

# ARMING APOLOGISTS #11: MATERIAL FALLACIES

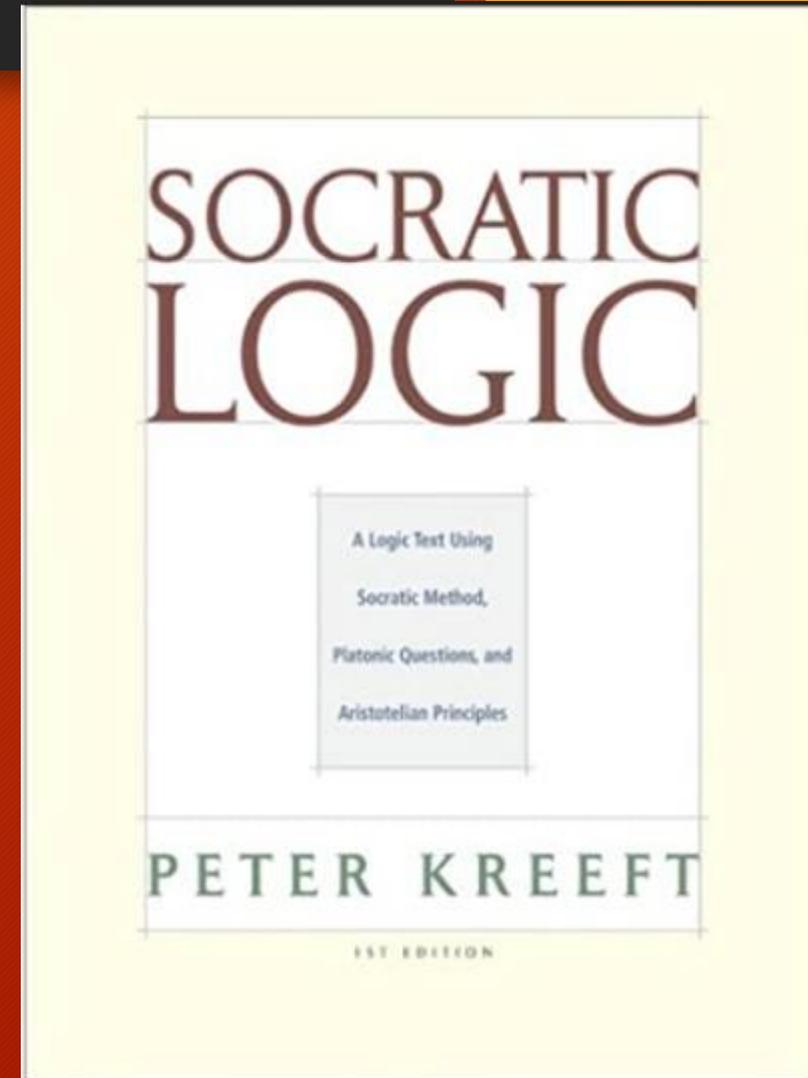
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# COURSE OUTLINE

- Questions?
- Reminder: Engage - EXPLAIN - Exemplify
- Review MAXIM
- Review 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>ND</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Act of the Mind
- Discuss Material Fallacies

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Southern Evangelical Seminary
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- *Socratic Logic: A Logic Text Using Socratic Method, Platonic Questions, and Aristotelian Principles*
  - Dr. Peter Kreeft



# MAXIM: ESTABLISH TRUTH

- Desire to know & seek truth (Dispensational)
- Philosophical Apologetics
  - Defending Sound Philosophy (Way of Thinking)
- Tenets of Truth
  - Correlation to Reality
  - Exclusive Nature
  - Absolute Standard
- Law of Non-Contradiction

# 3<sup>RD</sup> ACT OF THE MIND

- Reasoning (Act)
- Cause (Reveals)
- Why? (Practical Application)

## THREE KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Deductive reasoning, when correct, demands certainty
- An argument can only be valid or invalid
- Validity is not the only, best, or easiest way to defeat an argument

