

12 angry men | appeal to pity



Juror eight used Appeal to pity fallacy which was the most powerful fallacy in the film 12 Angry Men. If we want to see which of the fallacies in the film is used most effectively, we have to take a closer look at which juror did the best job. Twelve jurors gathered in a hot court room to decide if an 18-year-old young man, who had been accused of killing his father, was guilty or not. At first, eleven jurors voted for guilty and one for not guilty. Obviously, eleven jurors, who voted for guilty, had come to vote in a few minutes and go back home, but it was juror eight who convinced other jurors to change their vote. Even though 11 jurors voted for guilty, juror 8 proposed an “Appeal to pity” fallacy, which was used most effectively, and helped other jurors to investigate the events step by step, and convinced them to vote for not guilty.

Juror eight used “Appeal to pity” fallacy in an effective way. He proposed the first fallacy of the film. He did not claim that the boy was not guilty in a straight way, but when he proposed an “Appeal to pity” fallacy, it became clear that he wanted to find a reason to convince other jurors that the boy was not guilty. As a result, when juror three asked him if he really thought the boy was innocent, Juror eight said that he did not know. After that, he explained that the boy was not guilty because he was an 18-year-old boy with a miserable past. In juror eight’s opinion, the boy was too young to kill his father. This is an appeal to pity fallacy because the boy’s age and miserable life have nothing to do with his conviction. There is an important point here. This fallacy is a positive form of an “Appeal to pity” fallacy because when juror eight talked about the boy’s past, other jurors started to think about the events and try to look at the problem in a different way. As if

they did not know anything about investigation at all, and juror eight's fallacy gave them an idea to analyze all testimonies which they had heard in main court room. Moreover, he never showed any bad or rude behavior to other jurors. He was always polite. Along with these good behaviors, he was very smart. For example, before the court appointment, he had gone to investigate the neighborhood of the house. This is a kind of smart approach because it revealed an important point about switch-knife. Moreover, even though there was no advance equipment in their hot room, juror eight asked for the diagram of the building and gave an idea to other jurors to measure the time intervals of events with simple and inaccurate tools. At first, other jurors did not accept, but when they heard juror eight's smart descriptions, they changed their mind. Because of juror eight's smart arrangement, other jurors saw the results and add their own analysis. For example, juror nine explained about the dragging leg of the old man who testified in the court. Then, juror two talked about the stabbing angle of switch knife. After that, it was juror four who described the mechanism of the switch-knife. At last, when all pieces of the puzzle were founded, they changed their vote for not guilty. As a result, "Appeal to pity", which was juror eight's fallacy, was the most effective fallacy in the film. It changed the situation in favor of accused boy, and saved his life.

Calm behavior and effective fallacy of Juror eight convinced juror three. Juror three was the most aggressive opponent, but juror eight finally managed to persuade him to change his vote. This is an important point because juror three never wanted to change his vote. As a result, comparing to other jurors, it was very hard for juror eight to convince juror three. If we take a

closer look at juror eight and juror three and compare their behavior, we may see how well juror eight did and how effective juror eight's fallacy was. During the meeting, by convincing jurors one by one, the fallacy of juror eight became more and more effective, and the juror three became more and more aggressive. In other words, when juror three saw how other jurors were convicted by juror eight's smart approaches, he became more aggressive. For example, after taking preliminary vote, when Juror three talked about the facts and the neighborhood woman's testimony, he seemed a very strong and logical jury, but when juror eight proposed his fallacy, juror three became nervous and attacked to juror eight and threatened him. In contrast, Juror eight did not pay any attention to juror three's aggressive behavior and convinced other jurors one by one. When juror three saw that juror eight's effusive reasoning convinced others, he said he did not care. He continued his opposition and talked about his argument with his son to prove that he was right. After that, when Juror eight found out that juror eight had a bias against the accused boy, he continued his work more calmly. The calm behavior of juror eight was not tolerable for juror three. As a result, juror three become more aggressive. He revealed his main reason of opposition and showed the photo of his son. Here is an important point. Actually, this was juror three's turning point because when he tried to show the photo, he felt his valet. He was very nervous. The level of his anger showed that in response to juror eight's effective fallacy, he had nothing to say. In my opinion, the calm behavior of juror eight was one of the important reasons which made juror three angry, and persuaded him to change his mind. For example, juror eight was very smart and knew that the anxiety of the juror three was based on his past. Moreover, in the middle of meeting, we may

see that the argument of juror eight became more personal because he claimed that if he were the executor, he would pull the execution switch. Again, this was juror eight who did better job because his smart behavior obliged juror three to play his last card and reveal the photo of his son. At last, when other jurors left him alone, he torn the photo of his son and acknowledged that it was his whole reason. This is one of the most important moments of this film. Because it shows that the fallacy of juror eight was the most effective fallacy which managed to convince the last juror. In the end of the film, we see that juror eight completed his smart approach. He did not left juror three alone. He was the last juror who calmed juror three and accompanied him to left the meeting room. In my opinion, Juror eight's effective fallacy step by step convicted juror three to change his vote, and the calm behavior of juror eight played an important role in this procedure.

In conclusion, juror eight used an appeal to peaty fallacy, which was the most powerful fallacy in the film, to convince other jurors to change their vote. Juror eight talked about the boy's past live. For example, he mentioned that the boy was eighteen years old and could not kill his father. Even though they were not relevant to boy's charge, helped other jurors to think over the case, and analyze the evidence step by step. Without his leadership, other jurors did not even know what to do. Most of the jurors had come to vote in two or three minutes and go home. Juror eight's fallacy gave them an idea of thinking about the details. After that, we saw that other jurors started to think about events carefully, and add their own understanding to the main incident. For example, they did various measuring time tests and made a connection between the tests. Through the

discussion, other jurors convinced one another and changed their vote based on juror eight's fallacy. In the end of the film, juror three was the last juror who was convinced and changed his vote for "not guilty". Juror three was the most aggressive opponent, but juror eight's effective fallacy convinced him to change his vote. In my opinion, this film is a sample of democracy in The United States of America. Different people from different social levels try to convince each other and make a strong verdict to save someone's life. It was the fallacy of juror eight which helped others to find a solution.