
GBT 0002

— Fallacies of Insufficient Evidence —

Objectives

- Quick recap of Fallacies of Relevance
- Fallacies of Insufficient Evidence
- Kahoot! Fallacies of Insufficient Evidence

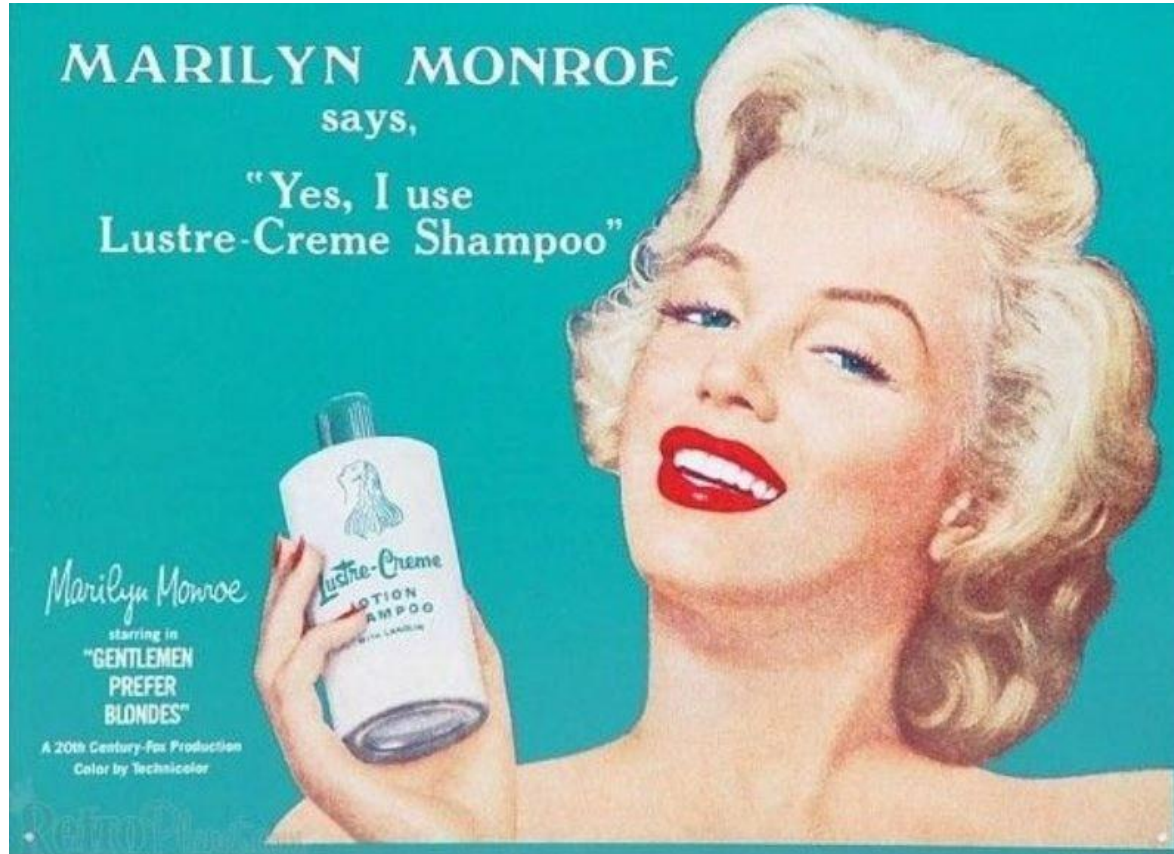
Fallacies of Insufficient Evidence

- Mistakes in reasoning in which the premises,
 - though RELEVANT to the conclusion,
 - fail to provide SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE for the conclusion

Fallacies of Insufficient Evidence

1. Inappropriate appeal to authority
2. Appeal to ignorance
3. False alternatives
4. Loaded questions
5. Questionable cause (False cause)
6. Hasty generalization
7. Slippery slope
8. Weak analogy
9. Inconsistency
10. Missing the point

