

## INFORMAL LOGIC FALLACIES

## EXERCISE 1

Below are 21 arguments that (arguably) illustrate each of the 21 fallacies in the Informal Logic Fallacy Toolkit Reference Sheet. Match each argument to a fallacy by placing a number from 1 to 21 (in accordance with the reference sheet) in the space provided. One of the “arguments” is not actually an argument. For this one, write *NA* for *no argument*.

1. There is no doubt that, compared with other countries in the world, Canada is an affluent nation. Therefore, poverty is not a problem in Canada. \_\_\_\_\_
2. To allow every person unbounded freedom of speech must always be, on the whole, advantageous to the state, for it is highly conducive to the interests of the community that each individual should enjoy a liberty perfectly unlimited of expressing his or her sentiments. \_\_\_\_\_
3. “The Inquisition must have been justified and beneficial, if whole peoples invoked and defended it, if men of the loftiest souls founded and created it severally and impartially, and its very adversaries applied it on their own account, answering pyre to pyre.” (Benedetto Croce, *Philosophy of the Practical*, cited in Copi, Irving M. (1972). *Introduction to Logic* (4th Edition). New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., p. 89.) \_\_\_\_\_
4. To say that freedom from religion (that is, to be free from any religious indoctrination) is conducive to freedom of religion (that is, freedom to choose one’s own religion) is absurd as saying that freedom from expression is conducive to freedom of expression. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Returning something that has been borrowed is the right thing to do. Thus, when Harry came to me in a fit of rage asking for his shotgun back (while muttering something about avenging his neighbour), I did the right thing by returning it to him. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Ms Johnson’s position in favour of increased pension benefits and salaries for postal workers cannot be taken seriously. She is, after all, a postal worker herself and, therefore, a member of the very union that is pushing for increased benefits and salaries. \_\_\_\_\_
7. “He who forgets most is most ignorant. He who knows most forgets most. Therefore, he who knows most is most ignorant.” (Copi, p. 107) \_\_\_\_\_
8. Those people who are opposed to fighting in hockey are just left-leaning, weak-kneed softies who are inclined to think that all problems of humanity can be solved by sitting and having a nice, civilized chat over a cup of tea. How middle-class! How bourgeois! \_\_\_\_\_
9. No one has proven to me that carelessness on the part of the company wasn’t responsible for the plane crash. It is for this reason that I shall stick by my claim that company negligence is why the plane crashed. \_\_\_\_\_
10. If abortion were legalized, it would become more widespread; if it were to become more widespread, respect for human life would weaken; if respect for human life were weakened, our form of civilization would be jeopardized. But surely we do not want to weaken our form of civilization. Therefore, abortion should not be legalized. \_\_\_\_\_



## BLM 2.2 Continued

11. If a person came to you in a fit of rage asking you for his shotgun back (while muttering something about avenging his neighbour), there is no way you would give it back to him. Thus, one should not give back something one has borrowed. \_\_\_\_\_
12. A: "Police are entitled to their opinions, but I advise against giving them too much attention on the issue of capital punishment." B's response: "That is absurd. You are suggesting the censorship of those who are close to crime and able to provide an alternate and important point of view. Clearly you are wrong on this matter." \_\_\_\_\_
13. If the Occupy Wall Street movement is actually going to have an impact and create political and social change, then it must go beyond simply declaring that the economic system is broken and suggest concrete ways in which change must be brought about. \_\_\_\_\_
14. "It is our duty to do what is right. We have the right to disregard good advice. Hence it is our duty to disregard good advice." (Copi, p. 106) \_\_\_\_\_
15. The husbands of successful women wear expensive clothing. So the best way for a man to help his wife become successful is to wear expensive clothing. \_\_\_\_\_
16. You have the gall to question my purchasing mutual funds on the grounds that I should first research to make sure that the companies invested in by these funds are acting ethically towards others and acting responsibly towards the environment! Lots of people are purchasing mutual funds and they don't check the ethical and/or environmental practices of these companies. As far as I am concerned, it is perfectly alright to purchase such funds. \_\_\_\_\_
17. You should add Andres to the team. I know he failed to attend most practices and he is somewhat lacking in skill, but he will be devastated if he does not make the team while all his friends do. His heart was set on being on the team with his friends, and it will break his heart if he does not make it. \_\_\_\_\_
18. The reason you have not seen your Aunt Gracie for some time now is because she is made out of individual cells that, taken alone, are invisible to the naked eye. Therefore, Aunt Gracie is invisible to the naked eye. \_\_\_\_\_
19. For decades, the old-style nuclear family had one person working and one person at home raising the children. We should return to this family arrangement because it has been a long-standing tradition in our Western culture. \_\_\_\_\_
20. Either you are for lowering taxes in order to stimulate businesses and get the economy going again, or you are a bleeding-heart socialist. Since you are not a bleeding-heart socialist, you should support the lowering of taxes. \_\_\_\_\_
21. "By my definition, 'unbreakable' means 'requiring an unusual degree of force to break'; therefore, these dishes are unbreakable." (Beardsley, Monroe C. (1975). *Thinking Straight: Principles of Reasoning for Readers and Writers* (4th Edition). Prentice Hall, p. 248) \_\_\_\_\_
22. Albert Einstein said that world government was "the only way to control nuclear weapons and eventually abolish war entirely." Albert Einstein was, for decades, the world's foremost expert on physics. We should, therefore, do as he suggests and create a world government. \_\_\_\_\_

