According to a government report, last year the city of Dillton reduced its corporate tax rate by 15 percent; at the same time, it began offering relocation grants and favorable rates on city utilities to any company that would relocate to Dillton. Within 18 months, two manufacturing companies moved to Dillton, where they employ a total of 300 people. Therefore, the fastest way for Beauville to stimulate economic development and hence reduce unemployment is to provide tax incentives and other financial inducements that encourage private companies to relocate here."

**【参考译文】**根据一项政府报告，去年迪顿市把它的企业所得税率降低了 15%；同时，该市给予迁移至迪顿的公司一定的再安置费和相应城市设施使用费的优惠。在 18 个月内，两家生产制造公司搬迁到了迪顿，他们在那里一共雇用了 300 名工人。因此，宝维勒市刺激经济发展从而降低失业率最快的方法就是提供税率以及其他经济上的优惠来鼓励私有企业搬迁到本地。

**This article argues that** the fastest way for Beauville to stimulate its economic development and reduce unemployment would be to provide the same kinds of tax and financial incentives for business as the incentives which the city of Dillton began providing 18 months ago. Dillton's incentives included a reduced corporate tax rate as well as relocation grants and favorable utility rates for businesses willing to relocate to Dillton. **The article points out that** during the last 18 months two manufacturing companies, which together now employ 300 people, relocated to Dillton. **The argument is logically unconvincing in several respects.**

To begin with, the argument depends on the assumption that the two businesses moving to Dillton did so because of Dillton's new incentives—rather than for some other reason. Yet lacking evidence to the contrary it is entirely possible that the two businesses were motivated primarily by Dillton's climate, labor pool, or some other factor. Without ruling out all other reasons why the two businesses might have relocated to Dillton, the argument that Beauville can entice businesses to move to Beauville by offering similar incentives is dubious at best.

Even if it was Dillton's new incentives that enticed the two manufacturers to Dillton, the argument relies on the further assumption that the two firms' relocating to Dillton in fact had a beneficial impact on the city's economy. Yet the only evidence the article offers to substantiate this assumption is that the two manufacturers now employ 300 people. Perhaps those 300 employees left other jobs in Dillton to go to work for those two firms; if so, then the incentives had no positive impact on Dillton's employment rate. Or perhaps other businesses have left Dillton during the last 18 months, taking even more job opportunities with them. For that matter, perhaps on average more businesses relocated to Dillton each year prior to Dillton's establishing the new incentives than afterward. In short, without more information about Dillton's economic conditions and employment level both before and after the incentives were established it is impossible to assess whether those incentives had a positive or negative impact—or any impact at all—on Dillton's overall economy.

Even if Dillton's new incentives did in fact serve to help Dillton's economy, the article unfairly assumes that similar incentives will carry a similar result for Beauville. It is entirely possible that the two cities differ in ways that would undermine the effectiveness of similar incentives for Beauville. For instance, perhaps Beauville's labor pool is smaller; or perhaps unemployed Beauville residents would be less willing or able to go to work if offered the chance. Without accounting for such differences any analogy between the two cities is premature, and any conclusion based on that analogy is unjustified.

Furthermore, the author's inference that incentives which were effective in the past will also be effective in the future rests on the poor assumption that during the last 18 months all conditions upon which their effectiveness depend have remained unchanged. Perhaps the general economy is expected to turn down. Or perhaps other cities have recently begun to provide similar incentives. Indeed, the fact that Dillton is already providing these incentives might actually portend failure for Beauville, which might need to devise even stronger incentives to convince businesses to move to Beauville rather than Dillton.

Finally, the article fails to consider any other course of action that might help Beauville attain the same economic goals. Perhaps by improving its schools or hospitals, or by reducing its crime rate, Beauville can just as quickly and effectively attract new businesses and achieve its economic objectives. In short, without weighing the proposal against alternatives, the article's claim that the proposed incentives are the "best" means of achieving Beauville's objectives is wholly unconvincing.

To sum up, the article has not convinced me that the proposed incentives would be the best way for Beauville to achieve its economic goals. To bolster the argument the article's author must provide clear evidence that Dillton's incentives—and not some other phenomenon—were in fact responsible for stimulating Dillton's economy during the last 18 months. To better assess the argument I would need to know what other conditions in Beauville that were not present in Dillton might dissuade businesses from moving to Beauville—despite the proposed incentives. I would also need to compare near-

term economic forecasts with economic conditions during the last 18 months. Finally, I would need to consider the proposed incentives in light of alternative courses of action.

### 【参考译文】

这篇文章认为,对于宝维勒来说,刺激经济发展和减少失业率的最快的方法是按照迪顿市 18 个月以前开始提供商业优惠政策那样为商业提供同种类型的税收和财政优惠。迪顿市的优惠政策包括降低企业所得税率,除此之外,还包括为愿意迁往迪顿市的企业提供再安置费和优惠的使用费用。文章指出,在过去的 18 个月里,有两家现在共雇用了 300 人的制造公司在迪顿市安置了下来。这篇文章的论证在以下几个方面逻辑上不具有说服力。

首先,论证所依据的假定是那两家企业迁移到迪顿市是因为迪顿市的新优惠政策,而不是因为其他一些原因。然而缺乏与之相反的证据,完全可能那两家企业主要是被迪顿市的气候、劳动力市场或者其他一些因素促使的。如果没有排除那两家企业迁往迪顿市的所有其他的原因,宝维勒通过提供类似的优惠政策可诱使企业迁往宝维勒的说法无论如何都是可疑的。

即使确实是迪顿市的新优惠政策诱使了两家制造公司迁往迪顿市,论证仍依据一个更进一步的假定,即那两家公司迁移到迪顿市实际上给这个城市的经济带来了有利的影响。然而文章所提供的惟一可证实这个假定的证据是这两家制造商现在雇用了 300 人。或许那 300 个雇员是离开迪顿市的其他工作岗位而到那两家公司去上班的;如果是这样的话,那么优惠政策没有对迪顿市的就业率产生积极的影响。或者也许其他企业在过去 18 个月期间离开了迪顿市,带走了更多的就业机会。同样,也许在迪顿市实行优惠政策之前平均每年迁往迪顿市的企业比实行优惠政策之后还要多。简而言之,如果没有更多关于优惠政策实行之前和之后迪顿市的经济状况和雇用人数的信息,就不可能判断那些优惠政策对迪顿市的整个经济是否有正面或负面的影响,还是根本就没有什么影响。

即使迪顿市的新优惠政策确实有助于迪顿市的经济,文章还不公平地认为相似的优惠政策将给宝维勒带来相似的结果。完全可能这两座城市在很多方面有所不同,以致相似的优惠政策的效力在宝维勒将会降低。比如,或许宝维勒的劳动力市场更小;或者即使有工作机会提供,失业的宝维勒居民也不愿意或者不能够去上班。如果没有考虑这些差异,任何这两座城市之间的类推都是为时过早的,并且任何基于那个类推的结论都无法被有效证实。

此外,作者关于这些在过去有效的优惠政策在将来也将有效的推论建立在一个没有根据的假定上,就是过去 18 个月中优惠政策的效力所依存的全部条件仍然保持不变。或许总体经济状况将会低迷,或者也许其他的城市最近已经开始提供相似的优惠政策了。其实,迪顿市已经提供这些优惠政策的事实实际上可能会导致宝维勒的失败,宝维勒可能需要制定更有吸引力的优惠政策来说服企业迁往宝维勒,而不是迪顿。

最后,文章没有考虑可能有助于宝维勒实现相同的经济目标的任何其他行动方针。或许通过改进它的学校或者医院,或者通过降低它的犯罪率,宝维勒一样能迅速而有效地吸引新的企业,并且达到它的经济目标。简而言之,在没有权衡文中建议和其他选择的情况下,文章主张建议的优惠政策是达到宝维勒目标的“最好”的办法,这是完全不能令人信服的。

总的来说,文章没能使我相信所建议的优惠政策是宝维勒达到其经济目标的最好的方式。为了支持论证,文章作者必须提供清楚的证据证实在过去 18 个月间,确实是迪顿市的优惠政策而不是一些其他现象刺激了迪顿市的经济。为了更好地评价论证,我需要知道在宝维勒还有哪些其他条件是迪顿市所不具备的,而这些条件会阻止企业迁往宝维勒,尽管它提供了建议的优惠措施。我也需要比较近期的经济预测与过去 18 个月的经济状况。最后,我需要参照其他的可选择的行动方针来考虑文中建议的优惠政策。

**【逻辑问题提纲】:**

本文作者一共攻击了原文的五处缺陷:

1. 两家企业搬到迪顿未必是因为文中所述政策的刺激而可能有别的原因。
2. 搬到迪顿的两家企业未必对该市的就业率等经济状况起到正面影响。
3. 迪顿的政策未必会在宝维勒起到相同的作用(错误类比的错误)。
4. 在过去 18 个月产生效果的政策和措施在将来未必同样有效(没有与时俱进的错误)。
5. 作者没有考虑其他能够帮助宝维勒市达到同样目标的途径。

**【论证展开】**

- 攻击作者没有与时俱进的错误的方式: 在攻击作者没有考虑时间的变化, 简单地从过去或现在的情况推断将来时, 可以先用 the author's inference that ... rests on the poor assumption that during the ... (the interim) all conditions upon which their effectiveness depend have remained unchanged. 来指出作者的错误, 然后用推测法和列举法例举有哪些情况和因素会随着时间而变化, 最后用我们掌握的句型作段落小总结。
- 攻击作者没有考虑其他途径的方式: 在攻击作者思路过于片面, 只考虑某一种方案而没有考虑其他时, 可以先用 the article fails to consider any other ... that might help ... attain the same effect. 来指出错误, 再列举一下还有哪些其他途径和措施也可以达到相同的效果, 最后用 without weighing the proposal against alternatives, the article's claim that ... is the "best" means of achieving ... is wholly unconvincing. 来作段落结尾。

**【语言提示】**

- 论证句式: (1) Yet lacking evidence to the contrary it is entirely possible that ... (2) Without ruling out all other reasons why ..., the argument that ... is dubious at best. (3) Without accounting for such differences any analogy between ... is premature, and any conclusion based on that analogy is unjustified. (4) Finally, the article fails to consider any other course of action that might ... (5) In short, without weighing the proposal against alternatives, the article's claim that ... is wholly unconvincing.

## 第五章 Argument 2 论证

### **Argument 2 Enhancing property values at Deerhaven Acres**

In this letter, a committee of Deerhaven Acres homeowners recommends that in order to enhance Deerhaven property values homeowners should follow certain restrictions concerning their homes' exterior appearance. To support this recommendation the committee points out that in the seven years since Brookville adopted similar restrictions property values there have risen. This argument rests on a series of unsubstantiated assumptions, and is therefore unpersuasive as it stands.

A threshold assumption upon which the recommendation relies is that Brookville homeowners implemented Brookville's restrictions in the first place. The letter fails to substantiate this crucial assumption. If these restrictions were not implemented, then any change in Brookville's property values cannot be attributed to them. Accordingly, the committee cannot draw any firm conclusion about what effect similar restrictions would have on Deerhaven property values.

Even assuming that Brookville homeowners implemented these restrictions, the committee relies on the additional assumption that this course of action was responsible for the increase in Brookville property values. However, it is entirely possible that one or more other factors were instead responsible for the increase, especially since a considerable period of time has passed since Brookville adopted its restrictions. Property values are a function of supply and demand. Perhaps the demand for housing in the area has increased due to an influx of major employers. Or, perhaps the supply of housing has decreased. Either scenario would provide an alternative explanation for the increase in property values.

Even assuming that Brookville's rising property values are attributable to the implementation of these restrictions, the committee fails to consider possible differences between Brookville and Deerhaven that might help to bring about a different result for Deerhaven. For instance, potential Deerhaven homebuyers might be less interested in a home's exterior appearance than Brookville homebuyers. For that matter, perhaps Deerhaven homebuyers would find consistent exterior appearance a distasteful feature—in which case adopting these restrictions might actually tend to decrease Deerhaven property values. Without accounting for these and other possible dissimilarities, the committee cannot assume that what resulted in rising property values in Brookville would bring about the same result in Deerhaven.