# 2<sup>ND</sup> ACT OF THE MIND

- Judgment (Act)
- Existence (Reveals)
- What is your point? (Practical Application)

## THREE KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Premises make a truth claim via a declarative sentence
- Multitude of methods for verifying its veracity
- A premise can only be true or false

# 1<sup>ST</sup> ACT OF THE MIND

- Apprehension (Act)
- Essence (Reveals)
- What do you mean? (Practical Application)

## THREE KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Concepts are immaterial & private
- Terms are either clear or unclear
- Solve ambiguity with definitions

# FALLACIES

- Formal Fallacies
  - Reasoning (3<sup>rd</sup> Act of the Mind)
  - Beyond the Scope
  - Intuitive
- Material Fallacies
  - Apprehension (1<sup>st</sup> Act of the Mind)
  - Infinite variety (49 types)
  - 14 Most Applicable ABC

# MATERIAL FALLACIES

- “...are mistakes in understanding the meaning or use of terms, errors in the operation of the first act of the mind. These material fallacies are found in the course of an argument, so they are called “fallacies,” or mistakes in reasoning; but they are not mistakes in the logical *form* but mistakes in the content or *matter* or meaning. Most of the errors and misunderstandings that plague our conversation and argumentation come

# MATERIAL FALLACIES

from a loose use of language rather than from formal fallacies. Formally fallacious arguments don't deceive us as often as materially fallacious arguments do...the topics in a practical text [*Socratic Logic*] should be determined not by the topic's clarity but by its practicality, i.e. by human need and use.”

Kreeft, *Socratic Logic*, p68

# FALLACIES OF LANGUAGE

- Equivocation
- Amphiboly
- Accent
- Slanting
- Slogans
- Hyperbole
- “Strawman”

# EQUIVOCATION

- Word used in 2+ different ways
- Equivocal usage
- “I am saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, just like you are saved by the grace of Jesus the Christ.”
- Grace - 2 Nephillim 25:23
- Grace - Ephesians 2:8-9
- *The 5 Love Languages* by Gary Chapman

# “STRAWMAN”

- Refuting a different version of an opponent's argument/conclusion
- Medieval debate
- Modern discussion
- Crusades / Catholicism
- Coexist

# FALLACIES OF DIVERSION

- Appeal to the Person (*Ad hominem*)
- Appeal to Illegitimate Authority (*Ad verecundiam*)
- Appeal to Force (*Ad baculum*)
- Appeal to Pity (*Ad misericordiam*)
- Appeal to Shame (*Ad ignominiam*)
- Appeal to the Masses (*Ad populum*)
- Appeal to Ignorance (*Ad ignorantiam*)

# *Ad hominem*

- Argument addressed to the person, attacking the person not the argument
- Iniquity does not always impede veracity
- Priests, Ravi Zacharias, & Jerry Falwell Jr
- “Poisoning the Well”
- “*Tu quoque*” (“You too”)
- Pastor / Parent

# AD VERECUNDIAM

- Appeal to illegitimate authority
- Irrelevant - Celebrities & politics
- Unreliable - CNN & FaceBook
- Unnecessary - Politicians & family
- Dogmatic - Democratic Party & abortion
- Uncritical - Amazon's superfans

# FALLACIES OF OVERSIMPLIFICATION

- *Dicto simpliciter* (saying something too simply)
- “Special Case”
- Composition
- Division
- “The Black-and-White Fallacy”
- Quoting out of Context
- Sterotyping

# “THE BLACK-AND-WHITE FALLACY”

- Sometimes there are gradations, i.e. shades of grey
- Calvinist argument
- Sometimes there are not gradations:
- “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.”

Matthew 12:30

- *False Analogy*

# QUOTING OUT OF CONTEXT

- Using data selectively to support your premise
- “Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: ‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’ and, ‘In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’” Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ‘You shall not tempt the Lord your God.’”

