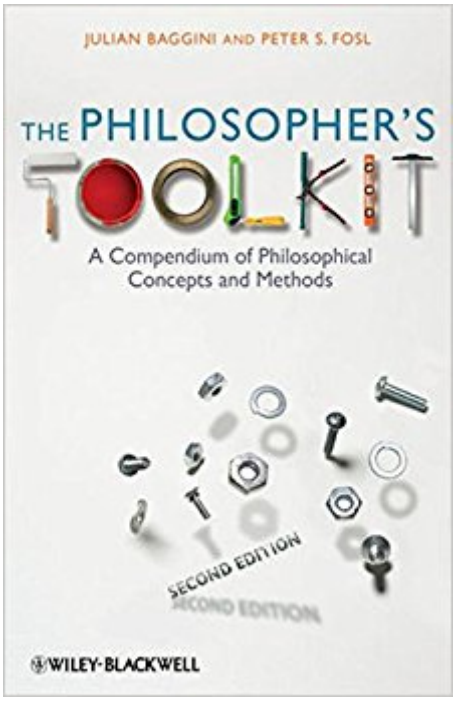
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The Philosopher's Toolkit: A Compendium Of Philosophical Concepts And Methods



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Synopsis

The second edition of this popular compendium provides the necessary intellectual equipment to engage with and participate in effective philosophical argument, reading, and reflection Features significantly revised, updated and expanded entries, and an entirely new section drawn from methods in the history of philosophy This edition has a broad, pluralistic approach--appealing to readers in both continental philosophy and the history of philosophy, as well as analytic philosophy Explains difficult concepts in an easily accessible manner, and addresses the use and application of these concepts Proven useful to philosophy students at both beginning and advanced levels

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Customer Reviews

"The Philosopher’s Toolkit is a very good book. It could be highly useful for both introductory courses in philosophy, or philosophical methodology, as well as independent study for anyone interested in the methods of argument, assessment and criticism used in contemporary analytic philosophy. It is unique in approach, and written in a pleasant and considerate tone. Its authors are both competent philosophers, and the book visibly reflects their deep sympathy to the discipline and their appreciation of its unique character. This book will help one to get going to do philosophy, but more advanced students might find this text helpful too. I wish I had had access to this book as an undergraduate." (Teaching Philosophy) "This book is ... an encyclopedia of philosophy. It should be of great use as a quick and accurate reference guide to the skill of philosophy, especially for beginners, but also for instructors ... highly recommended." (Choice) "Its choice of tools for basic

argument ... is sound, while further tools for argument ... move through topics and examples concisely and wittily... Sources are well chosen and indicated step by step. Sections are cross-referenced (making it better than the Teach Youself "100 philosophical concepts") and supported by a useful index." (Reference Reviews) "...the average person who is interested in arguments and logic but who doesn't have much background in philosophy would certainly find this book useful, as would anyone teaching a course on arguments, logic, and reasoning. Even introductory courses on philosophy in general might benefit because the book lays out so many of the conceptual "tools" which will prove necessary over students' careers." (About.com)

"The Philosopher's Toolkit provides a welcome and useful addition to the introductory philosophy books available. It takes the beginner through most of the core conceptual tools and distinctions used by philosophers, explaining them simply and with abundant examples. Newcomers to philosophy will find much in here that will help them to understand the subject." Ã¢â ¬â •David S. Oderberg, University of Reading

This is a sensible, readable, and well-written book, suited especially for the novice or non-specialist. The text is highly useful in clarifying or delineating basic philosophical terms and concepts. This is quite valuable because they are usually employed in the literature with the implicit assumption that readers will already know their meanings and implications. Although many do in fact more or less know many of such terms/concepts, I find after reading this book that there are some subtleties or distinctions of which I had been blithely unaware. Hence, all but trained or veteran specialists can likely benefit by sharpening their discernment of these terms and concepts here, even after years of exposure to them. I know that I did.As a toolkit, this book comprises seven sections on important kinds of philosophical tools, which in all include some one hundred tools, or topics or terms. In addition to the conventional table of contents, there is also an alphabetical listing of topics/terms versus paragraph number in the front of the book. Plus there is the usual index in the back. Accordingly, this book can serve as a ready reference apart from just reading end-to-end.As examples of the bookÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s vital content, some of the very significant if often misunderstood points or distinctions made in this book include:1. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“induction involves an inference where the conclusion follows from the premises not with necessity but only with probability...induction is not essentially defined as reasoning from specific to the general.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (pp. 8-9)2. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“If you hold...inconsistent beliefs, then...(they will)...be found ...either to ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Ëœcontradict ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢...or to be

ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœcontraryÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ to one another...contradictory when they are opposite in ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Ëœtruth valueÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢...contrary when they both canÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t both be true.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (p.19)3. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“To beg the question is...to assume in your argument precisely what you are trying to prove...(yet) In everyday English people often say ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThat begs the question,ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ (when) meaning ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã ËœThat leads to a further question.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (pp. 118 & 120)4. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The a priori/a posteriori distinction...(is) whether any reference to experience is required...The analytical/synthetic distinction...(is) whether thinkers add anything to conceptsÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (p. 149)And from the politicianÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s toolkit, the authors have imported two incessantly employed willful deceptions:1. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“A false dichotomy occurs when we are presented with...false alternatives...(an) either/or choice that does not accurately represent the range of options available.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (p. 97)2. ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“a logical error called the ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Ëœstraw manÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ fallacy...(is) criticizing a silly caricature of anotherÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s position rather than the position itself.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• (p. 116-117)I only noted one characterization with which I totally disagreed: coherence on page 43. And only two terms occurred to me that regrettably were omitted: entity and universals.Obviously, this book is not for heavy-duty philosophers or scholars, and that plus its highly navigable organization is precisely why I really like it. For beginning students, it would likely serve as just a supplementary reference, but a valuable one nonetheless in keeping oneself anchored to precise meanings and clear thinking.

Some sections need work, but overall a well written and helpful guide in understanding philosophical tools and definitions. Would be a bit more helpful if they defined some of the terms initially and then proceeded with their discussion, so those of us unfamiliar with the terms could consider the definition as we ran through the examples.

The book is a comprehensive approach to the most puzzling questions to beginners at philosophy. Issues such as "arguments", "inductive/deductive", "a priori/a posteriori" or "analytic/synthetic" and philosophers specifics such as "Hume`s fork" or "Leibniz’s law of identity" are covered by the author.As someone not graduated in philosophy, but with great interest in amplifying my knowledge, this book offers exactly what the tittle states: a toolkit with lots of tools necessary to navigate trough the realm of philosophy.It is, definitely, a recommended reading.

Fearing Alzheimer’s at age 73, I set my mind to stay fit, exercise regularly, and eat the

recommended diet. Photography is my hobby. Learning and doing photography helps to exercise my brain. But I was looking for something more.I found it . . . a study of philosophy. I love to argue peacefully (and win because of superior reasoning). Even arguing me against myself is one of my favorite pastimes. (For example, does anything exist that was not caused to exist by prior events?)The Philosopher's Tool kit has been written for old duffs just like me - and, I guess, also for young College students who want to improve their thinking ability. Just reading a few arguments catches and holds my attention. With false arguments, criticisms, and solutions so close together, I get a rush of satisfaction. When thumbing through the headings I feel sure that this is a great book to start my study.If I have any criticisms after finishing it I will amend this review.

I thoroughly enjoyed the book. I found it to be very readable, unusual for a compendium of philosophical concepts and methods and even more uniquely, the book is very entertaining. I plan to add it to my philosophy library as a permanent reference.

I was expecting esoteric words and convoluted explanations but what I got was elucidation and a light shown on specific points of inquiry and interest. This is a supreme book for the lay philosopher with many many references to many fronts according to your interest.

Well, I ordered the 2nd version because I accidentally left my first version at my dentist's, office. Well, that is not officially true, I ordered the 2n'd version having thought I had lost the first version, but then accidently lost the first version, and then realized I had the 2nd laying about under a stack of books and my universe was once again okiay

This book explains, in extraordinarily clear language, how philosophers think and explains a lot of basic concepts and thinking of great philosophers that make up the common body of philosophy that every philosopher knows. Cliff notes of philosophical concepts plus an extended glossary of philosophical terms. A basic college-level introduction in how to think.

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