In conclusion, to persuade me that Deerhaven should adopt the proposed restrictions the committee must supply clear evidence that the implementation of Brookville's restrictions, and not some other factor, was responsible for the rise in Brookville's property values. The committee must also provide evidence that other factors affecting home prices in the two areas are otherwise essentially the same.

#### **Argument 4 Which real estate firm is better?**

The author of this argument claims that Adams Realty is superior to Fitch Realty. To support this claim the author cites certain statistics about the number and working hours of the firms' agents, and the number and sales prices of homes sold by the two firms. The author also cites anecdotal evidence involving her own experience with Fitch and Adams. Close scrutiny of this evidence reveals that it lends little credible support for the author's assertion.

The author bases her claim partly on the fact that Adams has more agents than Fitch, and that many of Fitch's agents work only part-time. However, the author provides no evidence that the quality of a real estate firm is directly proportional to the number of its agents or the number of hours per week that its agents work. Lacking such evidence, it is equally possible that a smaller firm is more effective than a larger one, and that a part-time agent is more effective than a full-time agent. Besides, the author does not provide any information about how many Adams agents work part-time.

To further support her claim the author cites the fact that Adams sold more properties last year than Fitch. However, the author overlooks the possibility that last year's sales volume amounted to an aberration, and that in most other years Adams has actually sold fewer properties than Fitch. Moreover, the disparity in sales volume can readily be explained by factors other than the comparative quality of the two firms. Perhaps Adams serves a denser geographic area, or an area where turnover in homeownership is higher for reasons unrelated to Adams' effectiveness. Or perhaps sales volume is higher at Adams simply because it employs more agents, and each Adams agent actually sells fewer homes on average than each Fitch agent does. Without ruling out such alternative explanations for the disparity in sales volume, the author cannot defend the conclusion that based on this evidence Adams is superior to Fitch.

In further support of her claim, the author points out that the average sales price of a home sold by Adams is greater than the average price of a home sold by Fitch. However, this evidence shows only that the homes that Adams sells are more valuable on average than the ones that Fitch sells, not that Adams is more effective in selling homes than Fitch. Moreover, it is possible that a few relatively high-priced or low-priced properties skewed these averages, rendering any conclusions about the comparative quality of the two firms based on these averages unfair.

For additional support the author points out that it took Fitch Realty considerably longer to sell one of the author's homes than it took Adams Realty to sell another one of her homes ten years earlier. However, this disparity is explainable by other plausible factors, such as changing economic conditions during that ten-year period, or a difference in the desirability of the two properties. Without establishing that all other factors affecting the speed of a sale were essentially the same for the two homes, the author cannot rely on this limited anecdotal evidence to support her claim.

In conclusion, the author's evidence lends little credible support to her claim. To persuade me that Adams is better than Fitch, the author would need to provide clear evidence that individual Adams agents are more effective in selling homes than individual Fitch agents, and that the disparity in home sales and sales price is attributable to that difference. Finally, to better evaluate the author's claim we would need more information comparing the percentage of agents working part-time at Fitch versus Adams. We would also need more information about the comparative attractiveness of the author's two homes, and the extent to which the residential real estate market changed during the decade between the sale of these two homes.

## **Argument 12 Worker safety at Alta Manufacturing**

This editorial recommends that Alta Manufacturing reduce its work shifts by one hour each in order to reduce its on-the-job accident rate and thereby increase Alta's productivity. To support this recommendation the author points out that last year the number of accidents at Alta was 30% greater than at Panoply Industries, where work shifts were one hour shorter. The author also cites certain experts who believe that many on-the-job accidents are caused by fatigue and sleep deprivation. I find this the argument unconvincing for several reasons.

First and foremost, the author provides absolutely no evidence that overall worker productivity is attributable in part to the number of on-the-job accidents. Although common sense informs me that such a relationship exists, the author must provide some evidence of this cause-and-effect relationship before I can accept the author's final conclusion that the proposed course of action would in fact increase Alta's productivity.

Secondly, the author assumes that some accidents at Alta are caused by fatigue or sleep deprivation. However, the author overlooks other possible causes, such as inadequate equipment maintenance or worker training, or the inherent hazards of Alta's manufacturing processes. By the same token, Panoply's comparatively low accident rate might be attributable not to the length of its work shifts but rather to other factors, such as superior equipment maintenance or worker training. In other words, without ruling out alternative causes of on-the-job accidents at both companies, the author cannot justifiably conclude that merely by emulating Panoply's work shift policy Alta would reduce the number of such accidents.

Thirdly, even assuming that Alta's workers are fatigued or sleep-deprived, and that this is the cause of some of Alta's on-the-job accidents, in order to accept the author's solution to this problem we must assume that Alta's workers would use the additional hour of free time to sleep or rest. However, the author provides no evidence that they would use the time in this manner. It is entirely possible that Alta's workers would use that extra hour to engage in some other fatiguing activity. Without ruling out this possibility the author cannot convincingly conclude that reducing Alta's work shifts by one hour would reduce Alta's accident rate.

Finally, a series of problems with the argument arise from the scant statistical information on which it relies. In comparing the number of accidents at Alta and Panoply, the author fails to consider that the per-worker accident rate might reveal that Alta is actually safer than Panoply, depending on the total number of workers at each company. Second, perhaps accident rates at the two companies last year were aberrations, and during other years Alta's accident rate was no greater, or even lower, than Panoply's rate. Or perhaps Panoply is not representative of industrial companies generally, and that other companies with shorter work shifts have even higher accident rates. In short, since the argument relies on very limited statistical information I cannot take the author's recommendation seriously.

In conclusion, the recommendation for emulating Panoply's work-shift policy is not well supported. To convince me that shorter work shifts would reduce Alta's on-the-job accident rate, the author must provide clear evidence that work-shift length is responsible for some of Alta's accidents. The author must also supply evidence to support her final conclusion that a lower accident rate would in fact increase overall worker productivity.

### **Argument 15 Investing in Old Dairy stock**

This excerpt from an investment newsletter cites a recent study in which 80 % of respondents indicated a desire to reduce their consumption of high-fat and high-cholesterol foods, then points out that food stores are well stocked with low-fat food products. Based on this evidence the newsletter predicts a significant decline in sales and profits for Old Dairy (OD), a producer of dairy products high in fat and cholesterol, and advises investors not to own OD stock. I find this advice specious, on several grounds.

First, the excerpt fails to assure me that the survey results accurately reflect the desires of most consumers, or that the results accurately predict consumer behavior. Without evidence that the respondents' desires are representative of those of the overall population where OD products are sold, it is hasty to draw any conclusions about future foodbuying habits from the survey. Moreover, common sense informs me that consumers do not necessarily make food-purchase decisions in strict accordance with their expressed desires. Thus, as it stands the statistic that the newsletter cites amounts to scant evidence that OD sales and profits will decline in the future.

Secondly, the fact that low-fat foods are in abundant supply in food stores does not necessarily indicate an increasing demand for low-fat dairy products or a diminishing demand for high-fat dairy products. Absent evidence to the contrary, it is quite possible that consumers are buying other types of low-fat foods but are still demanding high fat in their dairy products. For that matter, it is entirely possible that food stores are well stocked with low-fat foods because actual demand has not met the demand anticipated by the stores.

Thirdly, even assuming an indisputable consumer trend toward purchasing more low-fat dairy products and fewer high-fat dairy products, the newsletter concludes too hastily that OD profits will decline as a result. OD can always raise the price of its dairy products to offset declining sales, and given a sufficient demand OD might still turn a profit, despite the general consumer trend. Besides, profit is a function of not just revenue but also expenses. Perhaps OD expenses will decline by a greater amount than its revenue; if so, then OD profits will increase despite falling revenues.

In sum, without additional information prudent investors should refrain from following the newsletter's advice. To better assess the soundness of this advice it would be helpful to know the following: (1) the demographic profile of the survey's respondents; (2) the extent to which consumer desires regarding food intake accord with their subsequent behavior; (3) the extent of OD loyalty among its regular retail customers who might continue to prefer OD products over low-fat products even at higher prices; and (4) the extent to which OD might be able to reduce expenses to offset any revenue loss resulting from diminishing sales of OD products.

### **Argument 16 A lottery for Impecunia**

In this editorial, the author concludes that by establishing a lottery the state of Impecunia could use the profits from it to improve the state's education and public health programs. To support this conclusion the author points out that the neighboring state of Lucria established a lottery two years ago, and that today Lucria spends more per pupil and treats more people through its health programs than Impecunia does. The editorial also cites a study showing that the average Impecunia resident now spends \$ 50 per year on gambling. In several respects, however, the evidence lends little credible



support for the argument.

First of all, the fact that Lucria now spends more than Impecunia per pupil, in itself, lends no support to the argument. Perhaps Lucria has always placed a high priority on education; or perhaps Lucria has always had more funds than Impecunia to spend on its programs, including education. Lacking clearer evidence that Lucria's lottery successfully raised revenues that were then used to increase the amount spent per pupil, the author cannot expect us to take seriously the claim that by establishing a similar lottery Impecunia would improve its education programs.

Similarly, the fact that Lucria's health programs treat more people than Impecunia's programs lends no support to the argument. Perhaps Lucria's population is greater than Impecunia's; or perhaps its residents are older, on average, than Impecunia's residents, and therefore require a greater measure of health care. Without considering and ruling out these and other possible explanations for the distinction cited, the author cannot justifiably conclude that Lucria's lottery was responsible for improved health care in that state or that a similar lottery in Impecunia would carry a similar result.

Moreover, the argument unfairly assumes that the lottery in Lucria has been profitable. The author provides no evidence that this is the case. It is entirely possible that the money used for education and health care in Lucria comes from sources other than the lottery. Without accounting for this possibility, the author cannot justify the conclusion that a lottery in Impecunia would be successful.

Finally, the fact that Impecunia's residents spend \$ 50 per capita on gambling each year lends little support to the argument. Admittedly, this statistic amounts to some evidence of interest among Impecunia's residents in gambling, and therefore potential interest in a lottery. However, this evidence in itself does not suffice to prove that the lottery will in fact be popular. Perhaps Impecunia residents have no more discretionary income to participate in a lottery after spending \$ 50 on other forms of gambling. Or perhaps Impecunia residents typically travel elsewhere to gamble as part of their vacations, and that they would not otherwise be interested in gambling. In short, without more convincing evidence of both an ability and a willingness on the part of Impecunia's residents to participate in a lottery the author cannot convince me that the lottery will be profitable.

In conclusion, the editorial has not convinced me that a lottery would be profitable and would serve to improve Impecunia's education and health programs. To better evaluate the argument I would need more information comparing Lucria's level of health care and education expenditures before and after the lottery was established. To strengthen the argument, the author must provide clear evidence that Lucria's lottery was profitable and that these profits contributed to improved education and health care in Lucria. The author must also provide dearer evidence of the willingness and ability of Impecunia residents to participate broadly in a lottery.

### **Argument 17** Walnut Grove's trash collection service

This letter recommends that Walnut Grove continue to contract with EZ Disposal, which has provided trash-collection services to Walnut Grove for ten years, rather than switching to ABC Waste. To justify this recommendation the letter's author notes that even though ABC's weekly fee is \$ 500 less than EZ's, EZ collects twice per week whereas ABC would collect only once per week. The author also points out that, although both companies have the same number of trucks, EZ has ordered additional trucks. Finally, the author cites a recent survey in which 80% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with EZ's service. I find this recommendation specious on several grounds.

First of all, the fact that EZ collects trash twice as often as ABC is significant only if the town would benefit from an additional collection each week. Yet the author provides no evidence that this is the case. For all we know, one collection per week suffices to dispose all of the town's trash. If so, then on the basis of frequency of collection it would make no sense to favor EZ's costlier service over ABC's less expensive one.

Secondly, the fact that EZ has ordered more trucks proves little in itself about which service would be the better choice for Walnut Grove. Perhaps EZ does not plan to use its new trucks for collecting Walnut Grove's trash. For that matter, perhaps EZ does not use its entire current fleet for this purpose, whereas ABC would. Besides, the author does not indicate when EZ will receive its new trucks; the later the delivery date, the less significant this factor should be in Walnut Grove's decision.

