

Re: Preaching To The Converted

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From: Immortalist (*Reanimater_2000_at_yahoo.com*)

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"Albert" <alwagner@tcac.net> wrote in message
news:10nr4n08sakdh8d@corp.supernews.com...

> *Kamerynn wrote:*

> <snip>

> > *A good post, Immortalist. Depressing, but good. I say*

> > *that it's depressing because I view the majority as uninformed.*

> > *This is why the majority can, for example, be persuaded by*

> > *presidential "debates." It's sad to think that a one-sided*

> > *argument could convince anyone.*

> > *Anyway - thanks for the post.*

>

Both kinds of argument come in handy though since sometimes it is not good to give away all the counter arguments to your position and at other times raising most of the counter arguments and then refuting them can be very persuasive and doesn't allow the opponent to raise them.

Sometimes we want to hear one sided arguments because we already been through all the counter arguments.

<Albertneedstoknow> -----

Schopenhauer said that it helps to have common names for common fallacies. When we do, then we can use them in conversation for quick and clear diagnoses of problems with reasoning. Then we have a better chance to notice them, fix them, and move beyond them.

In that spirit I'd like to name four stages of sophistication in argument, and some associated informal properties of argument. This is not profound. In fact, it's hokey. But I believe that teachers, and others who talk about arguments and evaluate their strengths, will find it helpful to have these names for rapid identification of where we are and where we could be instead.

These stages apply primarily to arguments for ethical and political conclusions. They have very little relevance to arguments for mathematical and scientific conclusions. (For the reason why, see the appendix below.)

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Here are some terms to help us understand the stages to follow. Let us say that a positive argument directly supports a conclusion, while a negative argument undermines an opposing conclusion. Let us say that an argument is two-sided if it has both positive and negative components, and one-sided otherwise. Finally, let us say that an argument is responsive if it answers objections to its positive and negative components, and unresponsive otherwise.

<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/courses/argstages.htm>

The One-Sidedness Fallacy

<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/courses/inflogic/onesided.htm>

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