FALLACIES

Fallacies are failures in reasoning (or logic). Sometimes, fallacies are use as deliberate attempts to create false reasoning. Below is a list of some common fallacies. Make sure to be aware and familiar with these, especially when considering the arguments of other authors.

AD HOMINEM

The fallacy of Ad Hominem (Latin for "to the man") refers to the concept of attacking a person personally instead of attacking the opponent's argument.

Example:
"You can't do math well, because you've never been good at math."
"You know nothing about X, because you're not a Y."

AD POPULUM

The fallacy of Ad Populum (Latin for "appeal to the people) refers to the concept of that a claim is right, just, or correct because the majority of people support the claim. This concept is very similar to the Bandwagon fallacy (sometimes called "bandwagon thinking"), which refers to the idea that something is just, right, or true because everyone else believes it to be just, right, or true.

Example:
"The Samsung X34 Phone is the best phone, because everyone seems to have one."
"X must be correct, because everyone believes it."

AD IGNORANTIUM

The fallacy of Ad Ignorantium (Latin for "ignorance") refers to the idea that a claim is true because it has not been proven to be false or untrue. This applies to religious, scientific, and philosophical beliefs.

Example:
"Roosters cause the sun to rise, because they sing every morning."
"No one else has seen X; therefore, X doesn't exist."

AD NOVIATEM

The fallacy of Ad Noviatem (Latin for "novelty" or "new") refers to the idea that something is true because it is new.

Example:
"This medicine will work the best, because this medicine is new."
"X must be good, because X is new."

AD ANTIQUITATEM

The fallacy of Ad Antiquitatem (Latin for "Antiquity" or "Ancient") refers to the idea that something is true because it follows a traditional way of thinking or a common practice. Similarly, this fallacy also applies to the idea that something is true because it might have been true in the past.

Example:
"That's the right way to do it, because it has always been done that way."
"X is good, because it has been used for years."

NATURALISTIC FALLACY

This fallacy refers to the idea that something natural is good because it is natural (or belonging to nature).

Example:
"Vaccines are unnatural; therefore, they are bad for you."
"X must be good, because it is natural."

HASTY GENERALIZATION

This fallacy refers to the situation where a conclusion is reached without sufficient evidence. This fallacy is often similar to "stereotypes," where a small unreliable sample becomes representative of a larger entity (a large quantity of something, group of people, etc.).

Example:
"My German car broke down, because most German cars are pieces of crap."
"All of X is good, because this one X is good."

FALSE ANALOGY

This fallacy refers to the situation where a person uses an analogy which has no connection to the thing discussed.

Example:
"Cars cause more death than guns. So, if we ban guns, we should ban cars too."
"X is like Y."

FALSE AUTHORITY

This fallacy refers to the situation where a person uses "expert" information from an expert who does not have "expertise" on the topic discussed.

Example:
"I drive an Audi, because Taylor Swift does."
"An expert on X must also be an expert on Y."