

Martignoni's Arsenal

Anyone who engages in formal discussion should be aware of certain types of arguments that are designed to derail, or otherwise win a debate by convincing others of its validity. Being able to recognize and contend with these types of arguments will help you to defend, argue, and uncover the problems associated with them. John Martignoni uses almost all of these techniques (whether he realizes it or not) in an effort to gain leverage, or even avoid critical discussion. Get a feel for these types of arguments so that you can recognize when they're being used.

Argument Type	Description
1. Straw Man	An informal fallacy that misrepresents an opponent's position. It creates an illusion by substituting a similar position (the "straw man"), and then arguing against it, never actually addressing, or successfully refuting the original position.
2. Ad Hominem	This type of argument attacks the person making the argument, rather than the actual opposing position. Not to be confused with making a refutation or counter claim, this argument distracts from the original position in an effort to minimize the opponent. Ad Hominem – to the man.
3. Bandwagon	This argument uses the reader's desire to "fit in" with the crowd in order to win an argument. This technique is often used by Martignoni in an effort to leverage his reader base against an opponent.
4. Begging the Question – Circular Reasoning.	This type of argument assumes the truth of the very point being raised – giving up any logic to show why the point is true. Because most of Martignoni's visitors and students agree with him already, he often poses questions that the reader believes he or she already knows the answer to.
5. False Dilemma	This form of argument is another informal fallacy that poses a situation in which two, and only two alternatives are presented, when in fact there are other options.
6. Scare Tactics	An argument that causes the reader to become frightened to the point of agreeing with the opposing position. Logic and reason are discarded in favor of fear.