

Preface

Critical thinking is a valuable skill: whether you are deciding which courses to take or career to pursue, what toothpaste to use or what stocks to buy, which candidate to vote for or which cause to support, which reports to believe or what claims to reject, critical thinking can be very useful. One of the most important places for careful critical thinking is the jury room. Serving on a jury is one of the most significant and basic ways that citizens actively participate in their government, and jury service makes strong demands on citizen-jurors. Jurors must set aside any biases and judge the issues fairly; they must reason carefully about what laws are involved, and how those laws apply to the specific case at hand; they must evaluate testimony, and weigh both its accuracy and its relevance; and they must give a fair hearing to both sides, distinguish sound from erroneous arguments, and ultimately reach a just and reasonable conclusion. The courts offer fascinating cases for examination and analysis, and the courts have long grappled with many of the key issues in critical thinking: questions about burden of proof, legitimate analogies, distinctions between relevant and irrelevant reasons, question-begging arguments and unfair questions, the weighing of testimony (including expert testimony and appeals to expert authority), the distinction between argument and testimony, the legitimate and illegitimate use of ad hominem arguments.

The courtroom demands a high level of critical thinking skill, and it is also a fascinating place for studying and developing the key skills of critical thinking: determining exactly what the conclusions is, and who bears the burden of proving it; separating false claims from reliable information; setting aside irrelevant distractions and focusing on the question at issue; and distinguishing between erroneous and legitimate arguments. The skills that make you an

effective juror will also make you an intelligent consumer, an effective planner, and a wise citizen.

The 6th Edition of *Critical Thinking: Consider the Verdict* uses the jury room as the focus for developing basic critical thinking skills, but it does not stop there. Those skills are also applied to the various arguments and issues that arise in our daily lives as consumers, students, planners, and citizens. While the courtroom and the jury room are valuable laboratories for learning and testing and applying critical thinking abilities, those abilities must also be exercised when reading editorial columns, debating social issues, making intelligent consumer choices, working effectively at a career, and fulfilling one's responsibilities as a thoughtful critical citizen of a democracy. Thus most of the exercises and examples are drawn from advertisements, social debates, political campaigns, editorials, and letters to the editor. Critical thinking skills are valuable in the jury room, but they are also valuable in the classroom, the boardroom, the laboratory, and the grocery store.

Critical thinking is often regarded as an adversarial process, where the stronger arguments triumph over the weaker. Adversarial critical thinking is common, and is often valuable: Cases in court usually proceed through an adversarial process, and that can be a useful way of bringing out both strong and weak points in the arguments presented. But not all critical thinking follows the adversarial model, and the 6th Edition of *Critical Thinking: Consider the Verdict* gives careful attention to the contexts when *cooperative* critical thinking may prove particularly useful. Several factors enhance effective cooperative critical thinking, and several argument fallacies are especially damaging to a cooperative critical thinking process. Both the promise and the pitfalls of cooperative critical thinking are examined in this new edition.

The 6th edition of *Critical Thinking: Consider the Verdict* contains a number of important changes and additions.

- Extensive new discussion of cooperative critical thinking (as distinguished from adversarial critical thinking), and examination of its special strengths and the contexts in which it is most effective.
- New and updated exercises and examples in every chapter.
- A new section on definitions, including examination of misleading definitions.
- Extensive new material on statistical fallacies and deceptions.
- A new section on the importance of scientific integrity and scientific cooperation.
- Additional new current exercises in the special review sections (the sections of cumulative exercises).

Critical Thinking: Consider the Verdict, 6th Edition, provides a solid introduction to critical thinking; chapters 18 and 19 offer introductory instruction in symbolic logic. Those two chapters are self-contained, and you may do either or both at any point in the course, or skip them altogether. The boxed exercises and examples throughout the text are not essential to understanding the chapters, but they do present interesting material and challenging questions. You can skip them, but you'll miss a lot of the fun.

SUPPORT FOR INSTRUCTORS AND STUDENTS

MyThinkingLab.com is an online resource that offers a wealth of tools to help student learning and comprehension, including practice quizzes, videos, primary source readings and more.

MyThinkingLab also includes a rich array of interactive tools enhanced with audio and video to engage students in learning. Please see your Pearson representative for more information or visit www.MyThinkingLab.com.

Instructor's Manual with Tests (0-205-15875-7): For each chapter in the text, this valuable resource provides a detailed outline, list of objectives, and discussion questions. In addition, test questions in multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer formats are available for each chapter; the answers are page referenced to the text. For easy access, this manual is available at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc.

PowerPoint Presentation Slides for Ethics: Theory and Practice (0-205-15877-3): These PowerPoint Slides help instructors convey critical thinking principles in a clear and engaging way. For easy access, they are available at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc.

MyTest Test Generator (0-205-15878-1): This computerized software allows instructors to create their own personalized exams, edit any or all of the existing test questions, and add new questions. Other special features of the program include random generation of test questions, creation of alternate versions of the same test, scrambling question sequence, and test preview before printing. For easy access, this software is available at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc.

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