Thirdly, the mere fact that most respondents to a recent survey considered EZ's service satisfactory provides little support to the author's recommendation. The author fails to provide assurances that these respondents are representative of the overall population of people whose trash EZ collects. Moreover, even if that population is generally satisfied it is entirely possible that they would be even more satisfied with ABC's services.

In sum, the recommendation is not well supported. To bolster it the letter's author must provide specific evidence that Walnut Grove would benefit from an additional trash collection each week, and that the use of additional trucks would improve service to Walnut Grove. To better assess the strength of the recommendation I would need more information about the demographic profile of the survey's respondents. It would also be helpful to obtain opinions from municipalities and individuals that have some experience with both EZ and ABC.

## **Argument 20 Restricting moped rentals on Balmer Island**

The author of this editorial recommends that to reduce accidents involving mopeds and pedestrians Balmer Island's city council should restrict moped rentals to 30 per day, down from 50, at each of the island's six rental outlets. To support this recommendation the author cites the fact that last year, when nearby Torseau Island's town council enforced similar measures, Torseau's rate of moped accidents fell by 50%. For several reasons, this evidence provides scant support for the author's recommendation.

To begin with, the author assumes that all other conditions in Balmer that might affect the rate of moped-pedestrian accidents will remain unchanged after the restrictions are enacted. However, with a restricted supply of rental mopeds people in Balmer might purchase mopeds instead. Also, the number of pedestrians might increase in the future; with more pedestrians, especially tourists, the risk of moped-pedestrian accidents would probably increase. For that matter, the number of rental outlets might increase to make up for the artificial supply restriction per outlet—a likely scenario assuming moped rental demand does not decline. Without considering and ruling out these and other possible changes that might contribute to a high incidence of moped-pedestrian accidents, the author cannot convince me that the proposed restrictions will necessarily have the desired effect.

Next, the author fails to consider other possible explanations for the 50% decline in Torseau's moped accident rate last year. Perhaps last year Torseau experienced unusually fair weather, during which moped accidents are less likely. Perhaps fewer tourists visited Torseau last year than during

most years, thereby diminishing the demand for rental mopeds to below the allowed limits. Perhaps last year some of Torseau's moped rental outlets purchased new mopeds that are safer to drive. Or perhaps the restrictions were already in effect but were not enforced until last year. In any event, a decline in Torseau's moped accident rate during only one year is scarcely sufficient to draw any reliable conclusions about what might have caused the decline, or about what the accident rate will be in years ahead.

Additionally, in asserting that the same phenomenon that caused a 50% decline in moped accidents in Torseau would cause a similar decline in Balmer, the author relies on what might amount to an unfair analogy between Balmer and Torseau. Perhaps Balmer's ability to enforce moped-rental restrictions does not meet Torseau's ability; if not, then the mere enactment of similar restrictions in Balmer is no guarantee of a similar result. Or perhaps the demand for mopeds in Torseau is always greater than in Balmer. Specifically, if fewer than all available mopeds are currently rented per day from the average Balmer outlet, while in Torseau every available moped is rented each day, then the proposed restriction is likely to have less impact on the accident rate in Balmer than in Torseau.

Finally, the author provides no evidence that the same restrictions that served to reduce the incidence of all "moped accidents" by 50% would also serve to reduce the incidence of accidents involving "mopeds and pedestrians" by 50%. Lacking such evidence, it is entirely possible that the number of moped accidents not involving pedestrians decreased by a greater percentage, while the number of moped-pedestrian accidents decreased by a smaller percentage, or even increased. Since the author has not accounted for these possibilities, the editorial's recommendation cannot be taken seriously.

In conclusion, the recommendation is not well supported. To convince me that the proposed restriction would achieve the desired outcome, the author would have to assure me that no changes serving to increase Balmer's moped-pedestrian accident rate will occur in the foreseeable future. The author must also provide clear evidence that last year's decline in moped accidents in Torseau was attributable primarily to its moped rental restrictions rather than to one or more other factors. In order to better evaluate the recommendation, I would need more information comparing the supply of and demand for moped rentals on the two islands. I would also need to know the rate of moped-pedestrian accidents in Torseau both prior to and after the restrictions were enforced in Torseau.

### **Argument 21    The demand for alpaca overcoats**

In this memo the vice president of Sartorian, a clothing manufacturer, argues that by resuming production of alpaca (wool) overcoats, after discontinuing production of these coats five years ago due to an unreliable alpaca supply, Sartorian would increase its profits. To support this argument the vice president points out that Sartorian now has a new fabric supplier, and reasons that since Sartorian's chief competitor has discontinued making these coats there must be pent-up consumer demand for them, which Sartorian would fill. The vice president also reasons that, since overall clothing prices have risen in each of the last five years, consumers will be willing to pay higher prices for Sartorian's alpaca coats. I find the argument specious in several respects.

To begin with, the argument relies on the assumption that the new fabric supplier will be a reliable supplier of alpaca. Yet the memo provides no substantiating evidence for this assumption. Perhaps the supply problems Sartorian experienced years earlier were attributable not to its supplier at the time but rather to factors beyond any supplier's control and that might render the alpaca supply unre-

liable today as well. Besides, without evidence to the contrary, it is entirely possible that Sartorian's new supplier will turn out to be unreliable and to be blameworthy for that unreliability.

Even if the new supplier turns out to be reliable, the memo assumes too hastily, on the basis of a competitor's discontinuing alpaca coat production, that consumer demand for alpaca coats made by Sartorian is now pent-up. Perhaps that competitor stopped making alpaca coats due to diminishing consumer demand for them. Or, perhaps other clothing manufacturers are now beginning to fill the market void by producing similar coats. Either of these scenarios, if true, would cast serious doubt on the vice president's claim that there is now pent-up alpaca coat demand from which Sartorian would profit.

Even if the vice president can substantiate the two foregoing assumptions, the argument relies on the additional assumption that consumers will be willing to pay whatever price Sartorian requires to turn a profit on its alpaca coat sales. Yet, perhaps Sartorian's costs for alpaca wool will be so high as to preclude any profit from alpaca coat sales. Also, the fact that clothing prices have been steadily increasing for five years suggests that consumers might have less disposable income for purchasing items such as alpaca coats, especially if consumers' income has not kept pace with escalating prices. Thus, without stronger evidence that consumers would be both willing and able to pay high prices for Sartorian's alpaca coats the vice president cannot convince me that the proposed course of action would be a profitable one.

Finally, even if Sartorian would turn a profit from the sale of its alpaca coats, the memo's claim that the company's overall profits would increase thereby is unwarranted. Sartorian's overall profitability is a function of revenue and expenses relating to all of Sartorian's products. Since the memo provides no evidence that Sartorian will continue to be profitable in other respects, I simply cannot take the vice president's argument seriously.

In sum, the argument is unpersuasive as it stands. To bolster it the vice president must provide assurances that the new supplier will be a reliable and affordable alpaca supplier, and that consumers will be able and willing to pay whatever prices Sartorian requires in order to turn a profit from selling its alpaca coats. To better assess the argument I would need to know whether consumers are demanding alpaca coats anymore, and if so whether new competitors entering the alpaca coat market would thwart Sartorian's efforts to profit from any pent-up demand for these coats. I would also need detailed financial projections for Sartorian to determine the likelihood that it will continue to be profitable overall, aside from its predicted profitability from alpaca coat sales.

## **Argument 22    The market for new houses in Steel City**

In this memo, the president of a new-home construction firm in Steel City concludes that the firm can increase its profits by focusing on building expensive homes, priced above \$ 150,000, rather than lower-priced homes, and by hiring additional workers to increase the number of homes the firm can build. To support this recommendation the president cites the fact that Steel City's population has increased by more than 20% over the last five years and that family income in Steel City is rising much faster than the nationwide average. The president also points out that nationwide sales of homes priced above \$ 150,000 are rising faster than sales of lower-priced homes. In several respects, this evidence provides little credible support for the president's recommendation.

First, by citing Steel City's population increase in order to argue for a step-up in home construc-

tion, the speaker relies on certain unsubstantiated demographic assumptions. One such assumption is that area demand for new housing will support additional home construction in the foreseeable future. Yet lacking firm evidence that this will be the case, it is entirely possible that the area's population will stabilize, or even decrease, and that the firm will have trouble selling its new homes at profitable levels. Another unfair demographic assumption is that Steel City residents will be interested in purchasing more expensive single-family homes. Perhaps the population increase has been and will continue to be the result of an influx of retired people who regardless of their income level are interested in smaller, less expensive homes and condominiums, or even rental housing.

Secondly, by citing Steel City's fast-rising family-income levels to support the recommendation, the speaker relies on other tenuous assumptions. One such assumption is that area residents interested in buying new homes can afford homes priced over \$ 150,000. It is entirely possible that in Steel City family-income levels are rising rapidly primarily among current homeowners who would not be in the market for new homes in the foreseeable future, or among only a handful of the area's wealthiest residents. It is also possible that despite the rapid increase the average family income in Steel City is still low compared to national averages—too low to justify the president's recommendation to shift focus to more expensive homes.

Thirdly, even if this firm builds and can sell expensive homes according to the president's proposal, the firm's profits would not necessarily increase as a result. Hiring additional workers adds to the expense of building a home, and of course the cost of materials will no doubt increase with the value of the homes that are built. Furthermore, in all likelihood the firm would not be able to build a greater number of expensive homes than cheaper homes. Moreover, given the scant evidence that area residents could actually afford expensive homes, it is entirely possible that the firm would have trouble selling these homes quickly and at profitable price levels. In short, without a detailed cost-benefit analysis the president cannot convince me that the proposed course of action would increase this firm's profits.

In conclusion, the president's argument is unpersuasive. To strengthen it the president must convince me that in the foreseeable future Steel City residents will actually demand and be able to afford houses costing more than \$ 150,000. To better evaluate the argument I would need more information about Steel City's demographic trends and about the income of area residents interested in buying new homes in the foreseeable future. I would also need a detailed analysis comparing the costs and revenues associated with the proposed course of action with the costs and revenues associated with the construction and sale of the firm's less expensive homes.

#### **Argument 24**    The best location for Viva-Tech's new plant

In this memo the president of Viva-Tech, a high-tech medical equipment firm, recommends closing its small assembly plants and centralizing its operations at one location—in the city of Grandview. To support this recommendation the president points out certain attractive demographic features, as well as the town's willingness to allow Viva-Tech to operate there without paying property taxes for the first three years. However, careful scrutiny of the evidence reveals that it provides little credible support for the president's recommendation.

To begin with, the fact that Grandview's adult population is larger than that of any other locale under consideration is scant evidence in itself that Grandview would be the best location for Viva-

Tech. Perhaps Grandview's adult residents are not skilled to work in the medical equipment industry. Or perhaps a large portion of its residents are retired. Or perhaps virtually all of its residents are already employed in jobs that they would be unwilling or unable to leave to work at Viva-Tech. Without considering and eliminating these and other possible reasons why Viva-Tech might have difficulty finding enough suitable employees in Grandview, the president cannot rely on the fact that Grandview has a large adult population to bolster the recommendation.

Furthermore, the fact that the earnings of the average Grandview worker are comparatively low does not necessarily mean that Viva-Tech could minimize labor costs by employing Grandview residents, as the president suggests. It is entirely possible that this low average wage is attributable to a high percentage of jobs requiring low-level skills. This scenario would be particularly likely if a large portion of Grandview's workers are teenagers and college students. In fact, the low average wage in Grandview is further evidence that Grandview residents do not possess the sorts of high-tech skills that would command a higher wage and that Viva-Tech might require among its workforce.

A final problem with the argument involves Grandview's willingness to forego payment of property taxes for the first three years. Admittedly, this evidence lends some measure of support to the recommendation. However, the president ignores the possibility that other cities under consideration would be willing to make similar concessions, or provide other equally attractive financial incentives. The president also overlooks the expense of property taxes over the longer term. Lacking evidence to the contrary, it is entirely possible that Grandview's property-tax rates are otherwise comparatively high, and that in the longer term Viva-Tech's property-tax liability would be greater in Grandview than in other locales. Until the president accounts for these two possibilities, I cannot be persuaded that Grandview is the best location for Viva-Tech from a property-tax standpoint.

