



Argumentation: The Study Of Effective Reasoning

David Zarefsky

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Introducing Argumentation and Rhetoric

History of Argumentation Studies

Formal and Informal Argument

The Emergence of Controversy

Resolutions and Issues

Stasis The Focal Point of Dispute

Presumption and Burden of Proof

Argument Analysis and Diagramming

Claims and Evidence

Reasoning from Parts to Whole

Moving from Cause to Effect

Establishing Correlations

Analogy, Narrative, and Form

What Makes a Sound Argument?

Fallacies in Reasoning

Validity and Fallacies Reconsidered

Assembling a Case

Attack and Defense I

Attack and Defense II

Language and Style in Argumentation

Arguments between Friends

Arguments among Experts

Public Argument and Democratic Life

The Ends of Argumentation

Argumentation: The Study Of Effective Reasoning Details

Date : Published 2001 by The Teaching Company

ISBN : 9780251405823

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Format : Audio CD 8 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Philosophy, Audiobook, Logic, Language, Communication, Self Help, Psychology

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Christie Skipper Ritchotte says

Maybe I'm too ADD, but I listened to three of the cds, and when the subject still hadn't gotten rolling good and properly, decided not to finish. This is a subject I'm very much interested in; the art and implementation of rhetoric has been sadly neglected in schools, to society's detriment. Unfortunately, while this professor may well have had lots of illuminating insights later on, I found he dallied too much on very basic explanations, and brother, if you haven't started teaching me anything by the fourth lecture, I'm over and out.

To be fair, I'm notoriously harder on audio books than written ones, so this isn't my favorite method of "reading." Could well be that I'd have had more patience if it had appeared in written form. I won't rate, since I couldn't finish.

Bill Glover says

This lecture series will give you a sinking feeling when you consider all the preconditions that are taken for granted. The bits about sharing accepted, vetted data, that's gone now. Argumentation as a means of finding a mutually acceptable resolution seems like a pipe dream. Maybe just stick to lectures on skepticism, Logic and statistical probability for now.

John Martindale says

I don't care for his Zarafsky voice, but the content was solid. There was just so much information that I couldn't retain hardly any of it. Occasionally I would take notes while I listened which helped. In my logic textbook, there are an absurd amount of exercises and no wonder--without regular exercises and engaging ways to actually practice argumentation, all this information is sure to just slide off the brain like water off a tin roof.

My favorite parts of the series was when he evaluated arguments from speeches.

Hmm...one thing I didn't care for. The lecturer had a thing for how pro-lifers managed to get "intact dilation and evacuation" called "partial birth abortion". One gets the impression that Zarafsky is a pro-choice, and sees the pro-lifers success in renaming this grizzly form of infanticide, was an underhanded way of keeping of it illegal, and stealing from woman their private "right" to have their baby dismember, or its brain sucked out off its head, or burned alive in saline. Ugg... Getting the feeling the lecture was all for "intact dilation and evacuation" makes me feel sick. Oh... I can't conceive of how anyone could approve of this barbarism. But I suppose many cultures throughout history have practiced infanticide, setting unwanted babies out to die from exposure or to be eating by the beast. They somehow not only saw it as their right but as their duty and did it without the pangs of conscience, condemning those who didn't follow suit. It is no surprise many have found a way to continue infanticide, just under a different name, at a slightly early time. Evil has a way of regrowing a new head after the last one was cut off. And labeling the killing of an innocent growing babies as a "right" of the mother and her doctor, is just so twisted.

Jurij Fedorov says

It's overall a letdown just because it doesn't really introduce any scientific foundation. So you never know if what he says is important or not.

Pro:

The writing style is clean and simple. It's simple to understand and all the logic mostly makes sense overall. This book is good for high school students who just want to know the definition of argumentation and how it works overall. It's very much basic and a good intro to beginners in this field.

Con:

What is this? I have seen too many of these Great Courses that are just about seemingly nothing. This was not overly politically preachy so that's good. Some of the other courses are basically left leaning propaganda sprinkled with science. This was a bit left leaning but nothing much at all. It's just there is not much to it. What did I learn from this? It's nice to know what arguments are but I feel like he just talked and talked without talking about anything concrete. It's a damn shame that this is so low brow and just predictable and simplified. It honestly seems like he never read a study in his life.

