

## Advertising and Logical Fallacies

### **Ad Hominem**

In an argument, this is an attack on the person rather than on the opponent's ideas. It comes from the Latin meaning "against the man."

### **Ads: The Cultural or Ideological Meaning**

Relies on the cultural knowledge and background of the person viewing the ad.

### **Ads: The Intended Meaning**

The sales message that the advertiser intends to get across.

### **Ads: The Surface Meaning**

The overall impression that a reader might get from quickly studying the advertisement.

### **Advertising**

A paid mediated message about services, products or ideas with the specific goal of persuading consumers to act in a particular way.

### **Advertising appeals**

Advertising uses social images (sex appeal, celebrities) to appeal to people's psychological and physical needs. SEX SELLS!

### **Appealing to Authority**

Fallacy commonly used in advertising; "If he said it, it must be true." Example: If a dentist in a TV commercial says Crest is the best toothpaste, you would believe him because he is an expert.

### **Argumentum Ignorame**

It comes from the Latin meaning "ignoring the question" or argument. Fallacy occurs when the argument brings up another statement to ignore the question being asked. Often seen in political campaigns.

### **Audience or market segmentation**

Dividing the audience into homogeneous groups that share certain attitudes, behaviors, and levels of knowledge and who use the same communication channels.

### **Bandwagon**

This fallacy either says or shows "everybody" getting behind the issue or product and "you do not want to be left behind."

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### **Behavioral or Affective Ads**

Appeals to emotions and images people have of themselves; EX: Beer ads identify product with a good time with friends.

### **Brand**

A name, term, symbol, design, or combination thereof that identifies a seller's products and differentiates them from competitors' products; a trusted symbol by consumers.

### **Cognitive Ads**

Informative, copy heavy, describe product's functional benefits; EX: Classified ads

### **Consumer advertising**

Targeted at people who buy products and services.

### **Deductive Argument**

An argument in which it is thought that the premises provide a guarantee of the truth of the conclusion.

### **Demographics**

Statistics such as age, gender, income, ethnicity, or education level.

### **Electronic media advertising**

Ads in this type of media: radio, television, Internet

### **Fallacy**

A false or mistaken idea based on flawed logic.

### **False promotion**

Caveat emptor (let the buyer beware); Consumers' responsibility to determine truth in advertising, especially infomercials. False claims of the results of using a certain product, service, etc.

### **Faulty/false dilemma**

Fallacy where a limited number of options (usually two) are given, while in reality there are more options. Use "or" as illegitimate operator. Example: Putting issues or opinions into "black or white" terms is a common instance of this fallacy.

### **Fear appeal**

Ads play on fear and anxiety. Nobody wants bad breath, body odor, pimples, excess weight/obesity, wrinkles, etc. Makes consumer feel they MUST buy the product.

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### Flag waving

A fallacy used in advertising connecting the person, product, or cause with patriotism. Example, "Buy Chevy--it's All-American!"

### Four functions of advertising

1. Sells products (marketing); 2. Information/Education; 3. Reaches large (mass) audience; 4. financially supports media

### Hasty Conclusion

A generalization or stereotype; begins with "ALL" (all blondes are dumb)

### Hidden Major Premise

Relies on one's knowledge of inductive/deductive logic; classic form is syllogism; first major premise usually starts with the word ALL; failure to state the generalization (premise) upon which the conclusion is based. Three parts: 1. MAJOR premise, which usually begins with the word "ALL."

2. Followed by MINOR premise, which is linked to the major premise but is more detailed.

3. Conclusion.  $A=B$ ,  $B=C$ . Therefore,  $A=C$

### How society is affected by advertising

Critics say advertising has created a consumer society that values materialism, greed, envy. We are exposed to thousands of advertising images a day.

### Impact of TV on advertising

Created a consumer culture in America; affects societal values, trends, pop culture, etc.

### Inductive Argument

An argument in which it is thought that the premises provide reasons supporting the PROBABLE truth of the conclusion.

### Linkage: Advertising

Mass advertising links what people need with sellers' products. Could also be social networking sites such as Ebay or Match.com.

### Logical thinking

Requires putting words together into STATEMENTS (to form a PREMISE); putting STATEMENTS together to form CONCLUSIONS. Method of conceptualizing, analyzing and evaluating data generated by observation, experience, reasoning as a guide to self belief and action.

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### **Logical thinking: BLOCKS TO PREVENT**

Personal values/beliefs/attitudes; preconceived or ready-made judgments; strong emotions

### **Meaningless Words**

Words to describe a product with denotative and connotative meanings, e.g. smoother, mellower, better tasting, smoother skin, etc.

### **The persuasion of advertising**

Ads don't cause people to buy products they don't want, but they do persuade consumers to purchase products they don't need. Advertisers use psychological research and motivational analysis to sell.

### **Political attack ads: Misc.**

"Yes We Can (Obama, 2008); Stop the Hot Air (Carly Fiorina attack ad against Diane Feinstein); Windsurfing (John Kerry "flip-flopping" (George W. Bush); Tank Ride (1998) against a goofy looking, helmeted Michael Dukakis."

### **Premise**

STATEMENT that provides reason or support for the CONCLUSION. (A statement that is assumed to be true and from which a conclusion can be drawn)

### **Print media advertising**

Ads in this type of media: Handbills, Newspapers, Magazines, Billboards, Direct Mail

### **Psychographics**

Statistics such as personality, opinions, values, beliefs, as well as lifestyle elements, hobbies and interests.

### **Reverse Bandwagon**

Fallacy used in advertising that convinces us we should pick (or side with) the people who are "not like everyone else" and stand independently.

### **Suppressed Evidence**

Almost all ads commit this fallacy because they don't tell us what's wrong with the product, only what's right about it.

### **Tear jerking**

Fallacy used in advertising that implies it is important to be caring and even sympathetic to causes or issues.

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### **Transmission of values**

Mass media is mode of transmission of personal and societal values; EX: "What's cool" and what's NOT cool (smoking, drinking, unsafe sex, etc.)

### **Types of mass media**

Print, Electronic and Digital

### **Types of online advertising**

Banners, pop-ups, spam, sponsored ads, text ads, intermercials, extramercials, etc.

*Source: <http://quizlet.com/29361090/advertising-and-logical-fallacies-flash-cards/>*