Consider this Pro-Life argument:

(H1) Fetuses are human beings.
(H2) All human beings have a right to life.
(H3) So, all fetuses have a right to life.

This is a common argument, and many find it persuasive, but it's actually fallacious. Specifically, it commits the fallacy of equivocation, where the meaning of a term shifts midway in an argument, rending it invalid. In other words, the conclusion doesn't follow from the premises.

The equivocation here is between two senses of "human being". There's the *genetic sense*, which means member of species *Homo Sapiens*, and there's the *moral sense*, which means member of the moral community (with full and equal rights).

In order to be justified, the first premise needs to express the *genetic sense*. Only then is it uncontroversial and can be established by science, as Pro-Lifers often say.

But the second premise needs to express the *moral sense*. Only then is it an uncontroversial moral principle. Otherwise, you'd have to justify why being a member of a particular species grants you full and equal rights, rather than other features (rationality, sentience, agency, etc.).

So, here's what the argument really looks like:

(H1) Fetuses are members of the species *Homo Sapiens*.
(H2) All members of the moral community have a right to life.
(H3) So, all fetuses have a right to life.

Clearly, it's invalid. The conclusion doesn't follow.

References

Mary Anne Warren – "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion"

Update: I made a correction to this in Video 5. I spoke too strongly here and should have made the accusation of equivocation *conditional* on the assumption that the premises are supposed to be obvious and uncontroversial, not requiring a substantial moral argument.