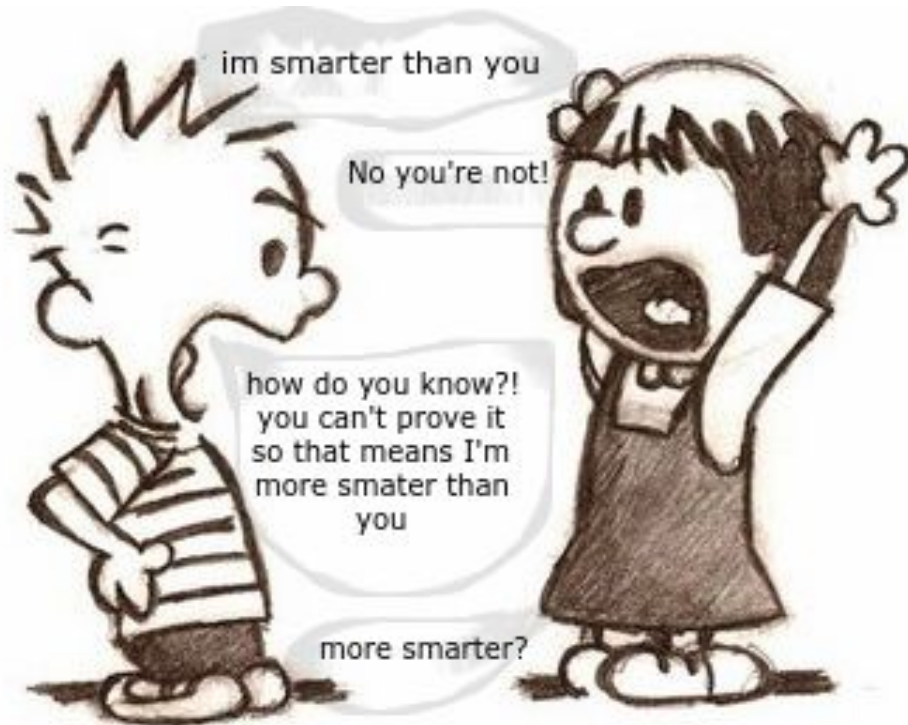
1. Inappropriate Appeal to Authority



1. Inappropriate Appeal to Authority

- Arguer cites a witness or an authority who, there is good reason to believe, is unreliable.
- Situations when witness or an authority is unreliable
 - When the source is not a genuine authority on the subject at issue
 - When the source is biased or has some other reason to lie or mislead
 - When the accuracy of the source's observation is questionable
- Eg:
 - **"We should abolish the death penalty. Many respected people, such as Kim Kardashian and Steph Curry, support commutation for former death row inmate Julius Jones,**

