

b. The argument analyzed

This argument really proceeds as follows:

If it is possible to construct a classification, based on structural similarity, then structural similarity certainly exists.

If structural similarity exists, then certainly a genetic relationship exists as an explanation of that similarity.

It is possible to construct a classification, based upon structural similarity, of living things.

Therefore a genetic relationship between all living things must exist.

**Formal Analysis of the Argument**

The Formal Argument	The Formal Structure
If CI, then SS	If A, then B
<u>If SS then GR</u>	<u>If B then C</u>
CI	A
Therefore GR	Therefore C

In analyzing any given deductive argument, there are really only two questions to be asked:

- (a) Is the formal structure valid?
- (b) Are both of the premises true?

if the answer to both these questions is yes, then the conclusion must follow.

In regard to the formal structure, we must admit that it is perfectly valid.

In regard to the major premise (or "first conditional inference"), we must assert that it is true. If it is possible to construct a Classification based upon Structural Similarity, then Structural Similarity certainly exists |

However, when we come to the minor premise (the "second conditional inference"), we discover a most interesting fact. Upon examination, the inference "If Structural Similarity exists, then Genetic Relationship exists" reduces to a restatement of the principle of homology ("fundamental structural resemblance signifies genetic relationship"). But this is the one assumption, the only postulate, the basic presupposition (see page 9, middle) which the evolutionist asks us to grant him. Give him this one point, and he asks no further concessions! This is tantamount to saying, "Grant me the assumption that evolution is a fact, and I will prove to you that evolution has, in fact, occurred."

Such an argument commits the logical fallacy of "begging the question" (i.e., assuming in a premise what one is trying to prove in the conclusion). Thus the minor premise must be challenged! The conclusion does not follow!