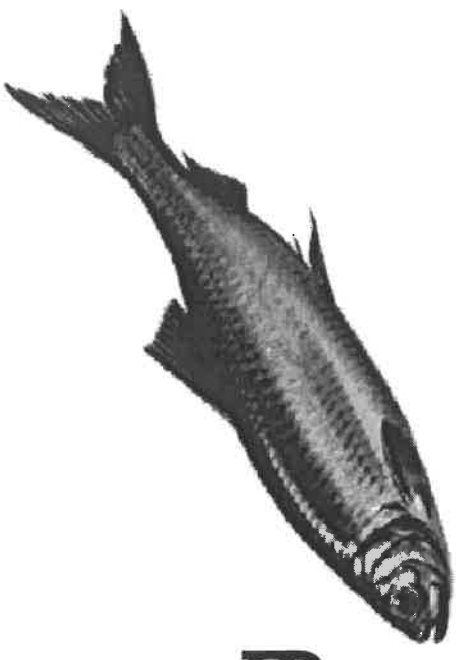




**Logical
Fallacies**

Fallacy: Red Herring



Definition: Distracting your audience from the main point by bringing up something else unconnected with the logic of the argument.



Example:

You should take my side on this weight issue because I played for the USA and trained with Hungary's national champion

Fallacy: Ad Hominem

Definition: Attacking the person instead of their arguments (another type of red herring).

Example:

The reason why the Bush administration's plan for battling obesity in America is wrong is because Bush is stupid.



Fallacy: Emotionally Loaded Terms

Definition: Using emotionally charged words to distract the reader from the real argument (a type of red herring).

Example:

You slowly murder your children
when you feed them fast food.

Fallacy: Straw Man

Definition: Constructing a feeble version of your opponent's argument and destroying it, indicating that your position is much stronger.

Example:

Those who say that kids should go on diets are simply telling us to send our kids to Weight Watchers, which not everyone can afford. My plan for exercise promotion is better because fresh air and walking is free.

Fallacy: Faulty Cause and Effect

Definition: Saying that because one event precedes another in time, it causes a second event. Also known as “correlation does not equal causation.”

Example:

Because children are taking more and more Ritalin for ADD and the obesity rate is rising at the same time, Ritalin causes obesity.

Fallacy: Either/Or Reasoning

Definition: An author limits the solution to two possible choices, instead of allowing for complex possibilities.

Example:

Parents should either let their children get fat by eating fast food all the time or never let them eat fast food. The choice is obvious.

Fallacy: Hasty Generalization

Definition: When a writer draws a conclusion based on too little evidence or from unrepresentative evidence. He or she fails to search for additional information or evidence and consider other possibilities (also known as jumping to conclusions).

Example:

A recent study showed that kids who are getting more obese also happen, on average, to watch 4 hours of TV a day. Therefore, to solve the problem, no children should watch TV.

Fallacy: False Analogy

Definition: When an author makes a comparison between things, events, or people that is unfair or misleading. The differences might be bigger than the similarities.

Example:

The battle against obesity is a war against children. Don't fight your children, love them!

Fallacy: Begging the Question

Definition: You beg the question when you assume that your argument is a proven fact. It basically repeats your thesis in different words, disguised as an argument to support it. This is also known as circular reasoning.

Example:

There's no childhood obesity problem because kids are generally slim and happy.

Fallacy: Non Sequitur

('nä'n-'se-kw-tur)

Definition: Latin for “it does not follow.” This fallacy occurs when an author draws a conclusion that doesn't logically follow from the premise. Personally, I call this the “huh?” fallacy. It makes you go “huh?”

Example:

Because diets don't work for most people, we should not recommend putting obese kids on diets.

Fallacy: Oversimplification

Definition: When an author proposes an overly easy solution to a difficult or complex problem.

Example:

The answer to childhood obesity is to teach kids to “just say no” to bad food.