2. Appeal to Ignorance



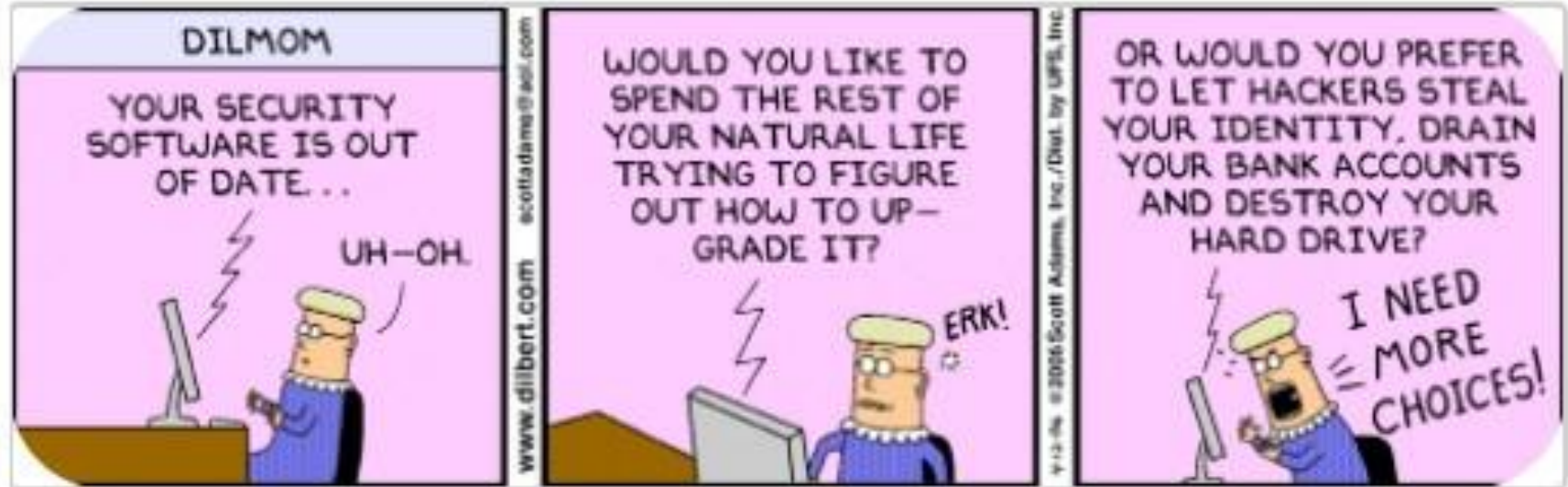
2. Appeal to Ignorance

- Arguer treats a lack of evidence as reason to think that a claim is true or false.
- Occurs when an arguer asserts that
 - a claim must be **TRUE** because **no one has proven it FALSE** or
 - a claim is **FALSE** because **no one has proven it TRUE**
- Eg: "People have been trying for centuries to prove that UFO exists. But no one has yet been able to prove it. Therefore, UFO does not exist."

2. Appeal to Ignorance

- Exceptions under two cases:
 1. A search hasn't found something is good evidence that the thing isn't there to be found
 - Eg: **We have searched this car from top to bottom looking for the stolen jewels, and no trace of them has been found. Therefore, probably the jewels aren't in the car.**
 2. Special rules require that a claim be rejected as false unless a certain burden of proof is met.
 - **In the American legal system, a criminal defendant is legally guilty only if his or her guilt is proven beyond a reasonable doubt. My client has not been proven guilty beyond a reasonable double. Therefore, my client is not legally guilty.**
 - In this example, special rules of evidence require that a claim be rejected as false unless it is proven to be true by some elevated standard of proof. Because these special rules justify the inference "not proven, therefore false," no fallacy is committed.

3. False Alternatives



3. False Alternatives

- the arguer sets up the situation so it looks like there are only two choices.
- The arguer then eliminates one of the choices, so it seems that we are left with only one option: the one the arguer wanted us to pick in the first place.
- Eg: **"Either we elect a Republican as president, or crime rates will skyrocket. Obviously, we don't want crime rates to skyrocket. Therefore, we should elect a Republican as president. "**