In the final analysis, the recommendation of Viva-Tech's president is not well supported. To strengthen it the president must provide detailed demographic evidence showing that a sufficient number of Grandview residents would be able and willing to work in Viva-Tech's high-tech environment. A proper evaluation of the recommendation requires more information about Grandview's property-tax rates vis-a-vis those of other locales under consideration, and about the willingness of these other municipalities to provide their own financial or tax incentives to Viva-Tech.

### **Argument 25** A new golf course and resort hotel for Hopewell

In this memo, Hopewell's mayor recommends that in order to stimulate the town's economy and boost tax revenues Hopewell should build a new golf course and resort hotel, just as the town of Ocean View did two years ago. To support this recommendation the mayor points out that in Ocean View during the last two years tourism has increased, new businesses have opened, and tax revenues have increased by 30%. I find the mayor's argument unconvincing in several important respects.

First of all, it is possible that the mayor has confused cause with effect respecting the recent developments in Ocean View. Perhaps Ocean View's construction of a new golf course and hotel was a response to previous increases in tourism and business development—increases that have simply continued during the most recent two years. Since the mayor has failed to account for this possibility, the claim that Hopewell would boost its economy by also constructing a golf course and hotel is completely unwarranted.

Secondly, the mayor fails to account for other possible causes of the trends in Ocean View during

the last two years. The increase in tourism might have been due to improving economic conditions nationwide, or to unusually pleasant weather in the region. The new businesses that have opened in Ocean View might have opened there irrespective of the new golf course and hotel. And, the 30 % increase in tax revenues might have been the result of an increase in tax rates, or the addition of a new type of municipal tax. Without ruling out these and other alternative explanations for the three recent trends in Ocean View, the mayor cannot reasonably infer based on those trends that Hopewell's economy would benefit by following Ocean View's example.

Thirdly, even if the recent trends in Ocean View are attributable to the construction of the new golf course and hotel there, the mayor assumes too hastily that the golf course and hotel will continue to benefit that town's overall economy. The mayor has not accounted for the possibility that increased tourism will begin to drive residents away during tourist season, or that new business development will result in the town's losing its appeal as a place to visit or to live. Unless the mayor can convince me that these scenarios are unlikely I cannot accept the mayor's recommendation that Hopewell follow Ocean View's example.

Finally, the mayor's argument rests on the unsubstantiated assumption that Hopewell and Ocean View are sufficiently alike in ways that might affect the economic impact of a new golf course and hotel. Hopewell might lack the sort of natural environment that would attract more tourists and new businesses to the town—regardless of its new golf course and hotel. For that matter, perhaps Hopewell already contains several resort hotels and golf courses that are not utilized to their capacity. If so, building yet another golf course and hotel might amount to a misallocation of the town's resources—and actually harm the town's overall economy.

In sum, the mayor's recommendation is not well supported. To bolster it the mayor must provide better evidence that Ocean View's new golf course and hotel—and not some other phenomenon—has been responsible for boosting Ocean View's economy during the last two years. To better assess the recommendation I would need to know why Ocean View decided to construct its new golf course and hotel in the first place—specifically, what events prior to construction might have prompted that decision. I would also need to thoroughly compare Hopewell with Ocean View—especially in terms of their appeal to tourists and businesses—to determine whether the same course of action that appears to have boosted Ocean View's economy would also boost Hopewell's economy.

### **Argument 27   How Automate can retain its best workers**

In this memo the president of Automate, an automobile manufacturer, concludes that to retain its best employees Automate must offer them salaries equal to those that Sparks automobile manufacturing pays its employees. To justify this conclusion the president points out that Sparks has just moved into the state and is now advertising job openings with salaries twice as high as those Automate pays its assembly-line workers, and that some Automate employees have already defected to Sparks. As further support for the argument, the president notes that Sparks plans to build additional plants in the state and will need to staff those plants. I find the argument unconvincing on several grounds.

First, the memo does not indicate what kinds of jobs Sparks is now advertising—the ones for which salaries are to be twice those paid to Automate's assembly-line workers. Those jobs might be top management positions or other jobs for which salaries are often significantly higher than those for assembly-line work. If so, this fact would serve to refute the president's assumption that Sparks is

paying higher salaries than Automate for similar work.

Secondly, the president assumes that the reason why some Automate workers have defected to Sparks is that Sparks has offered them higher salaries. Yet, the president fails to provide evidence to substantiate this assumption. Lacking such evidence, those defectors might have gone to work for Sparks because the city where Sparks is located is a preferable place to live, or because Sparks offers other job incentives that Automate does not. And, if the defectors accepted jobs at Sparks before Sparks began offering higher salaries, then salary could not have been a factor in their decision to defect to Sparks. In short, until the president establishes a clear causal relationship between the advertised salaries and the defection of some Automate employees to Sparks, the president cannot reasonably conclude that Automate must increase its salaries in order to prevent additional employees from defecting to Sparks in the future.

Thirdly, even assuming that those defectors did leave Automate because Sparks offered higher salaries for similar work, the president's argument rests on the additional assumptions that the number of defectors is significant and that these defectors are valuable to Automate. Yet the president fails to substantiate either assumption. Perhaps only a very small percentage of Automate's worker's have defected; if so, the president's proposed salary increases might amount to an overreaction. Or, perhaps the defectors were among Automate's least valuable employees; for that matter, perhaps Automate's most valuable employees are the ones who are most loyal and would not leave Automate even if they were offered a higher salary elsewhere. Without substantiating both assumptions, the president cannot reasonably conclude that Automate must raise the salaries of its best workers in order to retain them.

Finally, the mere fact that Sparks plans to build additional new plants in the state amounts to scant evidence that Automate will continue to lose valuable employees unless it raises their salaries. Perhaps Sparks plans to staff those new plants with workers from its other plants, or from other sources besides Automate. Or, perhaps Sparks is advertising high salaries now simply to gain a foothold into the state's labor market, and that once Sparks is established in the state it will offer lower salaries for new jobs. Besides, Sparks' plan to build additional plants might amount to sheer speculation, in which case the president's proposed salary increases would seem hasty.

In sum, the president's recommendation seems ill conceived, at least lacking additional supporting evidence. To bolster the argument the president must provide clear evidence that a significant percentage of Automate's valuable employees have defected to Sparks because Sparks offered them higher salaries for similar work—rather than for some other reason. The president must also provide better evidence that this is a trend that is likely to continue and to harm Automate's operations unless Automate boosts the salaries of its best employees to match the salaries Sparks would pay those employees.

#### **Argument 140 A salary raise and promotion for Professor Thomas**

In this report, an Elm City University committee recommends increasing Professor Thomas' salary and promoting her to Department Chairperson because of her effectiveness as a teacher and researcher. To support this recommendation the report points out that Thomas' classes are among the University's most popular and that last year the amount of grant money she attracted to the University exceeded her \$ 50,000 salary. The committee argues further that unless the University implements its



recommendation Thomas is likely to defect to another school. For several reasons, the evidence offered in support of the recommendation provides little credible support for it.

First, the recommendation relies on the assumption that the popularity of Thomas' classes is attributable to her effectiveness as a teacher. Yet this assumption overlooks other possible reasons for the popularity of these classes. Perhaps Thomas is a comparatively lenient grader, or perhaps the classes she teaches are requirements for every science student. Without considering and eliminating these and other possible alternative explanations for the popularity of Thomas' classes, the committee cannot convincingly conclude based on that popularity that Thomas is an effective teacher and therefore should be granted a raise and a promotion.

Secondly, the mere fact that the amount of grant money Thomas attracted to the University last year exceeded her salary proves nothing about either her teaching abilities or her research abilities. Perhaps last year was an aberration, and in other years Thomas did not attract much grant money. For that matter, perhaps many—or even most—other professors at the University attracted even more grant money than Thomas, relative to their salary levels. Under either scenario, Thomas would appear undeserving of the recommended raise and promotion—based on this particular criterion.

Thirdly, the report provides no evidence whatsoever regarding the likelihood that Thomas would leave the University if she is not granted the proposed raise and promotion. Lacking such evidence, it is entirely possible that Thomas is quite content in her current position and at her current salary level. Thus, the committee cannot justifiably rely on this claim to bolster its recommendation.

In conclusion, the committee's recommendation is ill-founded. To strengthen it the committee must provide clear evidence that Thomas is in fact an effective teacher—perhaps by citing student or peer evaluations. The committee must also provide specific evidence of Thomas' research abilities—perhaps by listing scientific journals that have published the results of her work. Finally, to better evaluate the argument I would need more information about the degree to which Thomas is content in her current position and at her current salary, and whether any other University would be willing to offer her a more attractive employment package.

### **Argument 143   The effects of corporate downsizing**

This editorial disagrees with a certain article's claim that as a result of widespread corporate downsizing many able workers have faced serious long-term economic hardship—due to their inability to find other suitable employment. To justify its disagreement with this claim the editorial cites the following three findings of a recent report: (1) There has been a net increase in the number of new jobs created since 1992, (2) many workers who lost their jobs have found other work, and (3) most newly created jobs are full-time positions in industries that tend to pay above-average wages. Careful scrutiny of these findings, however, reveals that they accomplish little toward refuting the article's claim.

Regarding the first finding, the editorial overlooks the possibility that most of the newly created jobs since 1992 are not suitable for job seekers downsized by corporations. Perhaps the vast majority of these jobs involve food serving, clerical assistance, cleaning and maintenance, and other tasks requiring a low level of skill and experience. At the same time, perhaps most downsized job seekers are highly educated middle-managers looking for the same type of work elsewhere. In short, lacking evidence that the newly created jobs match the skills, experience, and interests of the downsized corpo-

rate employees, the editorial's author cannot convincingly refute the article's claim.

As for the second finding, the term "many" is far too vague to allow for any meaningful conclusions; if "many" amounts to an insignificant percentage of downsized employees, then the finding is of little use in refuting the article's claim. Moreover, the workers to whom this finding refers to are not necessarily downsized corporate employees. To the extent that they are not, this second finding is irrelevant in drawing any conclusions about the impact of corporate downsizing on downsized employees.

The third finding would lend support to the author's position only under two assumptions: (1) that the newly created jobs in those high-paying industries are suitable for downsized corporate employees, and (2) that the new jobs are among the high-paying ones. Otherwise, downsized employees seeking jobs would be unlikely to regain their former economic status by applying for these newly created positions, whether or not these positions are full-time.

In sum, the author has not effectively refuted the article's claim that corporate downsizing has worked economic hardship on downsized corporate employees. To more effectively refute the claim the author should provide clear evidence that most of those job-seekers are able to fill the sorts of new jobs that have been created since 1992, and that these new positions are suitable for those job-seekers given their work experience, areas of interest, and former salaries.

### **Argument 145** The relationship between snoring and weight gain

In this argument, the speaker concludes that any person who snores should try to eat less and exercise more than the average person. To justify this conclusion the speaker points out that many snorers awaken frequently during sleep—often so briefly that they are unaware that they are awake—in order to catch their breath (a condition called sleep apnea), and as a result are too tired during normal waking hours to exercise. The speaker also cites data collected during a recent study, suggesting that snorers are more likely to gain weight than other people. This argument is flawed in several critical respects.

First, the speaker provides no assurances that the recently collected data suggesting a correlation between snoring and weight gain are statistically reliable. Perhaps the study's subjects were unrepresentative of the overall population—in terms of other traits and habits that might affect body weight. Lacking such evidence the speaker simply cannot draw any firm conclusions based on the study about the relationship between snoring and weight gain.

Even assuming a strong correlation between snoring and weight gain among the general population, the speaker has not adequately shown that sleep apnea causes weight gain. A correlation is one indication of a causal relationship, but in itself does not suffice to prove such a relationship. It is entirely possible that some other medical condition, or some other trait or habit, that causes snoring also causes weight gain. Without establishing clearly that snoring at least contributes to weight gain, the speaker cannot convince me that snorers should either eat less or exercise more than the average person.

