

JARGON-Y TERMS OF ARGUMENT

PHIL 715

1. LATIN ALPHABET SOUP

Sine qua yum.

- et al. *et alia* “and others,” to refer to multiple persons
 - i.e. *id est* “that is,” to provide an alternate definition or identity statement
 - e.g. *example gratis* “for example,” to provide examples of a previously-identified category
 - cf. *conferre* “compare with,” refer to by way of comparison
 - viz. *videlicet* “see” to list further references
- QED *quod erat demonstrandum*, “so it is demonstrated,” indicating the conclusion of an argument
- sic “thus,” used to refer to quoted misspellings or grammar errors that are left uncorrected
- n.b. *nota bene*, “mark it well,” to alert readers to a relevant sidebar. Useful more for correspondence and manuscript drafts than for publications

2. THREE WAYS TO RE-CITE A WORK

There must be 50 ways to cite another.

- op.cit. *opere citato*, “in the work that was cited,” used after an author’s name to refer to the last work cited by the same author.
- ibid. *ibidem*, “in the same place,” used to refer to work cited immediately previously
- loc.cit. *loco citato* “in the same place,” used in footnotes to refer to the previous work cited down to the page, or if preceded by an author’s name, the last work cited by the same author (again, down to the page).

3. MORE LATIN, MOSTLY FROM THE ANCIENTS AND EARLY MODERNS

I saved Latin. What did you ever do?

- a priori “From the former,” analytic
- a posteriori “From the latter,” empirical
- ab initio “From the beginning,” from the ground up
- ad infinitum “to infinity,” signifying infinite regress
- ceterus paribus “all other things being equal” a conditional used to limit the scope of a discussion to a certain type of case
- de dicto “about the statement,” a highly literal interpretation or, in logic, a sentence-focused interpretation
- de re “about the matter,” a more liberal interpretation or, in logic, a proposition-focused interpretation
- explanans plural *explanantia* “the thing that explains,” a premise or explanatory assumption
- explanandum plural *explananda* “the thing that is explained” a conclusion or target of explanation
- mutatis mutandis “after changing what needs to be changed,” with appropriate changes

prima facie “at first glance,” apparently
 tabula rasa “blank slate,” a space (usually in the mind) without presuppositions or axioms
 salva veritate “saving the truth,” expressions that can be exchanged without changing the truth value of their parent statements
 simpliciter “simply,” without qualification
 sine qua non “that without which, nothing” the essential piece of a thing
 sui generis “of its own kind,” an irreducible concept
 summum bonum “highest good,” the greatest good

4. ARGUMENT FORMS AND FALLACIES

That’s just, like, your opinion, man.

a fortiori “from the stronger,” using a stronger argument to overshadow a weaker one
 reductio ad absurdum “reduction to the absurd,” finding a contradiction in a logical consequence of a premise
 ad hominem “to the man,” attacking the character or a trait of your opponent rather than their argument
 ad hoc “to this,” improvised to fit a given situation
 tu quoque “you too,” pointing out the same flaw in an opponent’s argument that they have pointed out in yours
 straw man a caricature of your opponent’s argument, which is much weaker than her actual view
 begging the question assuming the conclusion. Alternative: “vicious circle”
 valid The premises lead to the conclusion; the form is good. (opposite: invalid)
 sound The premises are true; the content is good. (opposite: unsound)

5. OTHER STUFF WE SAY

I don’t want to sell anything, buy anything, or process anything as a career.

negative project The part of the paper where you criticize someone else’s view
 positive project The part of the paper where you propose your own view
 the received view A view held to be not crazy and/or in fashion at the time of writing.
 Alternatively, a view held to be dogmatic and in need of revision.
 dialectic The comparison of views on a subject over time
 literature A body of philosophical work on a given subject
 endemic Native to a particular concept/debate/literature
 navel-gazing Used to question the merit of a particular philosophical project
 burden of proof Who is responsible for showing the correctness/incorrectness of a claim
 turtles all the way down Used to question the grounding of a particular argument’s content

6. IMPORTANT NOTATION FROM PROOFS

I’m sure the word you were looking for was “symbolism.”

∴ “Therefore,” designating the conclusion
 ∃ “Exists,” designating an existence claim
 ∀ “For all,” designating a universal claim
 □ “Necessarily,” designating a claim that holds in all possible cases
 ◇ “Possibly,” designating a claim that holds in at least one possible case
 ∼ “not”, negation
 ⊢ “entails”, in ‘A ⊢ B’, B is a logical consequence of A (NB: ⊨ is a variation of ⊢, with a similar but distinct meaning in some logical systems)