# An *academic* argument is defined as...

✓ Taking a debatable position, presenting evidence and using sound logic to convince the audience to accept (or at least consider) your position. *This is where In the Media comes in – to help build background!*

Note: statements of personal preference or taste are not typically suited for an academic argument.

# The Argument…in a nutshell

✓ A *solid* argument will typically include three essential elements:

      1. Claims

      2. Evidence

      3. Warrants

# Claims:

❑ In argumentative writing the writer presents a claim to the audience.

❑ **Claim:** a proposition that conveys the writer's *interpretations or beliefs* about something.

❑ **Claims are not** facts but rather **conclusions** drawn from facts.

❑ The truth or validity of a **claim** can be argued by others and there is always an opposing point of view.

At five-feet-six and a hundred and ten pounds, Queenie Volupides was a sight to behold and to clasp. When she tore out of the house after a tiff with her husband, Arthur, she went to the country club where there was a party going on. She left the club shortly before one in the morning and invited a few friends to follow her home and have one more drink. They got to the Volupides house about ten minutes after Queenie, who met them at the door and said, "Something terrible happened. Arthur slipped and fell on the stairs. He was coming down for another drink—he still had the glass in his hand—and I think he's dead. Oh, my God—what shall I do? The autopsy conducted later concluded that Arthur had died from a wound on the head and confirmed that he'd been drunk.



**Murder or horrible accident?**

**Claim???**

# Claims:

❑ Make sure that when you are developing a claim (for whatever type of assignment), that the following conditions are met:

1. The claim actually **conveys your interpretation** and is not a statement of fact.

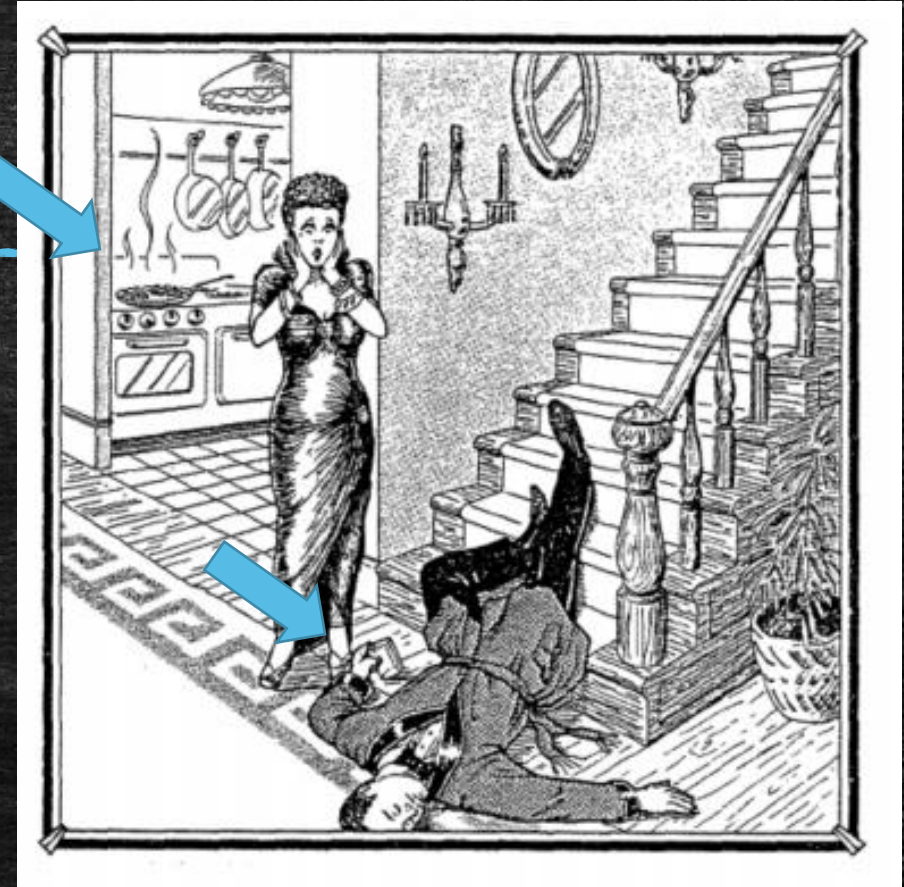2. The claim(s) can be **supported by specific evidence**.

# Claim Statements:

❑ A claim statement is typically just **your position** on the issue posed.


❑ Example: This year's Junior AP students are better than any other cohort of Junior AP students because they constantly push to be the best in academics, athletics and the arts.

# Evidence and Warrants:

❑ **<u>Evidence:</u> support, <u>data</u>, or facts** that are indisputable because they are **<u>ground</u>ed in solid, academic, reliable research.**

❑ Evidence is used to support the claim.

❑**<u>Warrant:</u> <u>logical connection/bridge between a claim and the supporting evidence.</u>**

❑Sometimes the relationship between the claim and the evidence will be obvious and the writer won't need to expound on the relationship between the two.

