



Extracts from the Small Compendium of 25 Argumentative **Molds** for contest of bad faith.



The abusive generalization

Method: take a sample too small and draw a general conclusion.

Examples:

- *The Chinese are really nice. I know two, they are too cool.*
- *Donald Trump is anti-Mexican, like all people in the United States.*

Panglossian reasoning

Method: reason backwards, towards one possible cause among others, towards a preconceived scenario, to the solution that we want to prove.

Examples:

- *It's crazy, the melon is already precut to be eaten with family.*
- *The world is too well done, it is a proof of the existence of a divine will.*

The call to ignorance (or argumentum ad ignorantiam)

Method: to pretend that something is true only because it has not been shown to be false, or that it is false because it has not been shown to be true.

Examples:

- *It is impossible to prove that I was not abducted by aliens. So I was kidnapped by aliens (Rael's argument, the founder and leader of the Raelian movement, subject of many controversies and classified in France as a sect by the parliamentary report of 1995.).*
- *It is not proven that wi-fi waves are not harmful. So they are.*

The argument of authority (or argumentum ad verecundiam)

Method: invoking a personality making or seeming to be authoritative in the field concerned.

Examples:

- *Isaac Newton was a genius, and he believed in God, so God exists.*
- *If Samuel Umtiti sees a marabout, it's good that it works.*

The call to popularity (or argumentum ad populum)

Method: Justify something by the large number of people who adhere to an idea.

Examples:

- Millions of people watch TF1/Fox, so it can not be so bad.
- Thousands of people use homeopathy, it proves that it works.

The call to exoticism (or argumentum ad exoticum)

Method: bet on the exoticism and the distant or "primitive" character of a people to validate one of their aspects, customs, medicines, etc.

Examples:

- Hopi ear candles are traditionally used by Hopi Indians 10, so that's fine.
- Tibetan monks know how to levitate, it's pretty predictable. They are big, there.

The false dilemma

Method: To excessively reduce the two-choice problem to a forced conclusion.

Examples:

- Those who are not with us are against us (the George W. Bush argument).
- The crisis: myth or reality?

"Smokescreen"

Method: Use complicated terms or unknown facts so that the other person does not do not understand, hoping he will not dare to question not to pass for an uneducated.

Examples:

- This situation is reminiscent of the disastrous confederation of Senegambia.
- I will not, of course, go back to Kant's nouménales categories, which every student of terminale knows.

The personal attack (or argumentum ad hominem)

Method: to attack the person (on his morality, his character, his nationality, his religion ...) and not his arguments.

Examples:

- Unable to give Heidegger credit, given his Nazi affinities.
- How can one adhere to Rousseau's positions on education, when he abandoned his own children?

The argumentative « mille-feuille » or « layer cake »

Method: Stack a proliferation of weak arguments in a mesh so tight that they reinforce themselves reciprocally without being confronted with each other.

Example:

- And the flag fluttering? And non-parallel shadows? And the framing crosses? And belts Van Allen? And Stanley Kubrick? All that proves that we never went to the moon!
- Tobacco causes cancer, promotes US companies and cigarette butts pollute planet!

The entirety of the Small Compendium of Argumentative Molds:

<https://cortecs.org/materiel/moisissures-argumentatives/>