Even if many snorers suffer from sleep apnea and tend to gain weight as a result, the speaker's advice that "anyone who snores" should try to eat less and to exercise is nevertheless unwarranted. It is entirely possible that some—or perhaps even most—snorers do not suffer from sleep apnea, or are not too tired to exercise, or do not in any event tend to gain weight. Without ruling out these possibil-

ities, the speaker must expressly limit the advice to those snorers whose snoring causes weight gain.

Even if the speaker's advice were modified as indicated above, the advice to exercise would still be logically unsound. If a person with sleep apnea is too tired to exercise as a result, then simply advising that person to exercise begs the question: What should the person do to eliminate the cause of the tiredness? Thus, the speaker should determine the cause of sleep apnea and modify the advice so that it targets that cause. Of course, if it turns out that weight gain is one cause of snoring and sleep apnea, then the speaker's advice that snorers should try to eat less would have considerable merit. Yet, without any evidence that this is the case, the speaker's advice might be at least partially ineffective in counteracting a snorer's tendency to gain weight.

In sum, the speaker's advice for "any" snorer is ill conceived and poorly supported. To lend credibility to this advice the speaker should provide evidence that the recently collected data reflect the general population. To better assess the argument it would be useful to know all the possible causes of snoring and of sleep apnea.

### **Argument 146** Encouraging students to use school libraries

In this editorial the author claims that the town's students are reading less, and that by improving the atmosphere in the town's school libraries students would visit their school library more frequently and, in turn, would read more. To support these claims the author points out that the number of annual visits students make to their school library, on average, has decreased significantly in recent years. Specifically, the average seventh-grader paid five such visits last year, four of which were required for classes. Close inspection of the evidence reveals, however, that it lends little credible support for the proposed course of action.

First, the author unfairly assumes that since the number of library visits per student is declining the amount of reading on the part of students must also be declining. This poor assumption overlooks the possibility that students are doing more reading or checking out more reading materials during each library visit. It also ignores the possibility that more and more students are obtaining reading material elsewhere—for example, from public libraries or from the Internet. Without considering and ruling out these possibilities, the author cannot justifiably conclude that students are reading less merely because they are visiting their school library less often.

Secondly, the author assumes that the reason for the declining number of library visits is that the library is uncomfortable. Yet, the author offers no evidence to substantiate this assumption. Lacking such evidence, a variety of other factors might account for the decline. As noted above, perhaps students are becoming less dependent on the school library for obtaining reading material and information. Besides, lacking evidence to the contrary it is entirely possible that library atmosphere is completely insignificant to most students.

Thirdly, the author assumes that improving atmosphere and comfort is necessary to reverse the current trend. However, even if the surroundings go unchanged there might be other ways to attract students to their library. Perhaps increasing the number of computer terminals or the number of staff members would reverse the current trend. Or perhaps increasing the number of books and periodicals, or enhancing their variety, would be effective. In short, without ruling out all other possible means of achieving the desired results, the author cannot convince me that the proposed course of action is necessary.

Finally, the author assumes that improving the library's atmosphere would suffice to increase the frequency of student visits and the amount of reading on the part of students. Yet, the author offers no evidence that these improvements alone would suffice. In fact, a more comfortable library might actually discourage students from reading by creating a social rather than work atmosphere.

In sum, the recommendation is not well supported. To strengthen the argument the author must provide clear evidence that the school's students are in fact reading less and that if they visit the school library more frequently they will read more. The author must also provide evidence—perhaps by way of a student survey—that the library atmosphere is the chief determinant of the frequency with which students visit the library. Finally, to better evaluate the argument I would need to know what alternatives, if any, are available for increasing the frequency with which students visit their library, and for increasing the amount that students read.

### **Argument 147** The prospects for **Whirlwind** video-game sales

This editorial concludes that a two-year decline in sales of Whirlwind's video games is about to reverse itself, and that sales will increase dramatically in the next few months. To justify this conclusion the editorial's author cites a recent survey in which videogame players indicated a preference for games with realistic graphics requiring state-of-the art computers. The editorial then points out that Whirlwind has just introduced several such games, along with an extensive advertising campaign aimed at people 10 – 25 years old—the demographic group most likely to play video games. I find this argument specious on several grounds.

First, the author provides no assurances that the survey on which the argument depends is statistically reliable. Unless the survey's respondents are representative of the overall population of video-game enthusiasts, the author cannot rely on it to predict the success of Whirlwind's new games. For all we know a significant percentage of the respondents were not 10 – 25 years of age; for that matter, perhaps the number of respondents was too low to ensure that they are typical of video-game enthusiasts in that age group.

Secondly, the argument relies on the assumption that the two-year decline in Whirlwind's sales is attributable to a problem that Whirlwind's introduction of its new games and ad campaign will solve. Yet it is entirely possible that the decline was due to factors such as imprudent pricing and distribution strategies or poor management, and that these problems have not been remedied. In fact, perhaps the same advertising agency that is promoting Whirlwind's new games also promoted Whirlwind's earlier games, and it was the agency's inability to attract interest among the key demographic group that caused the decline. Since the author has not clearly identified the cause of the decline, I cannot be convinced that Whirlwind's new strategy will reverse that decline at all—let alone dramatically.

Thirdly, even if the ad campaign successfully attracts many 10 – 25 year-olds to Whirlwind's new games, the argument rests on the further assumption that this result will suffice to cause the predicted sales increase during the next few months. Yet this need not be the case. Perhaps Whirlwind's new state-of-the-art games are prohibitively expensive for the key demographic group. Or perhaps Whirlwind's competitors are now introducing similar games at lower prices or with additional features that render them more attractive to video-game enthusiasts than Whirlwind's new games. Unless the author can rule out such possibilities, I simply cannot be swayed by the prediction that Whirlwind is about to experience a dramatic increase in sales.

Finally, even if the author can substantiate the foregoing assumptions, I remain unconvinced that the impending increase in sales will occur within the next few months. Perhaps video-game sales are highly seasonal and Whirlwind will need to wait longer than two months to see the dramatic increase it expects. If so, the author must modify the prediction accordingly.

In sum, the argument is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen it the author must provide clear evidence that video-game enthusiasts 10 – 25 years of age would be interested in Whirlwind's new games, and that they could afford to buy them. To better assess the argument I would need to know (1) what caused the two-year sales to decline to begin with, and whether Whirlwind's new strategy eliminates that cause; (2) what competing products might serve to diminish sales of Whirlwind's new games during the next few months; and (3) when Whirlwind's introduction of its new games has occurred in relation to the peak video-game sales season, if any.

### **Argument 149 Aircraft maintenance and airline profits**

In this memorandum, Get Away Airline's personnel director asserts that Get-Away mechanics should enroll in the Quality Care Seminar on proper maintenance procedures in order to increase customer satisfaction and, in turn, profits. The director reasons that because the performance of auto-racing mechanics improves after the seminar, so will that of Get-Away's mechanics. The director's argument relies on a number of dubious assumptions and is therefore unconvincing.

First of all, the argument unfairly assumes that because the performance of auto-racing mechanics improves after the seminar so will the performance of aircraft mechanics. Common sense tells me that, even though aircraft and auto mechanics serve similar functions, aircraft repair and maintenance is far more involved than car repair and maintenance. Thus, a seminar that improves the performance of auto mechanics will not necessarily improve that of aircraft mechanics.

Secondly, the argument assumes that the performance of Get-Away mechanics is subject to improvement. However, it is entirely possible that their performance level is already very high and that the seminar will afford little or no improvement. Perhaps Get-Away's mechanics have already attended a similar seminar, or perhaps they meet higher standards than the ones imposed on auto-racing mechanics.

Thirdly, the argument concludes from the mere fact that the performance of auto-racing mechanics improved after the seminar that the seminar was responsible for this improvement. However, it is possible that some other factor, such as improved diagnostic technology or more stringent inspection requirements, was the reason for the improved performance. Without ruling out these and other such possibilities, I cannot accept the memo's final conclusion that enrolling in the seminar will improve the performance of Get-Away's mechanics as well.

Finally, the argument concludes without adequate evidence that improved performance on the part of Get-Away's mechanics will result in greater customer satisfaction and therefore greater profits for Get Away. Admittedly, if a low performance level results in accidents, customer satisfaction and profits will in all probability decrease. Otherwise, however, improved mechanic performance will in all likelihood have no bearing on customer satisfaction; in other words, customers are unlikely to be aware of the level of performance of an aircraft's mechanics unless accidents occur.

In conclusion, the argument is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen it, the director must provide more convincing evidence that the performance of Get-Away's mechanics will actually improve as

a result of the seminar—perhaps by pointing out other airlines whose mechanics benefited from the seminar. The director must also show a strong causal nexus between improved mechanic performance and profit. In order to better evaluate the argument, I would need more information about the cost of the seminar compared to its expected benefits, and about what factors other than the seminar might have been responsible for the improved performance of auto-racing mechanics.

### **Argument 151 Blaming the mayor for problems with River Bridge**

This editorial concludes that Mayor Durant's approval of the River Bridge construction twenty years ago was the cause of current traffic and deterioration problems at the bridge. To support this conclusion, the editorial points out that a nearby bridge is not experiencing similar problems. However, the editorial relies on a number of doubtful assumptions and is therefore unconvincing.

First of all, since the bridge is 20 years old it is unfair to assign blame for recent traffic problems and deterioration to Durant or to anyone else involved in the initial bridge-building project. Given this time span it seems reasonable that these problems are due to ordinary wear and tear rather than to a design defect. Moreover, it is entirely possible that unforeseen developments during the last twenty years are partly responsible for the deterioration and traffic problems. For example, perhaps growth in the area's population, and therefore increased bridge traffic, has been greater than could have been anticipated twenty years ago.

Secondly, the editorial concludes without adequate evidence that if Durant had approved a wider and better-designed bridge none of the current problems would have occurred. This amounts to fallacious reasoning. Just because a bridge that Durant approved has experienced certain problems, one cannot reasonably conclude that without that particular bridge the same problems would not have occurred.

Thirdly, the editorial relies primarily on an analogy between River Bridge and Derby Bridge, yet provides no evidence that the two bridges are similar in ways that are relevant to the argument. Even assuming weather conditions are generally the same at both locations, a variety of other factors might explain why the River Bridge problems have not occurred at the Derby Bridge. Perhaps relatively few people traverse the Derby Bridge; or perhaps the Derby Bridge is relatively new; or perhaps the comparatively long span of the Derby Bridge places less structural stress on any given point. In short, without ruling out other factors that might explain why similar problems have not occurred at the Derby Bridge this argument by analogy is untenable.

Finally, the argument assumes that mere approval of the proposed bridge is tantamount to causation of traffic and deterioration problems. But the editorial fails to indicate why Durant approved the bridge in the first place. It is quite possible, for example, that it was the only feasible plan, and that Durant had no choice. Moreover, common sense tells me that deterioration and traffic problems are consequences of poor planning and engineering, and therefore more likely caused by negligence of engineers and planners than by politicians.

In conclusion, the editorial is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen the argument, the editorial's author must provide evidence that conditions which might have contributed to the bridge's deterioration and to traffic problems were reasonably foreseeable 20 years ago, and that some other feasible bridge design would have avoided the current problems. In order to better evaluate the argument, we would need more information about what choices Durant had at the time, as well as more information

about the age of the Derby Bridge and about how heavily that bridge is used compared to the River Bridge.

### **Argument 153 Violent teenage crime and television programming**

This editorial concludes that increasingly violent television programming during prime time in the country of Alta is responsible for the steady increase in violent crime among Alta's teenagers. To support this conclusion the editorial cites various statistical studies about violence on television. However, this evidence provides little credible support for the editorial's conclusion.

To begin with, the editorial observes a correlation between violence on television and violent teenage crime, then concludes that the former is the cause of the latter. However, the editorial fails to rule out other possible explanations for the rise in violent crime among teenagers. For example, since the 1950s it is entirely possible that Alta has seen a large growth in its population, or a deterioration of its juvenile justice system or economy. Any of these factors, or other social, political or economic factors, might lead to an increase in violent crime among teenagers. Without ruling out all other such factors it is unfair to conclude that television programs are responsible for this increase.

