

“logical fallacies”

part II



One of the earliest categorizations of logical fallacies is illustrated in Aristotle's "Rhetoric", which distinguished persuasion through:

- pathos (emotion)
- logos (pure logic)
- ethos (character, credibility)

let's start with the pathos

THE FALLACIES OF PATHOS

Fallacies of Pathos are arguments that **rely excessively on emotions** to persuade the audience, without sufficient supporting evidence or logical reasoning.

They exploit our natural emotional responses to manipulate our judgment and sway us towards a certain conclusion, even if the argument itself might be weak or flawed. One example.....

The Affective Fallacy

The Affective Fallacy (also known as "*Follow Your Heart*") is a modern fallacy of Pathos.

The idea is that one's feelings and emotions are both innate and self-validating, and thus immune to challenge or criticism.

Unfortunately, "*This is how I feel*" is a statement, not a logical argument of persuasion.

This fallacy mirrors a literary critique, where judging a piece of writing solely on its emotional impact on the reader is considered of very limited value.

A platitude from Paulo Coelho might make your heart race, but it does not bring the Nobel Prize in Literature in sight.

Several aspects expose the fallacy's weaknesses:

1. Outdated Dualism: It perpetuates the outdated notion of “mind” vs. “heart”.

Newsflash: it's the 21st century, embrace the complexity of human experience.

2. Cognitive Emotions: Contemporary brain theories propose that emotions are primarily cognitive constructions rather than innate responses. So, their "*inherent validity*" goes out the window.

3. Innate Doesn't Equal Valid: Even if emotions were innate, they wouldn't automatically be self-validating. *Road rage anyone?*

4. Misconstrued Criticism: a respectful and reasoned response to our emotions does not automatically mean either hostility or personal invalidation. *You're still worth it.*

Ultimately, "follow your heart" is as vague and directionless as it sounds. In most situations, the only sensible response is: *it depends.*



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