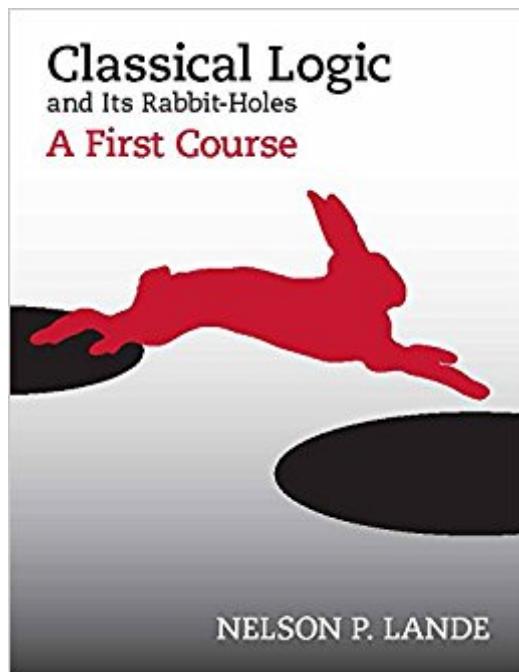


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Classical Logic And Its Rabbit-Holes: A First Course



Synopsis

Many students ask, 'What is the point of learning formal logic?' This book gives them the answer. Using the methods of deductive logic, Nelson Lande introduces each new element in exquisite detail, as he takes students through example after example, proof after proof, explaining the thinking behind each concept. Shaded areas and appendices throughout the book provide explanations and justifications that go beyond the main text, challenging those students who wish to delve deeper, and giving instructors the option of confining their course to the basics, or expanding it, when they wish, to more rigorous levels. Lande encourages students to think for themselves, while at the same time providing them with the level of explanation they need to succeed. It is a rigorous approach presented in a style that is informal, engaging, and accessible. Students will come away with a solid understanding of formal logic and why it is not only important, but also interesting and sometimes even fun. It is a text that brings the human element back into the teaching of logic. --Hans Halvorson, Princeton University

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Customer Reviews

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Nelson P. Lande has been a member of the Philosophy Department at the University of Massachusetts Boston since 1979, where he teaches courses in logic, metalogic, and philosophy of logic.

Clear, systematic, conceptually daring and meaty, all at the same time. The author does not refrain from the task of explaining the fundamental concepts to the students, a task that I believe is required for every good introductory exposition or at least it ought to be. Logic is not a difficult topic per se, but the conceptual rudiments of modern formal logic are relatively novel and obscure. Not quite like those we usually encounter floating around our textbooks during high school. That makes the process of initiation into the subject, so to speak, particularly painful. A more conceptual treatment of the subject where all the concepts are explained clearly seems to be the only way we could possibly facilitate the initiation process. I believe this book attempts, quite admirably I should say, to do that very job. I certainly recommend it to my students.

This author, Lande, knows his stuff. At first it is a little confusing but once you begin to get his method of delivery and teaching the subject, it begins to make more sense and you won't have to re-read each paragraph or so. If you are looking to figure out how to better reason or make philosophical arguments, this book will show you the way

This is the best textbook on this subject that I have ever encountered. Perfect for people who like math but dislike philosophy, or who dislike math but like philosophy, or who like both, or who despise both. I would recommend it to anyone.

Clear presentation of a conceptually very difficult subject.

Great book!

Short version: This is the best textbook on this subject that I have found. Lande writes in a very clear, accessible, conversational tone without sacrificing any of the rigor that a logic text should have. Long version: One of the things I like most about it is that Lande doesn't just tell you HOW to do (propositional and predicate) logic -- He takes the time to carefully explain WHY you are doing it that way. Something else I like about it: There are also interesting philosophical asides sprinkled throughout, which give you some sense of the metaphysics and meta-logic behind it all (e.g., the metaphysics of propositions. These asides are set apart from the main text in pink bubbles.) If it matters to you (it did to me), all of Lande's derivation rules are called 'Introduction' and 'Elimination' rules (e.g., the rule used to derive 'P' from 'P & Q', which is called 'simplification' in some of the inferior textbooks, is called 'conjunction elimination' by Lande). A couple of Lande's rules are stricter than they are in other textbooks (for instance, the rule for 'conditional introduction' does not allow you to derive 'P \rightarrow Q' from 'Q' whenever you want -- rather, Lande requires you to obtain 'Q' *resting on* a line where 'P' appears as an assumption). This can make a few of the derivations a little trickier than usual, but he doesn't do this arbitrarily. Rather, he explains that we should prefer counter-intuitive things to be *derivable* from intuitive rules, rather than choosing rules that are themselves counter-intuitive. I completely agree, but this is a matter of taste. (But, c'mon: Students find it super counter-intuitive that, since 'I am a human being' is true, it follows that 'If the Moon is made of cheese, then I am a human being' is also true. Lande just chooses not to build this weirdness into the arrow-introduction rule itself -- though, it is still of course *derivable* in his system. The rules are simply more intuitive this way. For this reason, I prefer Lande's derivation rules for teaching purposes.) And, note: All of this is coming from someone whose dissertation advisor wrote what is probably the most popular logic textbook of the last 20 years. (I won't say who, but his name rhymes with 'Ham Orbs'). I'm basically betraying my mentor by recommending someone else's book over his. But, get Lande's. It is superior to every single one of its competitors.

Instead of only stating and introducing rules, this book uniquely explains their origin, common difficulties and impediments to understanding them suffered by students.

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