I would like to personally thank you for watching the Origins program. Origins was a special program, near to the heart of my late husband, Russell Bixler.

I trust that the information in this presentation will be helpful in your study of creation science. Thank you for your prayerful and financial support of Origins… you’re making the television production of this program possible.

Norma Bixler
Logic – the study of the principles of correct and incorrect reasoning.

– It is about the “chain of reasoning” rather than the specific evidences used within the argument. I.e., what conclusions can we reasonably infer or deduce from accepted facts?
Argument

Argument – a group of propositions where the truth of one is claimed to follow from the others.
The claim being demonstrated is the conclusion. The other statements which provide support are premises.

1. All mammals have kidneys.
2. All dogs are mammals.
3. Therefore, all dogs have kidneys.
Fallacies

Logical Fallacy – a common error in the “chain of reasoning.”

1. Some mammals are cats.
2. All dogs are mammals.
3. Therefore, some dogs are cats.
Two Kinds of Logic

• **Deductive (formal)** argument: The conclusion is definitely true if the premises are.

• **Inductive (informal)** argument: The conclusion is likely to be true if the premises are.
Inductive Logic
Informal Logical Fallacies

Informal (Ordinary Language) Fallacies
1. Fallacies of Ambiguity
2. Fallacies of Presumption
3. Fallacies of Relevance
Informal Logical Fallacies

Ambiguity:

Equivocation, Amphibily, Accent, Division, Composition, Reification
Informal Logical Fallacies

Presumption:

Sweeping Generalization, Hasty Generalization, Bifurcation, Begging the Question, Question Begging Epithet, Complex Question, “No True Scotsman,” Special Pleading, False Analogy, False Cause, Slippery Slope
Genetic Fallacy, Abusive *ad Hominem*, Circumstantial *ad Hominem*, “Straw-man”, Irrelevant Thesis, Appeal to (Authority, Ignorance)
Equivocation:
The fallacy of shifting the meaning of a word within an argument ("bait and switch").
Equivocation

1. Practice makes perfect.
2. Doctors practice medicine.
3. Therefore, doctors are perfect.
Equivocation

1. Doctors know a lot about medicine.
2. Dr. Lisle is a doctor.
3. Therefore, Dr. Lisle knows a lot about medicine.
Equivocation

• “You believe in science, don’t you? Well, evolution is science. So you should believe in evolution.”

• “Evolution is a theory—sure. But so is gravity. And you believe in that don’t you?”
Reification

Attributing concrete (and often personal) characteristics to an abstraction.
Reification

• “It’s not nice to fool mother nature.”

• “Though Dr. Lisle was on vacation, his job continued to call to him—luring him back to the office.”
THIS EVIDENCE SAYS EVOLUTION IS TRUE!

I SAID NO SUCH THING!
Reification

• “Evolution figured out a way around these problems.”

• “Life will find a way.”

• “Nature selects those individuals that are most fit for the environment.”
Reification

• “The evidence speaks for itself!”
• “Natural selection guided the development . . .”
• “Science is atheistic in its outlook and procedures.”
• “Science says . . .”
Bifurcation (false dilemma, the “either-or fallacy”) – falsely assuming that there are only two (exclusive) options.
“Either the traffic light is red, or it is green.”

“Either Bob will go into the ministry, or he will move to Kansas.”
“I don’t live by faith; I’m rational.” This critic assumes that we either live by faith or we are rational.

“I cannot accept the Bible, because I believe in science.”

“Either the universe operates in a law-like fashion, or God is constantly performing miracles.”
“The Bible teaches that ‘in Christ all things hold together.’ But we now know that the forces of gravity and electromagnetism are what hold the universe together.”
Question-begging Epithet

Using biased language to support a conclusion that is logically unproved.
Question-begging Epithet

- “This criminal is charged with the vicious murder of the innocent victim.”
- “I pray you’ll have an epiphany and stop misleading people to believe in nonsense and lies.”
“Sigh, this woman received her PhD in molecular genetics from Ohio State . . . . Our department is becoming infested with creationists . . . . Perhaps they are becoming attracted to our program after noticing that we graduated this nitwit.”
Question-begging epithets can be subtle:

- “Evolution vs. creationism.”
- “Genesis teaches that God created in six days, however, the best scientists tell us that the universe is billions of years old.”
Ad Hominem

Ad Hominem Fallacy
when an argument is directed against a person rather than his or her position.
Abusive Ad Hominem

Attacking the character of the person:
“Joe is a mean person, so I wouldn’t believe anything he says.”
Ad Hominem

Circumstantial Ad Hominem – claiming that an argument is only due to a person’s circumstances.
Ad Hominem

• “You’re only for higher gasoline prices because you work at a gas station.”

• “You’re just a Christian because you were brought up in a Christian family.”
Irrelevant Thesis

When an argument proves a point that is not at issue.
“The people who want to reduce the amount of nuclear weapons are mistaken. After all, such an action will not solve all the world’s problems.”
Irrelevant Thesis

• “Why is the universe ideally suited for life? Because otherwise we wouldn’t be here to observe it.”

• “Why do living creatures have complex parts that function together so perfectly? Because if they didn’t they would have died off.”
The fallacy of irrelevant thesis can always be answered with this simple response:

“True, perhaps. But irrelevant.”
“Straw-man” Fallacy

An argument that is against a misrepresentation of the opponent’s position rather than the actual position.
Creationists believe that God created all the animals as we see them today. But some breeds of dogs are known to be quite recent.”
THEY'RE FLAT-EARTHERS!

THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN SCIENCE!

THEY DON'T BELIEVE IN CHANGE!

IF ONLY THESE CREATIONISTS HAD A BRAIN!
Faulty Appeals

Faulty Appeal to Authority – arguing that a claim is true because someone else believes it.
Faulty Appeals

• “Joe is an expert in biology, and he believes in evolution, so it must be true.”

• **Majority:** “Evolution must be true, because how could all those scientists be wrong?”
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