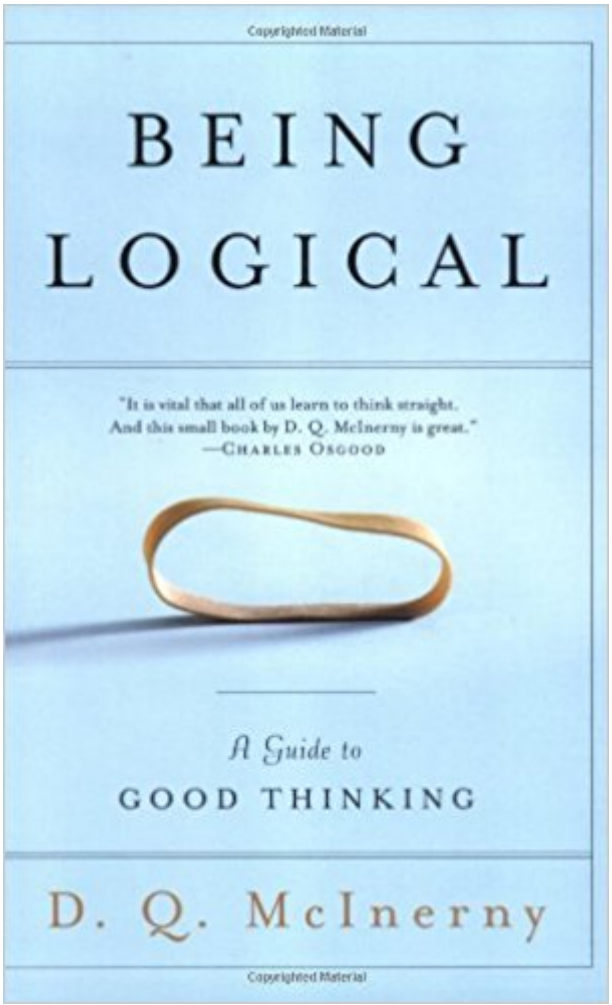
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Being Logical: A Guide To Good Thinking



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Synopsis

An essential tool for our post-truth world: a witty primer on logicÃ¢â ¬â •and the dangers of illogical thinkingÃ¢â ¬â •by a renowned Notre Dame professor Logic is synonymous with reason, judgment, sense, wisdom, and sanity. Being logical is the ability to create concise and reasoned argumentsÃ¢â ¬â •arguments that build from given premises, using evidence, to a genuine conclusion. But mastering logical thinking also requires studying and understanding illogical thinking, both to sharpen oneÃ¢â ¬â„¢s own skills and to protect against incoherent, or deliberately misleading, reasoning. Elegant, pithy, and precise,Ã Â Being LogicalÃ Â breaks logic down to its essentials through clear analysis, accessible examples, and focused insights. D. Q. McInerney covers the sources of illogical thinking, from naÃƒÂ ve optimism to narrow-mindedness, before dissecting the various tacticsÃ¢â ¬â •red herrings, diversions, and simplistic reasoningÃ¢â ¬â •the illogical use in place of effective reasoning. An indispensable guide to using logic to advantage in everyday life, this is a concise, crisply readable book. Written explicitly for the layperson, McInernyÃ¢â ¬â„¢sÃ Â Being LogicalÃ Â promises to take its place beside Strunk and WhiteÃ¢â ¬â„¢sÃ Â The Elements of StyleÃ Â as a classic of lucid, invaluable advice. Praise for Being Logical Ã¢â ¬Å“Highly readable . . . D. Q. McInerny offers an introduction to symbolic logic in plain English, so you can finally be clear on what is deductive reasoning and what is inductive. And youÃ¢â ¬â„¢ll see how deductive arguments are constructed.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Detroit Free Press Ã¢â ¬Å“McInernyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s explanatory outline of sound thinking will be eminently beneficial to expository writers, debaters, and public speakers.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Booklist Ã¢â ¬Å“Given the shortage of logical thinking, And the fact that mankind is adrift, if not sinking, It is vital that all of us learn to think straight. And this small book by D.Q. McInerny is great. It follows therefore since we so badly need it, Everybody should not only but it, but read it.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Charles Osgood

Book Information

Paperback: 160 pages
Publisher: Random House Trade Paperbacks; Reprint edition (May 10, 2005)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0812971159
ISBN-13: 978-0812971156
Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.4 x 8 inches
Shipping Weight: 4.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 112 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #36,859 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #41 inÃ Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Logic & Language #3612 inÃ Â Books > Education & Teaching #5756 inÃ Â Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting

Customer Reviews

"In logic, as in life, it is the obvious that most often bears emphasizing, because it so easily escapes our notice," McInerny argues in this pithy guide to applying logical thinking to everyday life. Modeled after Strunk and White’s indispensable handbook, The Elements of Style, McInerny’s primer offers valuable counsel on making a clear and effective point. He calls attention to the tremendous importance that language holds in the crafting and presentation of an argument, advising readers to "make your words as precise and sharply focused as possible" and to keep arguments, or at least their essential purpose, simple. Readers need not have a background in philosophy to follow McInerny’s remarkably comprehensible explanation of the methods used to construct a valid case, including the syllogistic argument, the conjunctive and disjunctive arguments and the conditional argument. The author also dedicates considerable discussion to the sources and the principal forms of illogical thinking, from such common ruses as begging the question and using tears as a diversionary tactic to the more ethically questionable ad hominem strategy, in which a person ignores an argument and attacks his opponent’s character instead. McInerny recommends that people hone their logical thinking skills by using them in real life situations, but perhaps one of the best ways his audience can learn to clearly express their views is by examining the crisp, articulate writing in this slender but richly informative guide.Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Major Premise: Sixty men can do a piece of work sixty times as quickly as one man. Minor Premise: One man can dig a posthole in sixty seconds; therefore-Conclusion: Sixty men can dig a post-hole in one second." Ambrose Bierce’s satire on the syllogism belongs to one of many species of specious reasoning that college professor McInerny takes to task in this precis on logic. Remarking that logic is rarely taught "as such" in American education, he presents this makeup course consciously modeled on Strunk and White’s Elements of Style (1959). In concise language, McInerny’s guide distributes the elements of logic among short, admonitory headings, such as "Avoid Vague and Ambiguous Language." McInerny also provides definitions of the tools of logic and their application in arriving at truth. Inculcating this noble and, in principle, attainable aim,

McInerny’s explanatory outline of sound thinking will be eminently beneficial to expository writers, debaters, and public speakers. Gilbert TaylorCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This book is an excellent, introduction to logic and logical thinking as a basic human pursuit. I really like its emphasis on logic as an activity - something people do, practice, and get better at, with the fine points coming into relief only through application and experience. By the time we get to reviewing the classical fallacies, these are not presented as abstract "forms", but as either practical or ethical "mistakes" that srise in the course of argument: We mistake guesses for sound observations or inferences ("take our eyes off the ball"), or we are drawn by the emotions aroused by an argument into "quarrelling" and "trying to win", rather than searching for truth - the only real objective for logic. Brief, simple, and pithy enough to be worth reviewing from time to time, as "inspirational reading". Great handbbook.

I decided about a week ago that I wanted to study the field of logic more directly than I have. As someone interested in apologetics and philosophy of religion, logic is a necessary field of study. The first book I picked up is this basic primer, a mere 130 pages. It is written clearly and concisely, the author deliberately seeking to write after the fashion of Strunk and White (which you should also read, if you have not).McInerny lays out the basic building blocks of logic, quite simply. He dedicates a few pages to each basic argument, a useful form to expose the reader to logic, but lacking the depth of coverage if you really want to dig in deeply.The author suggests that logic is a basic educational component missing from nearly all of our schools in modern society. I think he is right on. Given that, this book would be good for Logic 101.

This qualifies as one of my favorite kinds of books, which I call "Short Books of Profound Meaning." Prof. McInerny’s work here is one of distillment, of boiling down to bare essentials a discipline which is often absurdly over-theoretized. McInerny’s insights into logic, reason, and the objectivity of truth are hard-won and presuppose an ontology of realism. Moreover, this book, unlike books, say, on symbolic logic (which completely ignores the facticity of things), actually gives reasons; it explains WHY untruthful statements are untruthful, how validity "works", why and how logical fallacies are logically fallacious.In short, this is one of those rare books that should be read and re-read, considered and absorbed, and, ultimately, applied.

This book was a very good read, and worth a second reading. Not only was it clear and easy to understand, but the examples contained therein were not biased to any particular 'school of reasoning'. As such, the principles can be used to evaluate fairly, any type of reasoning, from political and religious debates, to discussions on civil liberties, and scientific debates to a simple family discussion.Not only is it useful in evaluating other people's arguments, but in evaluating your own thoughts and preferences on various subjects.What I particularly like was the author's emphasis on truth, and by extension, the need for honesty in our reasoning (even being honest with ourselves). This is the best (only?) way to reach a sound, logical conclusion.I highly recommend getting this book.

At first I had trouble with the book until I realized it was written clearly to define logical thinking and the fallacies of illogical thinking. It was very short and concise, much like The Elements of Style is for writing. It provides a great understanding of communicating in a logical fashion and educates the reader by familiarizing them with the concepts of logic.

Every high-schooler should have to read this. Also anyone who plans to ever vote in an election would benefit. I read this and several other books for an intro to grad school assignment. It helps to reorient your brain to the different types of fallacies and flawed reasoning/arguments that persuade so many people. Its good, simple, and is more like a handbook for reference.. Its an easy read that may be too easy or rudimentary to some long-time students, but its still good.

It is doubtful that Professor McInerny, brother of novelist Ralph McInerny, had child-rearing in mind when he penned this primer on logic, but he has nevertheless produced an indispensable guide for any family bookshelf.While it is popular for education professionals to claim that their charter is not to impart simple knowledge, disparaged as "rote learning," but to teach their charges "how to think," that is rarely, in fact, what our children's schools accomplish. Instead, parents commonly struggle to maintain a proper respect for the role of the school as a civic institution while at the same time disputing nearly every harebrained, one-sided, politicized trope with which their children have been inculcated by those schools.The answer to this conundrum is, fortunately, simple: teach your children to truly think critically. After all, if they can properly assess the arguments being presented to them, your kids will not need your urging to seek the opposing view, and to balance both sides carefully and ... well ... logically."Being Logical" is appropriate for advanced middle school students and for most high school students. It should be required reading for any college-bound student.If

only his name were as easy to pronounce, Dr. McInerny's work might become as de rigueur for parents of teenagers as Dr. Spock's was once for parents of infants - but, contra Spock, more deservedly so.

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