Next, the editorial cites studies showing that young children exposed to violent images are more likely to behave violently in the home. This evidence would support the editorial's conclusion only if teenagers and younger children react similarly to television. However, common sense tells me that young children are more likely than teenagers to mimic observed behavior. Moreover, the editorial fails to provide any evidence that this sort of mimicry ultimately develops into violent criminal behavior.

The editorial then cites the *Observer* survey in which "90% of the respondents were parents" who would prefer less violent television programming during prime time. However, the editorial fails to provide any information about the survey population; therefore it is impossible to determine whether the survey results apply generally to the Alta population. In addition, we are not informed how many parents were surveyed but did not respond. The greater this number, the less reliable the survey. Thus, as it stands the *Observer* study is statistically unreliable and lends no credible support to the editorial's conclusion.

Aside from the survey's statistical unreliability, in citing the survey the editorial assumes that parents' preferences about television programming have some bearing on whether their teenage children will commit violent crimes. However, the editorial provides no evidence to link one with the other. Moreover, the survey is relevant only to the extent that teenagers watch television during prime time. However, the editorial provides no evidence about this extent.

In conclusion, the editorial is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen the argument, the editorial's author must rule out all other possible factors contributing to the rise in teenage violence. The author must also show that teenagers react to violent television images similarly to how younger children react to the same images, and that Alta teenagers watch a significant amount of television programming during prime time. In order to better evaluate the argument, we would need more information about the *Observer* survey population, and about the percentage of those surveyed who responded.

### **Argument 154 Exercise and longevity**

This editorial concludes that to maximize longevity people should engage in vigorous outdoor ex-

ercise on a daily basis. To support this conclusion the editorial cites a 20-year study of 500 middle-aged men in which, among subjects responding to an annual survey, those who followed this regimen lived longer, on average, than those who exercised mildly once or twice per week. A careful analysis of the study reveals several problems with the editorial's argument.

First of all, the excerpt provides no information about the number of respondents or their occupational or residential profiles. The fewer respondents, the less reliable the study's results. Also, the narrower the spectrum of occupations and geographic areas represented among respondents, the more likely that one of these two phenomena, rather than exercise, played the key role in the subjects' longevity. Moreover, once a subject dies it would be impossible for that subject to respond to the annual survey. Unless a sufficient number of subjects from diverse geographic areas and occupations responded accurately and on a regular basis, and unless accurate responses were made on behalf of deceased subjects, I simply cannot accept the editorial's conclusion.

Secondly, a 20-year time span might not be sufficient to gauge the longevity of the study's subjects; that is, until a significant number of subjects have died, it is impossible to determine with certainty the effect of exercise on the subjects' longevity as a group. Lacking information about how many deaths among the 500 subjects were reported by the end of the study, it is impossible to draw any reliable conclusion about the relationship between exercise and longevity.

Thirdly, the editorial fails to indicate how many or what percentage of the respondents engaged in vigorous outdoor exercise on a daily basis. Lacking this information, it is entirely possible that only a few subjects matched this profile and that those few subjects happened to live to an old age—due to some factor other than exercise habits. The longevity of a small number of respondents is scant evidence upon which to draw any broad conclusions about the effect of exercise on longevity.

Finally, even if we accept the reliability of the study as it relates to men, the study does not support the editorial's broad conclusion that doctors should recommend to all patients vigorous daily outdoor exercise. Since the study excluded women, it is entirely possible that a different exercise regime would maximize female longevity.

In sum, the evidence cited in this excerpt does not permit any reliable inference about the effect of exercise on longevity. To better assess the study's reliability I would need more information about the number of respondents and the number of deaths among them by the end of the 20-year period. I would also need information about the occupational and residential history of each respondent. To strengthen the argument the editorial should either limit its conclusion to men or provide evidence that its recommended exercise regimen also maximizes longevity for women.

### **Argument 157 Local merchants and a new ski resort**

This editorial concludes that a new ski resort should be developed north of town because it would attract tourism and therefore be an economic boon to local merchants. To support this claim the author, a local merchant, points out that those opposed to the project do not live in the area and that a bank has agreed to fund the project. The argument suffers from several critical flaws and is therefore unpersuasive as it stands.

First of all, that mere fact that environmentalists who oppose the development do not live in the town lends no credible support to the editorial's conclusion. In essence, the author attempts to argue for one position by attacking his opponents based on potentially irrelevant considerations. We are not



informed about the environmentalists' specific reasons for their position. Besides, although they do not live in the town they might operate businesses or own property in the area; thus, their opposition might be based on economic grounds entirely relevant to the argument.

Secondly, the editorial provides no firm evidence to justify the assertion that a new ski resort north of town will in fact benefit the town's merchants. It is entirely possible that the resort might have the opposite effect, by drawing business away from local merchants, especially if the resort includes facilities such as apparel shops, restaurants, and grocery stores. Besides, we are not informed how far from town the resort would be located or how tourists would reach the resort. It is possible, for example, that the resort would be situated where visitors would take a route that does not pass through the town. Without ruling out these possibilities the editorial cannot justify its assertion that the resort would be a boon for local merchants.

Thirdly, the editorial's conclusion relies partly on the fact that a bank has agreed to fund the resort's development. However, this fact alone does not lend support to the assertion that local merchants will benefit. Common sense tells me that the bank agreed to fund the project because it believes the resort will be profitable, not because it believes other local merchants will benefit. In fact, a profitable ski resort might very well draw business away from local merchants.

In conclusion, the argument is untenable as it stands. To strengthen it, the editorial's author must provide clear evidence that the resort would increase business for the town's merchants rather than drawing business away from these merchants. To better evaluate the argument, we would need more information about the bank's reasons for agreeing to fund the project—especially whether the bank also lends to existing local merchants whose interests would be affected by the resort.

### **Argument 159   How to save money on electricity**

This argument recommends that all citizens of Claria should run fans as well as air conditioners, for the purpose of saving money on electricity. To support this recommendation, the argument's proponent points out that Claria citizens who run only fans incur higher electric costs than those who run only air conditioners, and that those who run both incur the lowest electric costs among the three groups. However, the argument depends on certain dubious assumptions about climate, electric costs, and the cited statistics. As a result, the recommendation is ill-conceived.

First, the argument relies on the assumption that climatic conditions are similar throughout all regions of Claria. Yet this is probably not the case, especially since the passage explicitly characterizes Claria as vast and widely diverse geographically. It is entirely possible that only fans are used in certain regions because the climate in these regions is comparatively cold year-round, and that electric heating costs are so high that they result in the highest overall electric costs in the country. If this is the case, implementing the proponent's suggestion would result in higher electric costs for citizens in these regions. Or perhaps people who run both fans and air conditioners live in regions where there is less need for artificial cooling. This would explain why total electric costs in these regions are comparatively low. If this is the case, then implementing the proponent's suggestion might still result in higher electric costs for citizens in other regions.

Secondly, the recommendation depends on the assumption that the cost of electricity is the same for all three groups. However, it is possible that people who use both fans and air conditioners incur the lowest total electric costs among the three groups simply because these people pay the least per u-

nit of electricity. The fact that Claria is geographically diverse lends support to this notion; people who use both fans and air conditioners are likely to live in the same climatic region, and people in the same region are more likely to be subject to the same electricity usage rates.

Thirdly, the argument provides insufficient information about the study on which it relies. If the results were based on only one warm season then the argument would be less persuasive than if the results were based on more than one warm season; in other words, the larger the statistical sample the more reliable the results.

In conclusion, the recommendation for using both cooling methods is dubious at best. To bolster it, the argument's proponent must show that climatic conditions are similar in all regions. The proponent must also show that rates charged for electricity are similar in all regions. Finally, in order to better evaluate the extent to which the cited study supports the recommendation we would need more statistical information about the study's time span.

### **Argument 163 Replacing an old town hall**

This editorial concludes that the town of Rockingham would save money by replacing its old town hall with a larger, more energy-efficient one. To support the argument the editorial's author cites the need for a larger building to comfortably accommodate employees, and the fact that the proposed building would cost less per cubic foot to heat and cool than the current building would. However, the editorial is unconvincing for several reasons.

First of all, even though it would cost less per cubic foot to heat and cool the new building, because the new building would be larger the total cooling and heating costs might actually be greater than they are now. Add to this possibility the initial cost of replacing the structure, and in all likelihood the new building would not save money for the town. Besides, the argument ignores other, potentially less expensive, means of reducing current heating and cooling costs—for example, retrofitting the building with a new climate control system.

Secondly, the editorial relies partly on the fact that the current building cannot comfortably accommodate all the people who work in it. However, this fact in itself is irrelevant to whether the town would save money by replacing the building. Besides, the editorial ignores other, potentially less expensive, solutions to the current comfort problem—for example, adding an annex to the current structure.

Thirdly, the editorial relies partly on the assertion that the town could generate income by renting out part of a larger new building. However, the author equivocates here—on the one hand claiming that a larger building is needed because the old one is too small to accommodate employees, while on the other hand proposing that the additional space not be used to solve this problem. The use of conflicting evidence to support the same conclusion renders the argument wholly unpersuasive.

In conclusion, the editorial is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen the assertion that a new building would save the town money, the editorial's author must provide a detailed analysis comparing the cost of cooling and heating the current hall to the anticipated cost of cooling and heating the new hall. In this analysis, the author must factor in the initial cost of replacing the old hall, as well as the additional rental income that the larger hall might generate. Finally, the author must choose between two competing objectives: creating a more spacious environment for current employees or creating a larger hall for the purpose of generating rental income.

### **Argument 164** New housing for **Claitown University** students

This argument recommends commissioning a famous architect known for futuristic and experimental designs as the best means of providing new affordable housing for Claitown University students. The argument's line of reasoning is that the building will attract paying tourists, new students, and donations from alumni—all of which will help raise the funds needed for the project. However, the argument is problematic in several critical respects.

First of all, a famous architect might charge a substantial fee for the project, in which case the funds raised by charging tourists and through alumni donations might be offset to the point of rendering the entire project unfeasible financially. The argument's proponent must address this issue before I can accept the argument's conclusion.

Secondly, the argument relies on the tenuous assumption that tourists will be interested in paying for tours of a building used for a purpose as mundane as student housing. It is entirely possible that once the building is in use, tourists will not be willing to pay for tours. Besides, perhaps the appeal of this architect's buildings lies primarily in their exteriors, in which case tourists would be able to appreciate the new building's salient architectural features without paying for a tour. In either case, the argument's claim that the architect's notoriety and the building itself will generate the funds needed for its construction would be dubious at best.

Thirdly, the argument fails to explain how the University will be able to pay for construction when it will not begin to receive the revenue it needs until after construction is complete. Unless the architect and contractors agree to be paid later, the argument's proponent cannot convince me that the recommended course of action will achieve the University's goals.

Finally, the argument assumes without justification that a futuristic or experimental building will attract alumni donations and students. While this might be true, it is also possible that instead the University's alumni and students strongly prefer the architectural status quo at their campus; in fact, the appeal of the campus' predominant architectural styles might be one of the key attractions for students and alumni dollars. Thus, I would need some evidence to substantiate this assumption before I can accept the argument's conclusion.

In sum, as it stands the argument is not well supported. To strengthen it, the argument's proponent must supply dear evidence—perhaps involving other college buildings designed by famous architects—that tourists will be willing to pay for tours of the building once it is completed and is in use as student housing. To better assess the argument I would need detailed and realistic financial projections, accounting for the architect's fees, to determine the project's financial feasibility. I would also need to know—perhaps by way of a reliable survey—the extent to which students and alumni would be likely to support the project.

### **Argument 165** **Promofoods'** recall of its cans of tuna

This magazine article concludes that the 8 million cans of tuna Promofoods recalled, due to complaints about nausea and dizziness, do not after all contain any chemicals that pose a health risk. To support this conclusion the author cites the fact that five of eight chemicals commonly causing these symptoms were not found in the recalled cans, while the other three also occur naturally in other canned foods. For several reasons, this evidence lends little credible support to the author's conclu-

sion.

