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# PHIL 1101 Argument and Critical Thinking

## Tutorial 8 Model Answers

1. A fallacy is an argument that is flawed because it relies on a faulty connection between premises and conclusion. Formal fallacies are arguments that have a faulty **logical structure**. Informal fallacies are arguments with faulty **content** (what they say) which usually involves a dubious hidden assumption.
2.
  - a. The assumption here is that the collected opinions of the people I've spoken to are sufficient to establish the truth. This is an **appeal to popularity** (to the people).
  - b. The assumption is that 'if what someone does contradicts what they say, then what they say must be wrong'. We may think less of someone for being a hypocrite, but this doesn't necessarily make what they say unreliable. An **attack on the person**.
  - c. The assumption is that if one thing occurs after another, the first thing caused the second. This is an example of a **fallacy of causation** known as the **post hoc fallacy**. The name 'post hoc' comes from the Latin phrase 'post hoc ergo propter hoc' which translates as 'after that, therefore because of that'.
  - d. The assumption here is that there are only two options: passing Latin or wasting your money. But time at university might not be a waste, even if you fail a course or two. This is a **false dilemma**.
3.
  - a. An **appeal to irrelevant authority**.
  - b. An **argument from ignorance** (true unless proven false).
  - c. An example of an **attack on the person** known as **circumstantial ad hominem**. The assumption in this case is that the circumstances of the person making this claim should lead us to reject anything they say. It is okay to treat a lobbyist's claims with caution, but this is very different to assuming there are strong grounds for simply dismissing them as wrong.
  - d. An **appeal to force**.
  - e. An **appeal to emotion** (sympathy).
4.
  - a. An example of **begging the question**. This phrase is often used outside critical thinking to mean 'inviting a question about...'. We use it here to refer to a fallacy in which the conclusion of an argument simply rephrases one of its premises.
  - b. This is an example of **the straw man**. Davies said that religious texts should not be read literally, which doesn't imply that one interpretation is as good as any other. The objection to Davis assumes the latter (straw man) and attacks it.

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