

Book Review

Critical Thinking, 14e

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Reviewed by John Barnes

Abstract

Perhaps many of us were taught clear thinking and writing skills in secondary school. However, reviewing syllabuses in a variety of programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels shows a lack of courses (philosophy logic and religion being exceptions) featuring this important area of learning and daily living. This book is remarkable for its scope of issues covered, and its explanations' depth and clarity.

Keywords: Philosophy, Contemporary Social Issues, Critical Thinking, Logic,

JEL Classifications: - not applicable

Review

In this new edition, the authors have expanded on improving information acquisition skills and recognising dubious claims, so important in this current climate of “fake news” on so many online sites frequented by people of all ages. Additionally, the authors have revised and expanded the distinction between subjective judgments and objective claims and revamped their explanation of inductive reasoning into four different types, introducing them in Chapter 2 and further explaining them in Chapter 11.

Both authors lecture in Philosophy at different universities in the USA, so their treatment is rigorous. This book is not about critical thinking as much as it is a book in critical thinking. Consequently, it is not an easy read. The authors work to provide guided practice in what they and instructors think are the most important critical thinking skill sets for students.

This latest 14th edition provides guided practice through hundreds of exercises and examples, to help students apply content and think critically themselves. With an enjoyable, concise reading style and a visually clear layout, *Critical Thinking* trains students to improve information acquisition skills, recognise dubious claims, and hone critically important skills.

In conclusion, reading this book is an exercise in critical thinking. In the *hurley burly* of study and teaching a variety of subjects it is easy to forget or to not always consciously use critical thinking skills. Sceptics or lazy people will say “Why bother when AI and Chat GPT can do that for me? The truth is that physical exercise and mental exercise require regular practice. The topics covered in the book remain vital to this day and continue in the latest 14th edition which features the latest topical issues and sources.

An earlier edition namely 2013 is available in our Saint Gabriel Library. (153.42 M821c 1986 8641 C1)

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