4. Loaded Questions



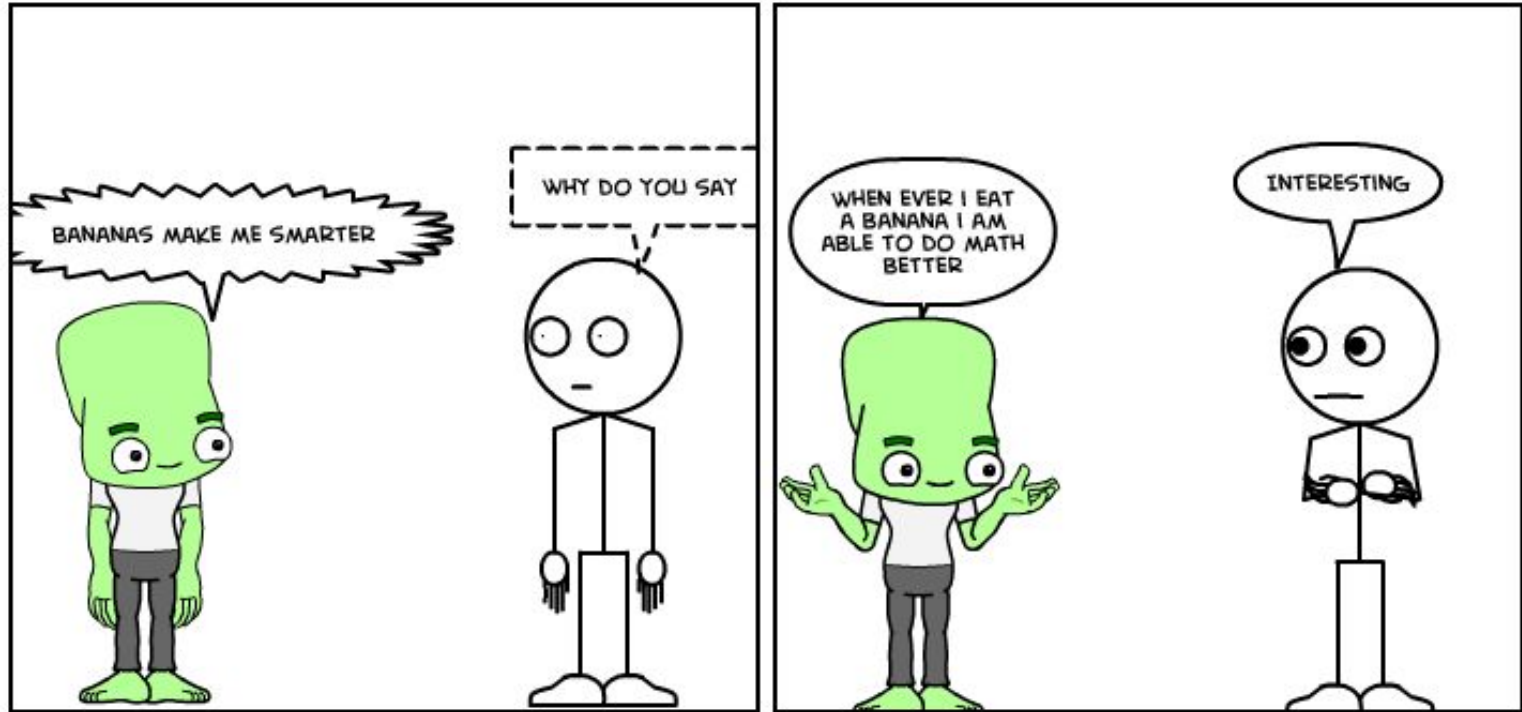
4. Loaded Questions

- an arguer asks a question that contains an unfair or unwarranted presupposition.
- Like either answers (yes or no) will force the person to admit something that he/she doesn't want to admit.

- **Eg:**
Joe: Have you stopped cheating on exams?
Pete: NO!
Joe: Oh, so you admit you still cheat on exams?
Pete: No, I meant to say yes!
Joe: Oh, so you admit that you used to cheat on exams?
Pete: No!

5. Questionable Cause (False Cause)

BY SHELBY BELLAMY



5. Questionable Cause (False Cause/ *Post hoc*)

- This fallacy gets its name from the Latin phrase "post hoc, ergo propter hoc," which translates as "after this, therefore because of this."
- Assuming that because **B comes after A, A caused B.**
- **Eg: "President Jones raised taxes, and then the rate of violent crime went up. Jones is responsible for the rise in crime."**

6. Hasty Generalization



"I HAVE NEVER SEEN FOOD
THAT IS NOT CIRCLE-SHAPED.
ALL FOOD IS THEREFORE
DEFINITELY CIRCLE-SHAPED."



"I HAVE NEVER SEEN FOOD THAT
DOES NOT HAVE STRAIGHT EDGES..."

