Fallacies

An Introduction to Common Fallacies

When discussing fallacies of reasoning, especially in the context of attempting to refute established sciences, it's important to understand that fallacies are errors in reasoning that undermine the logic of an argument. They often divert from a logical line of thinking to an illogical conclusion, sometimes appealing to emotions, biases, or irrelevant information. Here's an overview of some of the most common fallacies encountered in such debates:

1. Ad Hominem (Attack on the Person)

This fallacy occurs when an argument is rebutted by attacking the character, motive, or other attribute of the person making the argument, rather than addressing the substance of the argument itself. In scientific debates, this might look like discrediting a climate scientist's findings by attacking their character rather than the research.

2. Appeal to Authority (Argumentum ad Verecundiam)

This involves citing an authority on the subject as evidence for the truth of a claim, regardless of the authority's expertise in the specific area under discussion. While citing experts is common in science, it becomes a fallacy when the authority is not genuinely authoritative in that particular field.

3. Straw Man

A straw man fallacy happens when someone takes another person's argument, distorts it or oversimplifies it, and then attacks the distorted version as if it were the original argument. In scientific debates, this could involve oversimplifying the theory of evolution to easily attack it, rather than engaging with the actual scientific theory.

4. False Dilemma (False Dichotomy)

This fallacy occurs when an argument presents two options and ignores, either intentionally or out of ignorance, other alternatives. In science, a common example is the creationism versus evolution debate, where it's sometimes presented as if these are the only two explanations for the diversity of life.

5. Appeal to Ignorance (Argumentum ad Ignorantiam)

This fallacy asserts that a proposition is true because it has not yet been proven false or vice versa. In the context of science, one might argue that because science has not explained every detail of the universe, alternative, non-scientific explanations must be true.

6. Slippery Slope

This fallacy argues that a relatively small first step leads to a chain of related events culminating in some significant effect, without evidence to support the inevitability of this progression. In scientific discussions, this could be seen in arguments that minor environmental regulations will lead to economic disaster.

7. Cherry Picking (Selective Evidence)

Cherry picking involves selectively presenting evidence that supports one's position while ignoring evidence that contradicts it. In scientific debates, this could involve highlighting studies that question climate change while ignoring the overwhelming body of research that supports it.

8. Circular Reasoning (Begging the Question)

This fallacy occurs when the conclusion of an argument is assumed in one of the premises. In refuting science, someone might argue that intelligent design is true because the complexity of life proves intelligent design, essentially assuming the conclusion within the premise.

Revision #4
Created 2026-04-26 22:12:23 UTC by Daniel
Updated 2026-04-26 23:46:51 UTC by Daniel