To begin with, the author relies partly on the fact that, although three of the eight chemicals most commonly blamed for nausea and dizziness appeared in Promofoods' recalled tuna, these chemicals also occur naturally in other canned foods. However, this fact alone lends no support to the author's conclusion, for two reasons. First, the author might be ignoring an important distinction between "naturally occurring" chemicals and those not occurring naturally. It is entirely possible that these three chemicals do not occur naturally in Promofoods' tuna, and that it is for this reason that the chemicals cause nausea and dizziness. Secondly, it is entirely possible that even when they occur naturally these chemicals cause the same symptoms. Unless the author rules out both possibilities, he cannot reliably conclude that the recalled tuna would not cause these symptoms.

Another problem with the argument is that the author's conclusion is too broad. Based on evidence about certain chemicals that might cause two particular health-related symptoms, the author concludes that the recalled tuna contains no chemicals that pose a health risk. However, the author fails to account for the myriad of other possible health risks that the recalled tuna might potentially pose. Without ruling out all other such risks, the author cannot justifiably reach his conclusion.

A third problem with the argument involves that fact that the eight particular chemicals with which the test was concerned are only the eight "most commonly blamed" for nausea and dizziness. It is entirely possible that other chemicals might also cause these symptoms, and that one or more of these other chemicals actually caused the symptoms. Without ruling out this possibility, the author cannot justifiably conclude that the recalled tuna would not cause nausea and dizziness.

A final problem with the argument involves the testing procedure itself. The author provides no information about the number of recalled cans tested or the selection method used. Unless the number of cans is a sufficiently large sample and is statistically representative of all the recalled cans, the study's results are not statistically reliable.

In conclusion, the article is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen the assertion that the recalled tuna would not cause nausea and dizziness, the author must provide evidence that the three chemicals mentioned that occur naturally in other canned foods also appear naturally in Promofoods' tuna. The author must also provide evidence that ingesting other canned foods containing these three chemicals does not cause these symptoms. To better evaluate the argument, we would need to know whether the sample used in the tests was statistically significant and representative of all the recalled tuna. We would also need to know what other chemicals in the recalled tuna might pose any health risk at all.

### **Argument 169 Attracting new faculty to Pierce University**

In this letter, a department chairperson at Pierce University recommends that Pierce offer jobs to spouses of new faculty in order to attract the most gifted teachers and researchers. To support this recommendation, the chairperson cites certain Bronston University studies, which concluded that in small towns male as well as female faculty are happier when their spouses are employed in the same geographic area. However, the chairperson's argument relies on certain unsubstantiated assumptions about the similarity between Pierce faculty and the faculty involved in the Bronston study, and about how the most gifted teachers and researchers choose among jobs in the first place.

A threshold problem with the argument involves the Bronston studies themselves. The letter pro-

vides no information about the faculty in the study—specifically, whether they were representative of college faculty in general, and of potential Pierce faculty in particular. For example, if the study involved only Bronston faculty, then it would be less reliable than if it involved Pierce faculty as well. In any case, the smaller and more biased the survey's sample, the less reliable it is for the purpose of drawing any conclusions about how Pierce might attract new faculty.

Secondly, the argument relies on the assumption that faculty whose spouses work for the same employer are just as happy as faculty whose spouses work for other employers. However, since the letter fails to substantiate this assumption it is entirely possible that the spouses involved in the Bronston study and who worked in the same geographic area attribute their happiness to the fact that they work for different employers. If so, then the chairperson's recommendation that Pierce try to entice gifted teachers and researchers by offering jobs to their spouses as well would seem ill-advised.

Thirdly, the argument assumes that jobs for faculty spouses at Pierce would contribute to the happiness of Pierce faculty to at least as great an extent as the jobs in the geographical areas where the study's subjects resided. However, the letter provides no evidence to substantiate this assumption. Thus it is entirely possible that jobs in the areas where the study's faculty resided are higher-paying, offer better benefits, or otherwise contribute to the happiness of employees' spouses—college faculty—more so than a typical staff position at Pierce. In fact, the letter suggests that this might be the case. By admitting that Pierce job offers are not ideal, the letter implies that faculty candidates and their spouses might find a more attractive dual-employment package elsewhere.

Finally, the argument assumes that gifted teachers and researchers consider employment for spouses a key factor in choosing among job offers. However, the letter provides no evidence that this is the case. In fact, it is entirely possible that the faculty in the Bronston study are not exceptional teachers and researchers and therefore do not have as many job options as the kind of faculty Pierce hopes to attract. If this is the case, Pierce cannot justifiably expect the most exceptional teachers to accept positions at Pierce just because Pierce provides employment to faculty spouses.

In conclusion, the letter is unpersuasive as it stands. To strengthen the argument, the chairperson must show that jobs for spouses of faculty involved in the Bronston study are no more attractive than non-faculty jobs at Pierce. The chairperson must also provide clear evidence that the most gifted teachers and researchers find the sort of benefit that this letter proposes to be significantly attractive in choosing among job offers. Finally, to better assess the argument we would need more information about the faculty involved in the Bronston studies, so that we can determine the study's relevance to Pierce, as well as its statistical reliability.

### **Argument 170 The price of oysters**

This argument points out that, ever since harmful bacteria were found in a few Gulf Coast oysters five years ago, California consumers have been willing to pay twice as much for northeastern Atlantic oysters as for Gulf oysters. The argument then notes that scientists have now developed a process for killing these bacteria. The argument concludes that once consumers become aware of this fact they will be willing to pay as much for these oysters as for Atlantic oysters, and that profits for Gulf oyster producers will thereby increase. The argument is flawed in three critical respects.

First, the argument assumes that the bacteria discovery is the reason for California consumers' unwillingness to pay as much for Gulf shrimp during the past five years. However, this is not neces-

sarily so. Perhaps regional culinary tastes shifted during the last five years, and perhaps Atlantic oysters have a distinct taste, texture, size, or other quality that has made them more popular among California consumers. Since the argument fails to rule out this and other alternative explanations for the willingness of California consumers to pay more for Atlantic oysters, the argument's conclusion is unwarranted.

Secondly, the argument assumes too hastily that consumer awareness of the process that kills the bacteria will necessarily result in the behavior that the argument predicts. Perhaps after five years of favoring Atlantic oysters, consumer oyster tastes and habits have become so well entrenched that consumers will continue to favor Atlantic oysters and will happily pay a premium for them. Moreover, in my observation consumers often act unpredictably and irrationally, and therefore any prediction about consumer preferences is dubious at best. Besides, it is entirely possible that Gulf oyster producers will be unwilling to employ the new bacteria-killing process; if so, and if consumers are aware of this fact, then in all likelihood consumers will continue to favor Atlantic oysters.

Thirdly, even if consumers begin paying as much for Gulf oysters once they become aware of the bacteria-killing process, the argument's conclusion that Gulf oyster producers will enjoy increased profits as a result is unwarranted. Profit is a factor of not only revenue but also costs. It is entirely possible that the costs of employing this new process for killing bacteria, or other costs associated with producing Gulf oysters, will offset additional revenue. Besides, a myriad of other possible occurrences, such as unfavorable regional weather or economic conditions, might prevent the Gulf oyster producers from being as profitable in the foreseeable future as the argument predicts.

In sum, the argument is unpersuasive as it stands. To strengthen it the argument's proponent must consider and rule out all other possible explanations for the willingness of California consumers to pay a premium for Atlantic oysters, and must convince me that with consumer awareness of the bacteria-killing process Gulf oysters will become just as desirable as Atlantic oysters. To better assess the argument's claim that profits for Gulf oyster producers will increase as an end result, I would need to know whether Gulf oyster producers will incur the expenses involved in killing the bacteria and, if so, the extent to which these expenses will impinge on the producers' profits.

### **Argument 171 Bargain Brand Cereal profits**

In this memo the marketing director of Bargain Brand Cereal claims that the company will continue to make a profit from sales of its cereal, and therefore that the company should expand its bargain priced product line to include other foods as well. To support these assertions, the memo points out that Bargain Brand is still earning a profit from its cereal sales, despite the fact that major competitors have lowered their cereal prices and plan to offer bargain-priced cereal brands. On several grounds, this evidence lends little credible support for the memo's conclusions.

First of all, the mere fact that Bargain Brand is still earning a profit from its cereal sales is not the key in determining whether its competitors are succeeding. The key instead is the extent to which Bargain Brand profits have diminished since other companies lowered their cereal prices. It is entirely possible that Bargain Brand has been less profitable since its competitors lowered their cereal prices, and that given a little more time these competitors will draw enough additional sales away from Bargain Brand to render it unprofitable. The fact that the other companies offer the "top brands" is strong evidence that these companies can survive a prolonged price war and ultimately prevail over Bargain

Brand.

Secondly, the memo states that several major competitors plan to offer their own special bargain brands to compete directly with Bargain Brand. Yet the memo fails to account for this fact in concluding that Bargain Brand will continue to be profitable. In all likelihood, after the introduction of competing brands Bargain Brand's profits will diminish even further. Without providing evidence that this will not occur, the director cannot convincingly conclude that Bargain Brand will continue to profit from its cereal sales.

Thirdly, based on the fact that Bargain Brand continues to profit from cereal sales, the memo concludes that Bargain Brand should expand its product line to include other food products. Yet the memo provides no evidence that Bargain Brand is likely to be profitable in other markets. Common sense suggests the contrary—that Bargain Brand is unlikely to succeed in markets in which it has no previous experience or exposure. Without providing evidence as to how Bargain Brand would overcome natural barriers to entry into other markets, the director's conclusion is weak at best.

In conclusion, the memo is unpersuasive as it stands. To strengthen the argument, the director must show that Bargain Brand will continue to profit from cereal sales even after its major competitors introduce their own bargain brands. To better assess the director's conclusion that Bargain Brand should expand its line of bargain-priced foods, we would need more information about the extent of competition and other barriers to entry in those other markets.

### **Argument 175** Driver's education at **Centerville High**

This letter recommends mandatory driver's education courses at Centerville High School. The author bases this recommendation on three facts: during the last two years several Centerville car accidents have involved teenage drivers; Centerville parents are too busy to teach driving to their children; and the two private driver-education courses in the area are expensive. As discussed below, the argument suffers from several critical flaws and is therefore unpersuasive.

First of all, the letter fails to indicate who or what caused the car accidents to which the letter refers. If Centerville High School students caused the accidents, and if those accidents would have been avoided had these students enrolled in the high school's driving course, then the argument would have merit. However, it is equally likely that the other drivers were at fault, or that no driver was at fault. Moreover, it is entirely possible that the teenage drivers had in fact taken the high school's driving course, or that they were not local high school students in the first place. The author must rule out all these possibilities in order to conclude confidently that a school-sponsored mandatory driving course would have prevented these accidents.

Secondly, whether the fact that several car accidents the last two years involved teenage drivers suggests a need for a mandatory driving course depends partly on the comparative accident rate during earlier years. It is entirely possible, for instance, that the rate of accidents involving teenagers has been steadily declining, and that this decline is due to the availability of the two private driving courses. Without ruling out this possibility, the letter's conclusion is not defensible.

The argument is problematic in certain other respects as well. It assumes that a mandatory school-sponsored course would be effective, yet provides no evidence to support this assumption. Similarly, the argument fails to substantiate its assumption that a significant percentage of Centerville's parents cannot afford private driving instruction for their teenage children. Absent sub-

stantiating evidence for either of these necessary assumptions, I cannot be convinced that Centerville should establish the proposed driving course.

In conclusion, the letter's author fails to adequately support the recommendation for a school-sponsored mandatory driving course. To strengthen the argument, the author must provide clear evidence that Centerville High School students caused the accidents in question, and that a mandatory driving course would have prevented them. To better evaluate the argument, I would need more information about the affordability of the two private driving courses and about the effectiveness of a mandatory school-sponsored course compared to that of the two private courses.

### **Argument 177 Membership in Oak City's Civic Club**

This letter recommends that membership in Oak City's Civic Club, the primary objective of which is to discuss local issues, be limited to local residents. To support this recommendation, the author claims that since only residents pay local taxes they are the only people who sufficiently understand local business and political issues. The author also cites the fact that in the last ten years very few non-residents of Oak City who work in Oak City have joined nearby Elm City's Civic Club, which is open to any person. The argument suffers from two critical flaws and is therefore unpersuasive as it stands.