Read this if you really have a problem understanding arguments. But, for how long it is it doesn't pack a great knowledge punch at all. It's never better than just acceptable. And it's worth a listen if you have the time and nothing else to do. Otherwise there are better and more informative books out there.

Anna says

Pretty sure I wanted to enjoy this at the beginning but the narrator's voice made me tense and I didn't finish.

Mani says

I've been through this audio book three times. I find new things to love about it each time.

As a matter of fact, it bends how I read other books about argumentation. The nested structure of the lectures, from case construction to the individual lectures exploring each kind of warrant-inference relationship forces review and elaboration of the rhetorical concepts.

Highly recommend followed by "Thank You For Arguing".

Zack says

The lessons that are to be had in this course are much needed in contemporary society, and even within

individual relationships and group situations--understanding how to argue better is not just a matter of how to fight with people better, but is intended to be about displaying greater reasoning so as to reach more effective solutions to problems. Professor Zarefsky does a fantastic job of walking you through the basics of argumentation and supplying a helpful, comprehensive vocabulary with which to discuss arguments and tactics of argumentation. Where these lectures really shine, though, is in the concluding lectures, where the importance of effective argumentation is put into a societal context so that we can see just how critical it is to develop these kinds of reasoning skills. The early lectures can get a tad wearisome because they are basic, but it is true that they are necessary in order to build up to the great work that comes later--so just know that coming in and you'll be just fine in working through it all.

Ralph Trickey says

Excellent introduction to how to break down an argument

It appeared to be aimed at lawyers, but I found it to be an excellent discussion of what kinds of things to look at when building an argument and reviewing one. I definitely learned something that will help me look at discussions with a more critical eye.

Scott Wozniak says

Strong survey of the ways to organize your thoughts and prove your point. It covered many different tools and approaches, with lots of great examples.

This was not about manipulation or overwhelming rhetorical force. This might have been better titled something like "How Reasoning Works" or "How to persuade and explain".

I learned a lot.

Sean Callaghan says

Bears repetition. So much detail in these courses.

Pam says

Good review of what I studied long ago. I liked the examples he used to illustrate his points.

Geir Skårland says

Brilliant. Useful. Well structured. Close to no redundancy. Hoping to listen to it again, sometime.

Jacob O'connor says

I'm probably right. I have quite a few opinions on as many topics. I'm a careful thinker, so I'm probably right about most of them. Is that good enough? What if it's really important, like whether or not you're about to fall off a cliff. Don't you want me to be more than probably right?

Lately I've been thinking about the limits of pure reason. As long as we're just a couple blokes arguing, we can only ever know if we're probably right. Or if we're merely justified in our position. If we're looking for something more certain, we need it revealed to us by someone with a better perspective. We can only know something for certain if we learn it from a certain source, and reason is not sufficient.

Nevertheless, Zarefsky has taught a good course. If I stick to his regimen, I'll be halfway there. Some notes:

- In the presence of uncertainty, a good argument is one that would convince a reasonable person.
- Engagement means risking being wrong.
- Being willing to engage shows a respect for the personhood of your opponent.
- Deductive reasoning only rearranges what we already know
- Amplitude
- Doesn't advocate using questions to attack a case unless they're unanswerable
- Regarding warrant, author appeals to consensus

Kevin Beary says

The Teaching Company Audio CD's as well as Modern Scholar series are highly recommended learning tools

- College level courses that you can learn from in your car.

This is part of the mixed media I use in my pursuit of knowledge. I love music and on the weekends my car primarily blasts music from XM - but during the week, the 45 min - 1 hour a day I spend in the car going to and from work and misc errands, I have these Audio Books that I get from libraries.

Sometimes I get lazy with reading the non-fiction I am trying to consume. These courses make it so I am always thinking, always stimulating my mind.

As soon as I hop in the car in the AM, I'm forced to use that most important muscle. This is the glue to my self-education.

Eric says

I learned a lot of worthwhile, practical and interesting things. I previously knew nothing about argumentation, but upon finishing the course, I think I have laid a solid foundation on which to further build my understanding and knowledge about argumentation. I feel satisfied and glad that I have taken this course.
