

Denying the antecedent as a legitimate argumentative strategy:  
A dialectical model

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ABSTRACT

The standard account of denying the antecedent (DA) is that it is a deductively invalid form of argument, and that, in a conditional argument, to argue from the falsity of the antecedent to the falsity of the consequent is always fallacious. In this paper, we argue that DA is not always a fallacious argumentative strategy. Instead, there is a legitimate usage of DA according to which it is a defeasible argument against the acceptability of a claim. The dialectical effect of denying the antecedent is to shift the burden of proof back to the original proponent of a claim. We provide a model of this non-fallacious usage which is built upon pragmatic models of argumentation.

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