

LOGICAL FALLACIES RECOGNITION

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Pudge



INTRODUCTION

Both formal and casual arguments consist typically of opinions and facts. It is your responsibility as an educated person and a good citizen to be able to differentiate between facts and opinions when arguments are presented within the public discourse. There is nothing inherently wrong with opinions – we all have them. However, opinions should result from reasoned analysis after we have acquired an awareness and knowledge of relevant facts. People are entitled to their own opinions, but not to their own facts. Facts must be empirically verifiable within the constraints of human senses and technology. The essay form can, and frequently does, contain the statement of an opinion as a thesis statement. This is legitimate. What follows, then, in the valid essay should be a series of verifiable facts which support the opinion expressed.

The first set of arguments following were advanced by John Stemberger and published in the Orlando Sentinel on the Opinion page on Friday, April 12 2013. The question under consideration was: "Should same-sex marriage be allowed?"

ASSIGNMENT: Read the following arguments. Respond to at least these questions:

- *Are the contents of these argument facts, or opinions, or a mixture of the two?*
- *If the argument contains opinions, can these opinions be altered to become facts, and, if so, how?*
- *Are these arguments which should simply be deleted, arguments which cannot be salvaged?*

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1. Because marriage is the foundation of civilization, it was always been regulated in some way.
 2. Government has a compelling interest in the definition and preservation of marriage.
 3. It (marriage) protects children, reduces incidences of domestic violence, is best for socializing children and creates basic social order.
 4. Children have a natural human right to the best possible chance for a mother and a father.
 5. Our opponents' position is that two dads are just as good as a mom and a dad. But social-science research spanning decades shows that children raised with mothers and fathers do better in every category of human flourishing.
 6. And when you remove a father or mother, social problems become greater. The rates of suicide, depression, academic failure, sexually transmitted diseases, abortions, premature sexual experiences and incarceration are all higher when either mom or dad is gone.
 7. Therefore, same-sex marriages subject children to a vast, untested social experiment.