



The Art of Reasoning: An Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking

David Kelley

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Students learn logic by practicing it--by working through problems, analyzing existing arguments, and constructing their own arguments in plain language and symbolic notation. The Art of Reasoning not only introduces the principles of critical thinking and logic in a clear, accessible, and logical manner--thus practicing what it preaches--but it also provides ample opportunity for students to hone their skills and master course content.

The Art of Reasoning: An Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking Details

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Author : David Kelley

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Roy Schwartz says

The only self-improvement book you'll ever need. It's a textbook of critical thinking that succeeds in staying interesting throughout.

Paul says

Decent introduction to logic text. There were at least 10 mistakes I found in the answer key, though.

Ron Shoemaker says

Excellent explanation of how to reason. Many simple examples. He avoids stating conclusions on philosophical subject matter, e.g. politics and religion, and concentrates on how to use reason.

Lisa (Harmonybites) says

In rating and reviewing what is in effect a textbook I ask, could I study this on my own and master a subject? In this case, I think the answer is yes. This is clear, readable, and includes useful and well-designed exercises to drive the lessons home. As Kelley puts in it in the introduction: "This is a book about thinking. It's a book about *how* to think." Mastering logic is definitely useful in promoting clear thinking, and in evaluating and shaping convincing arguments. It's useful in particular in evaluating articles and books in subjects you don't know well. You might not have the expertise to evaluate many of the factual claims, but at least you can spot faulty reasoning. I should admit up front I picked this particular book because I knew author David Kelley as both a solid in scholarship and trained academic (he was a professor at Vassar at the time this book was published) and because I knew that like me, he was an admirer of Ayn Rand. He's upfront about his debt to her in his preface. Just as for me this was an attraction, some might find this point a turn-off. Which would be a shame, because I do think this book is an objective and strong presentation on the discipline.

Part One, "Concepts and Propositions" seemed rather elementary, even simplistic to me--I had absorbed these concepts long before. But it's a strength of Kelley's pedagogy that he goes step by step starting with the fundamentals and taking nothing for granted. It's Part Two, "Arguments," Part Three, "Classical Deductive Logic" and Part Five, "Inductive Logic" I find the most useful, at least in reviewing the art of the argument. Particularly useful is the chapter on "Fallacies"--encapsulated in a list on page 133. Part Four is the most difficult and esoteric, where Kelley goes into such advanced topics as symbolic logic. The layman might find this too much information--it's not a tool kit used by many other than professional philosophers. But for what it's worth, I can't imagine a better presentation.

Parnell says

A wonderful introduction to, not just logic, but rational thought and exposition in general. It provides a weak foundation in logic (a formal study of logic would do well after reading this book) followed by a thorough treatment of forming arguments, analyzing arguments, and fallacies.

Daniel says

Positive: Not as DRY as Copi
Negative: Not as DETAILED as Copi

Mike says

I rarely have much positive to say about any textbook, but *The Art of Reasoning* presents its material quite well. It is well written and is not nearly as dry as I would have expected, but it's still very clear and rather concise. It's also fairly easy to follow.

Kelley makes appropriate use of tables, charts and various diagrams to clarify topics and provide tools for easy review but doesn't treat them as a substitute for verbally explaining their content. He steps away from "Ps and Qs" to provide "real world" examples that make the concepts seem relevant and intelligible, but keeps them short enough that the text doesn't drag on.

All in all, it's a very solid textbook.

peiman-mir5 rezakhani says

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