❑Sometimes you will need to show the reader the connection.

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**Murder or horrible accident?**

**Evidence/Data/Grounds??**
**Warrant/Bridge/Logic/Rule??**

# The Three Appeals of Argument
## Ethos, Pathos, & Logos

## The Three Appeals of Argument

Aristotle postulated three argumentative appeals: logical, ethical, and emotional. Strong arguments have a balance of all of three, though logical (logos) is essential for a strong, valid argument. Appeals, however, can also be misused, creating arguments that are not credible.

### Logical Appeal (logos)

Logical appeal is the strategic use of logic, claims, and evidence to convince an audience of a certain point.

When used correctly, logical appeal contains the following elements...

- Unfair or dishonest
- Distorting or misrepresenting information (biased)
- Insulting or dismissive of other viewpoints
- Advocating intolerant ideas

### Emotional Appeal (pathos)

Not surprisingly, emotional appeals target the emotions of the reader to create some kind of connection with the writer. Since humans are in many ways emotional creatures, pathos can be a very powerful strategy in argument. For this same reason, however, emotional appeal is often misused...sometimes to intentionally mislead readers or to hide an argument that is weak in logical appeal. A lot of visual appeal is emotional in nature (think of advertisements, with their powerful imagery,

You were given a handout that looks like this in class. Please review ethos, pathos and logos as well as the difference between a credible and an effective argument. You may also download this handout from my website.

# Logical Fallacies

**Please be sure you understand why a logical fallacy might be used and the impact it has on an argument.**

# Logical Fallacies

- What is a **logical fallacy**?

    A **mistake in reasoning** that seriously affects the ability to argue effectively.

- **Why are they used**?

    The writer is unsure if the argument is sound. When used deliberately, logical fallacies are used simply **to win an argument and obscure the truth**.

*What happens when intelligent students, like you, identify/expose Logical Fallacies in a work?*

- Logical fallacies tend to **discredit parts or all of an argument.**

- When a logical fallacy is deployed, it makes an **argument less effective**.

- A logical fallacy also **creates mistrust between the audience and the writer.** If a writer uses logic fallacies, how can the audience trust anything that the writer states?

# Bias

- A place where the **writer** demonstrates their outlooks & **prejudices**—typically these are presented as facts, not opinions

- A bias argument lacks outside, credible research to support the writer's argument

- You need to avoid arguments with an extreme and obvious bias

# Pathos Pitfall

- An argument that uses ***only*** pathos is a flawed argument

- Why?  Pathos is an appeal to emotions and an argument that relies on tugging at another's heartstrings will only carry an argument for so long.  It is an <u>**unstable argument**</u> **that can easily be refuted by an alternative argument grounded in ethos and/or logos.**

# Circular Reasoning – restating argument with no proof.

Definition: the writer presents an arguable point as a fact that supports the argument—it is an argument that says absolutely nothing!!

Example: *Harry Potter* is a popular movie because it makes a lot of money.  It makes so much money because people liked the movie.  People like the movie because it is popular.

# Hasty Generalization

Definition: writers <u>draw conclusions</u> about an issue <u>too quickly</u> without considering the complete issue

Example: Some professional baseball players use performance enhancing drugs therefore all professional baseball players are drug addicts.

# Either-or Arguments

Definition: <u>reduce complex issue to black and white choices</u>; this creates a problem that doesn't really exist; this argument ignores choices & options to solving the issue

Example: Either we change the legal driving age to 18 or teenagers won't be able to drive at all.

# Slippery Slope – A-Z

Definition: an argument that suggests one step will inevitably lead to more, eventually negative steps; this argument implies that that the descent is inevitable & unalterable; speculative argument

Example: If elementary school children are forced to wear a school uniform then eventually middle schools and high schools will also require uniforms, and if they go to uniforms then public universities and colleges will also have to require uniforms.

# Bandwagon Appeals

Definition: attempt to persuade people to do something or believe in something simply because <u>everyone else is doing it or believes in it</u>

Example: Everyone is doing the ice-bucket challenge for ALS, so you should too.

# Ad-Hominem – attacking character of a person rather than his/her arguments.

Definition: arguments limit themselves not to the issues but to the opposition itself

Example: Presidential Candidate A claims that they are the better candidate because Presidential Candidate B doesn't attend the opera and went to U of A, not ASU.

# Logical Fallacy Resource

On my website is a very thorough and complete list of logical fallacies. Please download it to your iPad so that you can reference it throughout the year. ☺

*On to Toulmin! Pull up posted copy of PowerPoint on iPad. Go!*

## LOGICAL FALLACIES HANDLIST: Arguments to Avoid when Writing

Fallacies are statements that might sound reasonable or true but are actually flawed or dishonest. When readers detect them, these logical fallacies backfire by making the audience think the writer is (a) unintelligent or (b) deceptive. It is important to avoid them in your own arguments, and it is also important to be able to spot them in others' arguments so a false line of reasoning won't fool you. Think of this as intellectual *kung-fu*: the vital art of intellectual self-defense.

