

Final Exam**Section One:** Fallacies or Errors in Thinking

Directions: Read each argument. 1. Name the fallacy, 2. Define the fallacy, and 3. Why you decided this was the error in thinking. A list of fallacies is provided and can be used only once. This section is worth 30 points.

List of fallacies: Two wrongs don't make a right, Apple polishing, Smokescreen:red herring, False dilemma, Strawman, Scare tactics, Begs the Question, Personal attack, Slippery slope, and Misplaced burden of proof.

1. "People in Hegins, Pennsylvania hold an annual pigeon shoot in order to control the pigeon population and to raise money for the town. This year, the pigeon shoot was disrupted by animal rights activists who tried the release the pigeons from the crates. I can't help but think these animals' rights activists are the same people who believe in controlling the human population through the use of abortion. Yet, they recoil at a similar means of controlling pigeons. What rank hypocrisy." (Rush Limbaugh)
2. We have a simple choice. Saving Social Security is sure as hell a lot more important than giving people a tax cut. So write your representative now and let him or her know how you feel.
3. Whenever legislators have the power to raise taxes, they will always find problems that seem to require for their solution doing exactly that. This is an axiom, the proof of which is that the power to tax always generates the perception on the part of those who have that power that there exist various ills the remedy for which can only lie in increased governmental spending and hence higher taxes.
4. We should impeach the attorney general. Despite the fact that there have been many allegations of unethical conduct on his part, he has not done anything to demonstrate his innocence.
5. Overheard: "The new sculpture in front of the municipal building by John Murrah is atrocious and unseemly, which is clear to anyone who hasn't forgotten Murrah's mouth in Vietnam right there along with Hayden and Fonda calling for the defeat of America. I say: Drill holes in it so it'll sink and throw it in Walnut Pond."
6. Ladies and Gentlemen, as you know, I endorsed Council Member Morrissey's bid for reelection based on his outstanding record during his first term. Because you are the movers and shakers in this community, other people place the same high value on your opinions that I do. Jim and I would feel privileged to have your support.

7. **[Dole Campaign chairman] SCOTT REID:** There is a clear pattern of campaign finance abuse by the [Clinton} administration. Indonesian business interests have steered millions into the President's campaign using a gardener as a front, and [Democratic fund-raiser] John Huang, who apparently laundered money as a fund-raiser at a Buddhist temple in California, suddenly nowhere to be found.
[White House Senior Adviser] GEORGE STEHANOPOULOS: I can't let these charges go unrefuted. Dole has received millions from foreign supporters like Jose' Fanjul, and his vice chairman of finance, Simon Fireman, had to pay the largest fine in the history of the country for massive violations of campaign-finance laws.

8. **Reporter Cokie Roberts:** Mr. Cheney, aside from the legal issues that stem from the various United Nations resolutions, isn't there an overriding moral dimension to the suffering of so many Kurdish people in Iraq?
Dick Cheney: Well we recognize that's a tragic situation, Cokie, but there are tragic situations occurring all over the world.
(Adapted from an interview on National Public Radio's Morning Edition)

9. **Chair, Department of Rhetoric** (to department faculty): "If you think about it, I'm certain you'll agree with me that Mary Smith is the best candidate for department secretary. I urge you to join with me in recommending her to the administration. Concerning another matter, I'm now setting up next semester's schedule, and I hope that I'll be able to give you all the classes you have requested."

10. Creationism cannot possibly be true. People who believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible just never outgrew the need to believe in Santa Claus.

Section Two: Conclusion in an argument.

Directions: Read the following arguments to find the conclusion of each argument. For your answer: Write the conclusion in one sentence.

1. Dear Jim,
Your distributor is the problem. Here's why. There's no current at the spark plugs. And if there's no current at the plugs, then either your alternator is shot or your distributor is defective. But if the problem were I the alternator, then your dash warning light would be on. So, since the light isn't on, the problem must be in the distributor. Hope this helps.
Yours, Benita Autocraft
2. They really ought to build a new airport. It would attract more business to the area, not to mention the fact that the old airport is overcrowded and dangerous.
3. Cottage cheese will help you to be slender, youthful, and more beautiful. Enjoy it often.
4. From a letter to the editor: "The idea of a free press in America today is a joke. A small group of people, the nations' advertisers, control the media more effectively than if they owned it outright. Through fear of an advertising boycott they can dictate everything from programming to new report content. Politicians, as well as editors, shiver in their boots at the thought of such a boycott. This situation is intolerable and ought to be changed. I suggest we all listen to National Public Radio and public television."
5. "Consumers ought to be concerned about the Federal Trade Commission's dropping a rule that supermarkets must actually have in stock the items they advertise for sale. While a staff analysis suggests costs of the rule outweigh the benefits to consumer, few shoppers want to return to the practices that lured them into stores only to find the advertised products they sought were not there. The staff study said the rule causes shoppers to pay \$200 million to receive \$125 million in benefits. The cost is a low estimate and the benefits a high estimate, according to the study."
6. "Well located, sound real estate is the safest investment in the world. It is not going to disappear, as can the value of dollars put into savings accounts. Neither will real estate values be lost because of inflation. In fact, property values tend to increase at a pace at least equal to the rate of inflation. Most values tend to increase at a pace at least equal to the rate of inflation. Most homes have appreciated at a rate greater than the inflation rate (due mainly to strong buyer demand and insufficient supply of newly constructed homes)." {Robert Bruss, *The Smart Investor's guide to Real estate*}

7. As we enter a new century, about 100 million Americans are producing data on the Internet as rapidly as they consume it. Each of these users is tracked by technologies, ever more able to collate essential facts about them—age, address, credit rating, marital status, etc. — in electronic form for use in commerce. One Website, for example, promises, for the meager sum of seven dollars, to scan over two billion records to create a single comprehensive report on an individual. It is not unreasonable, then, to believe that the combination of capitalism and technology, pose a looming threat to what remains of our privacy. (Loosely adapted from Harper's)
8. The federal deficit must be reduced. It has contributed to inflation, and it has hurt American exports.
9. It is high time professional boxing was outlawed. Boxing almost always leads to brain damage, and anything that does that ought to be done away with. Besides, it supports organized crime.
10. Vote for Jackson? No way. He's too radical, and he's too inexperienced, and his lack of experience would make him a dangerous council member.

EXTRA CREDIT:

What type of fallacy are superstitions?