

INFORMAL FALLACIES

1. **Ambiguity**

(‘America is a ‘Christian Nation’!’)

2. **Equivocation**

(evidence that the people are a ‘Christian nation’ is offered to argue the claim that the national government was founded as a ‘Christian nation’)

3. **Hasty Generalization**

(evidence that some Founders were orthodox Christians supporting the conclusion :
“All Founders were orthodox Christians”)

4. **False Dichotomy**

(“The Founders were either atheists-secularists or orthodox Christians” – but obviously they were not atheists-secularists, thus they must have been orthodox Christians)

5. **False Cause**

(The Colonies were Christian, thus the national government that followed was Christian)

6. **Appeal to Emotions**

[positive or negative]

7. **Appeal to the Crowd / ‘Bandwagon Appeal’**

(group-feeling and desire for group belonging to group-thinking / group-belief)

8. **Appeal to Tradition**

(“Until recently, tradition shows that America was founded as a Christian nation.”)

9. **Straw Man**

10. **Red Herring**

(“‘Separation of church and state’ is NOT found in the text of the U.S. Constitution, but
‘separation of church and state’ IS in the constitution of the communist USSR!”)

11. **Ad hominem**

[personal]

(“Whitten you are a liberal! -Whitten you are a heretic!”)

[circumstantial]

(“What would you expect? this essay was published by that stupid, evil organization -
Americans United for Separation of Church and State!”)

(What would you expect? - Whitten went to Baylor - that un-Christian and un-American
school!)

12. **Appeal to Force**

(“If you believe that, you cannot teach Sunday School at our church!”)