### I. FALLACIES OF RELEVANCE: These fallacies appeal to evidence or examples irrelevant to the argument at hand.

**Appeal to Force**: (*Argumentum ad Baculum*, or the "Might-Makes-Right" Fallacy): This argument uses force, the threat of force, or some other unpleasant backlash to make the audience accept a conclusion. It commonly appears as a last resort when evidence or rational arguments fail to convince. Logically, this consideration has nothing to do with the merits of the points under consideration. Example: "Superintendent, it would be a good idea for your school to cut the budget by $16,000. I need not remind you that past school boards have fired superintendents who cannot keep down costs." While intimidation might force the superintendent to conform, it does not convince him that the choice to cut the budget was the most beneficial for the school or community. Lobbyists use this method when they remind legislators that they represent so many thousand votes in the legislators' constituencies and threaten to throw them out of office.

**Genetic Fallacy**: The genetic fallacy is the claim that, because an idea, product, or person must be wrong because of its origin. "That car can't possibly be any good! It was made in Japan!" Or, "Why should I listen to her argument? She comes from California, and we all know those people are flakes." This type of fallacy is closely related to the fallacy of *argumentum ad hominem*, below.

**Argumentum Ad Hominem** (Literally, "Argument to the Man." Also called "Poisoning the Well" and "Personal Attack"): Attacking or praising the people who make an argument rather than discussing the argument itself. This practice is fallacious because the personal character of an individual is logically irrelevant to the truth or falseness of the argument itself. The statement "2+2=4" is true regardless if is stated by a criminal, congressman, or a pastor. There are two subcategories:

(**Abusive**): To argue that proposals, assertions, or arguments must be false or dangerous because they originate with atheists, Christians, Muslims, Communists, the John Birch Society, Catholics, anti-Catholics, racists, anti-racists, feminists, misogynists (or any other group) is fallacious. This persuasion comes from irrational psychological transference rather than from an appeal to evidence or logic concerning the issue at hand. This is similar to the genetic fallacy.

(**Circumstantial**): To argue that opponents should accept or refute an argument only because of circumstances in their lives is a fallacy. If one's adversary is a clergyman, suggesting that he should accept a particular argument because not to do so would be incompatible with the scriptures is a circumstantial fallacy. To argue that, because the reader is a Republican, he must vote for a specific measure is likewise a circumstantial fallacy. The opponent's special

type of argument is Shakespeare's version of Mark Antony's funeral oration for Julius Caesar. There are three basic approaches:

(**Bandwagon Approach**): "Everybody is doing it." This *argumentum ad populum* asserts that, since the majority of people believes an argument or chooses a particular course of action, the argument must be true or the course of action must be the best one. For instance, "85% of consumers purchase IBM computers rather than Macintosh; all those people can't be wrong. IBM must make the best computers." Popular acceptance of any argument does not prove it to be valid, nor does popular use of any product necessarily prove it is the best one. After all, 85% of people possibly once thought planet earth was flat, but that majority's belief didn't mean the earth really *was* flat! Keep this in mind, and remember that all should avoid this logical fallacy.

(**Patriotic Approach**): "Draping oneself in the flag." This argument asserts that a certain stance is true or correct because it is somehow patriotic, and that those who disagree are somehow unpatriotic. It overlaps with *pathos* and *argumentum ad hominem* to a certain extent. The best way to spot it is to look for emotionally charged terms like Americanism, rugged individualism, motherhood, patriotism, godless communism, etc. A true American would never use this approach. And a truly free man will exercise his American right to drink beer, since beer belongs in this great country of ours. This approach is unworthy of a good citizen.

(**Snob Approach**): This type of *argumentum ad populum* doesn't assert "everybody is doing it," but rather that "all the best people are doing it." For instance, "Any true intellectual would recognize the necessity for studying logical fallacies." The implication is that anyone who fails to recognize the truth of the author's assertion is not an intellectual, and thus the reader had best recognize that necessity.

In all three of these examples, the rhetorician does not supply evidence that an *argument* is true; he merely makes assertions about *people* who agree or disagree with the argument.

**Appeal to Tradition** (*Argumentum ad Traditio*): This line of thought asserts that a premise must be true because people have always believed it or done it. Alternatively, it may conclude that the premise has always worked in the past and will thus always work in the future: "Jefferson City has kept its urban growth boundary at six miles for the past thirty years. That has been good enough for thirty years, so why should we change it now? If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Such an argument is appealing in that it seems to be common sense, but it ignores important questions. Might an alternative policy work even better than the old one? Are there drawbacks to that long-standing policy? Are circumstances changing from the way they were thirty years ago?

**Appeal to Improper Authority** (*Argumentum ad Verecundium*): An appeal to an improper authority, such as a famous person or a source that may not be reliable. This fallacy attempts to capitalize upon feelings of respect or familiarity with a famous individual. It is not fallacious to