Matthew 4:5-7

# QUOTING OUT OF CONTEXT

- “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4:13

- Sports Team or New Years Resolution
- Following God’s call & will

# FALLACIES OF ARGUMENTATION

- *Non sequitur* (“It Does Not Follow”)
- *Ignoratio Elenchi* (“Ignorance of the Chain”)\
- *Petitio principii* (“Begging the Question”)
- “Complex Question”
- Arguing in a Circle
- Contradictory Premises
- False Assumption

# BEGGING THE QUESTION

- “Assuming what you set out to prove, smuggling the conclusion back into the premises, usually under different words.”

Kreeft, *Socratic Logic*, p94

- “I think, therefore I am” (Rene Descartes)
- We’ll hang’em after he gets a fair trial.
- I preach about free will, because I am predestined to do it.

# ARGUING IN A CIRCLE

- Using a premise to justify the conclusion, which uses the conclusion to justify the premise
- The Bible claims to be the Word of God,
- God cannot lie
- Therefore, the Bible is the Word of God
- Classical Apologetics & New Testament Reliability
- Presuppositional Apologetics & *False Analogies*

# FALLACIES OF INDUCTION

- Hasty Generalization
- *Post hoc, ergo propter hoc* (“After this, therefore caused by this”)
- Hypothesis contrary to the fact
- *False Analogy*
- Argument from silence
- Selective Evidence
- Slanting the Question

# *POST HOC*

- “After this, therefore caused by this.”
- Rooster and the Sun
- Lemons and alligators
- Losing weight & health

# ARGUMENT FROM SILENCE

- Silence does not equal consent nor negation
- 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Bill of Rights
- Historical figures & secret societies
- Jesus the Christ & His teachings
- Practical Rebuttal

# ARGUMENT FROM SILENCE

- Jesus is God (Exodus 3:14 & John 8:58)
- All Scripture is from God (2 Timothy 3:16)
- Therefore, all Scripture is from Jesus
- Deductive Argument?
- Certainty
- Valid argument?
- Premises true?
- Terms clear?

# PROCEDURAL FALLACIES

- “Refuting” an Argument, by Refuting its *Conclusion*
- Assuming that Refuting an Argument Disproves its Conclusion
- Ignoring an Argument
- Substituting an Explanation for Proof
- Answering Another Argument than the One Given
- Shifting the Burden of Proof
- Winning the Argument but losing the Arguer

# EXPLANATION AS PROOF

- Proof vs Explanation
- T-Rex bones
- Theory of Evolution
- Teleological Demonstration

# DIFFERENT ARGUMENT

- Self-Evident
- Politicians
- Parenting
- Policing

# WINNING BUT LOSING

- Pyrrhic Victory
- “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear”

1 Peter 3:15

- Not just limited to Apologetics
- Wife’s good conduct (1 Peter 3:1-2)
- Engage - Explain - Exemplify

# METAPHYSICAL FALLACIES

- Reductionism
- Fallacy of Accident
- Confusing Quantity with Quality
- Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness
- Confusing the Logical, Psychological, and Physical “Because”
- The Existential Fallacy
- Confusing the Natural with the Common

# NATURAL VS COMMON

- “The *natural* is inherent and unchangeable; the merely *common* is accidental and changeable. It is human *nature* to want property; it is *common* in our age to want a lot more than we can use. It is *natural* to wear clothes; it is *common* in our day to wear jeans.”

Kreeft, *Socratic Logic*, p113

- Alternate lifestyle and gender choice
- Fallen world vs Natural state

# APPLICATION

- Comprehensive Understanding
  - Learn
  - Discern
- Clandestine Supply
  - Memorized
  - Measured
- Conversational Delivery
  - Relatable
  - Digestible

# ENDING EXHORTATION

- Victory isn't always a win
- “Wives, Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.”

1 Peter 3:1-2

- Universal & Instructive

# QUESTIONS?

- Homework Assignment