FIFTEEN FAULTS TO FAIL THE ARGUMENT

1.   **Giving too few instances to prove a point.**

       example: Women cannot be trusted to make decisions when the pressure
                    gets tough. My wife cries as soon as a high pressure situation arises.

2.   **Using famous people's names as the sole proof of your point.**

       example: Whitney Lewis, the actor, advertises that camera, so I am sure that
                    it is good.

3.   **Praising or blaming the people who state a proof you cite and then ignoring the
       idea.**

       example: She's such a brilliant scholar that any candidate she supports has to
                    be good.

4.   **Trying to prove something by showing that people have always believed such a
       thing.**

       example: Women have never been allowed to compete professionally with
                    men in sports. Why should we allow it now?

5.   **Proving something by showing that everyone is doing it.**

       example: Young people all over the world are using marijuana without harm.
                    How harmful can it be?

6.   **Trying to prove something by repeating the point again and again.**

       example: Women ought to have the same rights as men. Women's rights are
                    just as important as men's rights, and women should receive the
                    same treatment as men. After all, women have rights too.

7.   **Using an unreliable source to back up an idea.**

       example: My brother Jerry says politicians are liars and cheats and I have
                    always trusted his judgement.

8.   **Making a comparison that is weak and untrue.**

       example: I know I can drive a motorcycle. I can drive a bicycle, can't I?

9. **Appealing to people's prejudices or unreasonable emotions.**

   example: Anyone who opposes Governor Bradley's re-election is anti-American.

10. **Drawing conclusions that only follow from personal experience.**

    example: When I went to College, I got all A's and B's. Anyone who wants to can get good grades.

11. **Proving that something is "good" or "bad" only because of associations with other "good" or "bad" things.**

    example: Since the dean was found guilty of robbing city funds, surely the president himself must have some illegal dealings too.

12. **Generalizing and stating the proof so strongly so as to admit to no exceptions.**

    example: Women drivers are the worst drivers on the road.

13. **Trying to show that if something happened after an event, it is the result of that event.**

    example: Five convicted killers said that when they were younger, they enjoyed watching programs of violence on T.V. This proves that watching violent actions on the screen can lead to murder.

14. **Stating your proof in "either/or" terms.**

    example: It is no wonder that he failed so many courses. College students go to school or they work; they certainly cannot do both.

15. **Ignoring information that contradicts the point you are trying to make.**

    example: A large number of investigations suggest that legalizing heroin would be a positive step toward controlling drug abuse.