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Nonsense: Red Herrings, Straw Men And Sacred Cows: How We Abuse Logic In Our Everyday Language



Synopsis

Nonsense is the best compilation and study of verbal logical fallacies available anywhere. It is a handbook of the myriad ways we go about being illogical—how we deceive others and ourselves, how we think and argue in ways that are disorderly, disorganized, or irrelevant.

Nonsense is also a short course in nonmathematical logical thinking, especially important for students of philosophy and economics. A book of remarkable scholarship, Nonsense is unexpectedly relaxed, informal, and accessible.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Robert Gula was educated at Colby College and Harvard University and taught a course on logic among many other subjects at the Groton School in Massachusetts. He authored or coauthored sixteen books in addition to NONSENSE.

It keeps things in layman's terms and clearly defines more complicated terms. I'd guess that anyone already well versed in philosophy and logic wouldn't get much from this book. However, I think it is a good starting place or possibly a jumping off point for someone who took a philosophy 101 class who wants to go a bit deeper. I plan to read it again in a few months to a year for a refresher. If you have ever thought something didn't make sense but couldn't quite figure out why, this book is very helpful. It will also help you start to see fallacies in people's (and your own!) arguments. Very good read.

This is a text book written at the modern college level. It can be dry, But let's be blunt - when is retraining yourself to think logically and with clarity a bowl of cherries? This is the fastest way, of which I know, to help others greatly strengthen their ability to read, think, and write logically and critically. Buy it for your kids and go through it with them. Their SAT, GMAT, LSAT and MCAT scores will thank you.

An outstanding introduction to critical thinking and analysis of the art of argument. I read it every few years as a booster vaccine to protect me from the sloppy arguments from the news media, the advertisers, and of course the politicians.

With our society today and the election arguments, this book was a wonderduk refresher about critical thinking and building correct logic without resorting to many alternatives!

The late Robert J. Gula was an expert not only on logical fallacies, but in describing them in clear, understandable language. In little more than 170 pages, Gula describes and illustrates more than 170 logical fallacies. In an era where everything has been reduced to spin and absolutely no one can be implicitly trusted to tell the truth, being able to recognize logical fallacies is imperative to being accurately informed. Gula wrote this for use in secondary schools and colleges. His writing can be described as perfectly pitched. It is clear and despite the complexity of the subject, almost simplistic in its structure. That doesn't mean Gula was talking down to his audience: it means simply that his writing is uncluttered and to the point. The book was written in the 1970s and some of the examples not only seem dated, but innocent as well. Compared to the lies we are told on a daily basis, the 1970s were almost an oasis of honesty. Well, at least a little more honest than today. In the last several chapters, Gulas takes aim at specific issues, such as the nature of argument, syllogisms and semantics. He also provides a great summary of "fallacies and nonsense", which just for fun you might want to keep handy while you watch television "news" or read the "news" in some of the leading daily newspapers and magazines. As a matter of fact, it was trying to remember all the logical fallacies while reading a particular newspaper that caused me to buy this book. I needed a refresher course. Jerry

One can find free comprehensive lists of logical fallacies online. So why fork out the dough for this book? Because this book not only lists and discusses fallacies but also helps the reader understand the sometimes subtle techniques that propagandists use to subvert cogent, sound argument with

superficially appealing nonsense. If you want to better your critical thinking skills, I recommend this book. Having read two critical thinking books and taken a college class in logic prior to reading this book, I had a rather high view of both my reasoning skills and my ability to spot erroneous reasoning. A read of this book was a gargantuan piece of humble pie. This book has been life changing.

I think this is a pretty good book. Basically, it will keep you from being distracted by false arguments and nonsense during debates with 1) fools or 2) people who know their position is untenable and try to manipulate the argument away from its origin into something "else." A handy tool to use against internet trolls, message board spammers and other anonymous pests.

Bought this for the boyfriend. He loves pointing out logical fallacies. It gets annoying. Maybe I shouldn't have encouraged this behavior with a book that explains them all to him.

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