6. Hasty Generalization

- Making assumptions about a whole group or range of cases based on a sample that is inadequate (usually because it is atypical or just too small).
- **Eg: "My roommate said her philosophy class was hard, and the one I'm in is hard, too. All philosophy classes must be hard!"**
 - Two people's experiences are, in this case, not enough on which to base a conclusion.

7. Slippery Slope



7. Slippery Slope

- The arguer claims that a sort of chain reaction, usually ending in some dire consequence, will take place, but there's really not enough evidence for that assumption,
- "We can't allow A, because A will lead to B, and B will lead to C, and we sure don't want C!"
- Eg: **Bans on so-called assault weapons must be vigorously opposed. Once the gun-grabbing liberals have outlawed assault weapons, next they'll go after handguns. After that, it will be shotguns and semiautomatic hunting rifles. In the end, law-abiding citizens will be left totally defenseless against predatory criminals and a tyrannical government.**

8. Weak Analogy



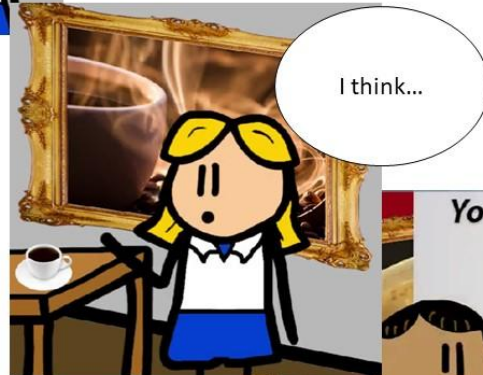
8. Weak Analogy

- An arguer compares two (or more) things that aren't really comparable in relevant respects.
- Comparing orange and apple.
- Eg: **"Guns are like hammers--they're both tools with metal parts that could be used to kill someone. And yet it would be ridiculous to restrict the purchase of hammers--so restrictions on purchasing guns are equally ridiculous."**
- Eg: **Lettuce is leafy and green and tastes great with a veggie burger. Poison ivy is also green. Therefore, poison ivy probably tastes great with a veggie burger, too.**



(poison ivy- cause allergic)

9. Inconsistency



9. Inconsistency

- An arguer asserts inconsistent or contradictory claims.
- Eg:

A: Preferential treatment is unfair and discriminatory. It has no place in college admissions.

B: But didn't you say a minute ago that you got into this college only because your father was a rich alumnus?

A: Well, yeah. But what's wrong with that?

B: Just checking, man.

10. Missing the Point



10. Missing the Point

- The premises of an argument do support a particular conclusion--but not the conclusion that the arguer actually draws.
- Eg: **"The seriousness of a punishment should match the seriousness of the crime. Right now, the punishment for drunk driving may simply be a fine. But drunk driving is a very serious crime that can kill innocent people. So the death penalty should be the punishment for drunk driving."**
- The argument actually supports several conclusions-- "The punishment for drunk driving should be very serious," in particular--but it doesn't support the claim that the death penalty, specifically, is warranted.
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Recap

1. **Inappropriate appeal to authority:** Arguer cites an unreliable authority or witness.
2. **Appeal to ignorance:** Arguer claims that something is true because no one has proven it false or vice versa.
3. **False alternatives:** Arguer poses a false either/ or choice.
4. **Loaded question:** Arguer asks a question that contains an unfair or unwarranted assumption.
5. **Questionable cause:** Arguer claims, without adequate evidence, that one that is the cause of something else.

Recap

- 6. **Hasty Generalization:** Arguer draws a general conclusion from a sample that is biased or too small.
- 7. **Slippery slope:** Arguer claims, without adequate evidence, that a seemingly harmless action will lead to a very bad outcome.
- 8. **Weak analogy:** Arguer compares things that aren't truly comparable.
- 9. **Inconsistency:** Arguer asserts inconsistent claims.
- 10. **Missing the point:** Arguer presents a claim, but fails to address the issue in question.