

Fallacies in prop 8 commercial essay sample



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The opening statement in the commercial constitutes a fallacy of red herring as it tries to insinuate the prop 8 issue within the framework of discrimination. By starting with the statement, " It wasn't that long ago that discrimination was legal in California", the commercial both directly and indirectly suggest that California's history of discrimination is being revived which is inappropriate and inapt for the state to advance to the future.

In exemplifying and justifying its opening statement, the commercial committed the fallacy of strawman which distorted, oversimplified or misrepresented the examples given to support the notion that discrimination was indeed legal in California. That Japanese Americans were confined in internment camps, that Armenians couldn't buy a house in the Central Valley and `Latinos and African Americans were told who they could and could not marry, are not real laws that were passed to institutionalize and legalize discrimination. The commercial apparently used these different incidences of discrimination i. e. racial, social and cultural discrimination to insinuate the discrimination existed. The commercials evokes that the issue at hand is simply another form discrimination - this time against the third sex or gays.

The run down of instances of discrimination was encapsulated and concluded by the fallacy of appeal to pity. The commercial concluded that, " It was a sorry time in our history", which further reinforces the distorted idea being conveyed by appealing to emotions of the audience denoting that it was a general sentiment of the people.

Moving from the past and progressing towards the future, the commercial continued with a strong presumptive statement, " Today the sponsors of

Prop 8 want to eliminate fundamental rights, which partakes of the appeal to ignorance because it does not provide evidence or proof for the claim but rests on the inability of the sponsors to defend themselves.

It then used the fallacy of slippery slope and scare tactics to justify its promotion of voting against prop 8. For the former, it implies that voting 'no' is a matter of our obligation to pass along to our children a more tolerant, more decent society as if voting 'no' would indeed result to a more tolerant and decent society in the future. For the latter, the fact that it uses our children's future being at stake in the issue provides a scary tactic to persuade people to support the commercial's conclusions and campaign.

Finally, the commercial finished off by a fallacy of Card Stacking. Card Stacking is an informal logical fallacy which is often committed by people who focuses on a one-sided assessment of an issue or when perceiving a problem in a single perspective that results to slanted argumentation or disregard of evidence presented from the other side of the issue. 'Vote No on Prop 8. It's unfair and it's wrong.' These statements are apparently one sided. It obliquely hints that voting otherwise will make one guilty of being unfair and committing a mistake.

For all intents and purposes, the commercial fails to inform and provide arguments. Prop 8 is actually an initiative constitutional amendment in California that will eliminate the right of same sex couples to marry. The Prop 8 commercial seeks to encourage people to vote against the said proposal. In conclusion, the commercial ended without providing any

concrete justification for voting “ no” but rests solely on loosely founded opinions that are encapsulated in stylish and enthralling lines.