To begin with, the letter fails to adequately support the claim that since only residents pay local taxes only they truly understand local business and political issues. Even given the dubious assumption that being a local taxpayer affords one an understanding of local business and political issues, it is fallacious to conclude that being a local taxpayer is a necessary condition for understanding these issues. Moreover, common sense tells me that local business people, residents or not, would probably be more intimately involved in many such issues than local residents who do not have business interests in the town. Having failed to address this distinct possibility, the letter is wholly unconvincing.

In further support of the recommendation, the letter cites the fact that nearby Elm City's Civic Club is open to any person, yet very few Oak City business people who are not residents have joined Elm City's club in the last ten years. But this fact alone lends no support to the recommendation. It is possible, for instance, that these business people have no connection with Elm City whatsoever, or that these business people have been members of Elm City's Civic Club for longer than ten years. The author must eliminate these possibilities in order to rely justifiably on this evidence for his or her recommendation.

In conclusion, the letter's author fails to adequately support the recommendation that Oak City Civic Club membership be restricted to local residents. To strengthen the argument, the author must provide clear evidence that non-residents who work in Oak City do not understand local issues as well as residents do. To better evaluate the argument, we would need more information about why non-resident business people in Oak City have not joined Elm City's Civic Club during the last ten years.

### **Argument 179 Selecting a food service provider for an employee cafeteria**

This memo recommends that Cedar Corporation replace its current food provider, Good-Taste, with Discount Foods. To support this recommendation, the memo's author cites Good-Taste's increasing fees, the fact that three Cedar employees refuse to eat in the cafeteria, and various features of Discount Foods. For several reasons, this evidence fails to provide adequate support for the recom-



mendation.

The memo's reliance on the fact that three Cedar employees find eating in the company cafeteria "unbearable" presents two problems. First, the memo unfairly assumes that Good-Taste is responsible for these complaints. It is entirely possible that other conditions in the cafeteria are instead responsible. Second, the memo assumes that complaints by only three Cedar employees constitutes a statistically significant number which warrants replacing Good-Taste with another food / provider. However, the memo provides no evidence that this is the case.

Another problem with the recommendation is that it relies partly on the fact that Good-Taste has been increasing its fees and is now the second-most-expensive food provider available to Cedar. Yet the recommendation is based on what food provider would best satisfy Cedar's employees, not what provider would reduce Cedar's costs. In other words, this evidence is not directly relevant to the reasons for the author's recommendation. Even if expense were a legitimate factor, it is possible that Discount is even more expensive than Good-Taste.

Yet another problem with the recommendation is that it relies partly on the need to accommodate employees with special dietary needs. The memo provides no evidence that Good-Taste is any less capable than Discount of accommodating these employees. Rather, the memo merely provides that Discount offers "a varied menu of fish and poultry". Without a more detailed comparison between the offerings of the two companies, it is unfair to conclude that one would meet the needs of Cedar's employees better than the other would.

Finally, the recommendation relies partly on the fact that in one taste test the memo's author found Discount Foods to be "delicious". In all likelihood, however, the author's tastes do not represent the collective tastes of Cedar employees; accordingly, the author's report is patently insufficient to demonstrate that Cedar's employees would be more satisfied with Discount than with Good-Taste.

In conclusion, the letter's author fails to adequately support the recommendation that Cedar replace Good-Taste with Discount. To strengthen the argument, the author must provide clear evidence that Cedar employees are dissatisfied with Good-Taste's food and that they would be more satisfied with Discount's food. To better evaluate the argument, we would need more information comparing the two companies' menus to determine which is more varied and caters to those with special dietary needs.

### **Argument 180 The benefits of the Easy Read Speed-Reading Course**

In this argument, the personnel director of Acme Publishing claims that Acme would benefit greatly from improved employee productivity if every employee takes the 3-week Easy-Read seminar at a cost of \$ 500 per employee. To support this claim the director points out that many other companies have claimed to benefit from the seminar, that one student was able to read a long report very quickly afterward, and that another student saw his career advance significantly during the year after the seminar. However, close scrutiny of the evidence reveals that it accomplishes little toward supporting the director's claim, as discussed below.

First of all, the mere fact that many other companies benefited greatly from the course does not necessarily mean that Acme will benefit similarly from it. Perhaps the type of reading on which the course focuses is not the type in which Acme Publishing employees often engage at work. Moreover, since Acme is a publishing company its employees are likely to be excellent readers already, and

therefore might stand to gain far less from the course than employees of other types of companies.

Secondly, the two individual success stories the argument cites amount to scant evidence at best of the course's effectiveness. Moreover, the director unfairly assumes that their accomplishments can be attributed to the course. Perhaps both individuals were outstanding readers before taking the course, and gained nothing from it. Regarding the individual whose career advanced after taking the course, any one of a myriad of other factors might explain that advancement. And the individual who was able to read a long report very quickly after the course did not necessarily absorb a great deal of the material.

Thirdly, the director assumes without warrant that the benefits of the course will outweigh its costs. While all of Acme's employees take the 3-week course, Acme's productivity might decline significantly. This decline, along with the substantial fee for the course, might very well outweigh the course's benefits. Without a complete cost-benefit analysis, it is unfair to conclude that Acme would benefit greatly should all its employees take the course.

In sum, the director's evidence does not warrant his conclusion. To support his recommendation he must first provide evidence that employees with similar reading skills as those that Acme employees possess have benefited significantly from the course; a survey of other publishing companies might be useful for this purpose. To better assess the argument I would need more information about the extent to which the course would disrupt Acme's operations. Specific information that would be useful would include the proximity of the seminar to Acme, the hours involved, and the percentage of Acme employees enrolled simultaneously.

### **Argument 182** Should **Happy Pancake House** serve margarine or butter?

In this argument the speaker recommends that, in order to save money, Happy Pancake House (HPH) should serve margarine instead of butter at all its restaurants. To support the argument, the speaker points out that HPH's Southwestern restaurants now serve margarine but not butter, and that only 2% of these restaurants' customers have complained about the change. The speaker also cites reports from many servers that a number of customers asking for butter have not complained when given margarine instead. This argument is unconvincing for several reasons.

First of all, the speaker does not indicate how long these restaurants have been refusing butter to customers. If the change is very recent, it is possible that insufficient data have been collected to draw any reliable conclusions. Lacking this information I cannot assess the reliability of the evidence for the purpose of showing that HPH customers in the Southwest are generally happy with the change.

Secondly, the speaker fails to indicate what portion of HPH customers order meals calling for either butter or margarine. Presumably, the vast majority of meals served at any pancake restaurant call for one or the other. Yet it is entirely possible that a significant percentage of HPH customers do not order pancakes, or prefer fruit or another topping instead. The greater this percentage, the less meaningful any statistic about the level of customer satisfaction among all of HPH's Southwestern customers as an indicator of preference for butter or margarine.

Thirdly, the speaker unfairly assumes that HPH customers unhappy with the change generally complain about it. Perhaps many such customers express their displeasure simply by not returning to the restaurant. The greater the percentage of such customers, the weaker the argument's evidence as a sign of customer satisfaction with the change.

Two additional problems specifically involve the reports from “many” servers that “a number” of customers asking for butter do not complain when served margarine instead. Since the speaker fails to indicate the percentage of servers reporting or customers who have not complained to servers, this evidence is far too vague to be meaningful. Also, the speaker omits any mention of reports from servers about customers who have complained. Since the anecdotal evidence is one-sided, it is inadequate to assess overall customer satisfaction with the change.

Finally, even if HPH’s Southwest customers are happy with the change, the speaker unfairly assumes that customers in other regions will respond similarly to it. Perhaps Southwesterners are generally less concerned than other people about whether they eat margarine or butter. Or perhaps Southwesterners actually prefer margarine to butter, in contrast to prevailing tastes elsewhere. Or perhaps Southwesterners have relatively few choices when it comes to pancake restaurants.

In sum, the speaker’s argument is weak. To better assess it I would need to know: (1) how long the change has been in effect in the Southwest, (2) what percentage of HPH servers and managers have received customer complaints about the change, and (3) the number of such complaints as a percentage of the total number of HPH customers who order meals calling for either butter or margarine. To strengthen the argument, the speaker must provide dear evidence—perhaps by way of a reliable survey—that HPH customers in other regions are likely to be happy with the change and continue to patronize HPH after the change.

### **Argument 183 Outlook for new hires and layoffs**

The speaker concludes that employees of major U.S. corporations should not fear that they will lose their jobs in the near future. To support this conclusion the speaker cites the fact that most companies expect to hire new employees next year, while fewer plan to lay off employees. The speaker also cites the current proliferation of job-finding resources. The argument is problematic in several critical respects.

First of all, the argument depends on the assumption that the total number of expected hires exceeds the total number of expected layoffs. However, we are not informed whether this is the case. It is possible that, although more companies expect to hire than lay off employees, the total number of employees expected to be laid off exceeds the total number expected to be hired. If true, this fact would serve to refute the speaker’s conclusion that employees of major U.S. corporations should not expect to be laid off.

Secondly, the argument assumes that the companies that expect to hire next year are major U.S. corporations. However, it is entirely possible that these are the firms that expect layoffs, while it is smaller companies that expect to hire. Common sense tells me that this is a reasonable possibility, because the number of small companies greatly exceeds the number of large U.S. corporations. Moreover, even if it is the major U.S. corporations that expect to do most of the hiring next year, it is entirely possible that it is these same companies that expect to do most of the laying off. Again, common sense informs me that this is entirely possible—that these employers intend to replace many current employees or job positions with new ones.

Thirdly, the argument rests on the dubious assumption that all conditions relevant to a company’s decision to hire or lay off employees will remain unchanged in the near future. While this might be the case, it is equally possible that unexpected changes in general economic conditions will

result in more layoffs among major U.S. corporations next year than these firms now anticipate.

Finally, the argument seems to rely partly on the proliferation of job-finding programs. While this fact might allay the worries of employees that they will not find new employment, it is irrelevant to whether these employees should expect to be laid off in the first place. In fact, it can even be argued that the proliferation of job-finding programs is evidence of increasing job attrition, and therefore evidence that these employees' fears are well founded.

In conclusion, the argument is unconvincing as it stands. To strengthen it the author must provide clear evidence that the number of expected hires exceeds the number of expected layoffs, and that major U.S. corporations are the companies planning to hire rather than to lay off employees.

### **Argument 184** Replacing Bayhead Public Library's books

In this argument the speaker supports Bayhead Public Library's plan to replace books that are borrowed less frequently than once per year with additional copies of recent novels. In support of this position, the speaker suggests that seldom-borrowed books amount to wasted shelf space because people who want to read recent novels frequently find the library's only copy checked out. In further support of this position, the speaker points out that only thirty people have protested the plan. I find the speaker's position unjustified in several critical respects.

First of all, the speaker ignores the possibility that replacing less popular books with more copies of popular new novels will undermine the library's primary function as a repository of a wide variety of books for free public access. New books are available at bookstores, whereas older, less popular ones are not. Thus, the library might lose the patronage of a large percentage of the community should it adopt the plan.

Secondly, the speaker unfairly implies that the library has only two options: to maintain the status quo or to follow the proposed plan. Some other alternative—one that would appease protesters while preserving community support—might provide an optimal long-term solution. For example, perhaps the library can remove books that have not been borrowed for three years or for five years, rather than for one year. Although this alternate plan would free up less shelf space than the current plan, it would nevertheless make room for the most popular new books.

Finally, the mere fact that only thirty people have protested the plan accomplishes little toward supporting the speaker's argument—for two reasons. First, this statistic is scant evidence that the community at large would support the plan; it is entirely possible that many opponents have simply not voiced their opposition. Second, the thirty protesters might very well be in a position to influence many other people; or they might be among the library's most significant financial patrons. In either event, ignoring these protesters might result in the ultimate loss of community or financial support the library needs to thrive, or even survive.

In sum, the library's plan seems neither well-reasoned nor well-supported. To strengthen her position, the speaker must convince me that the plan is the only viable option to maintaining the status quo. To better assess the plan's impact on the library's value as a community resource, I would need to know what percentage of the library's current inventory would be replaced under the plan. I would also need to know the extent of influence among the thirty protesters, and the extent of support for the plan among the vast majority of community members who have not voiced their opinions about it.