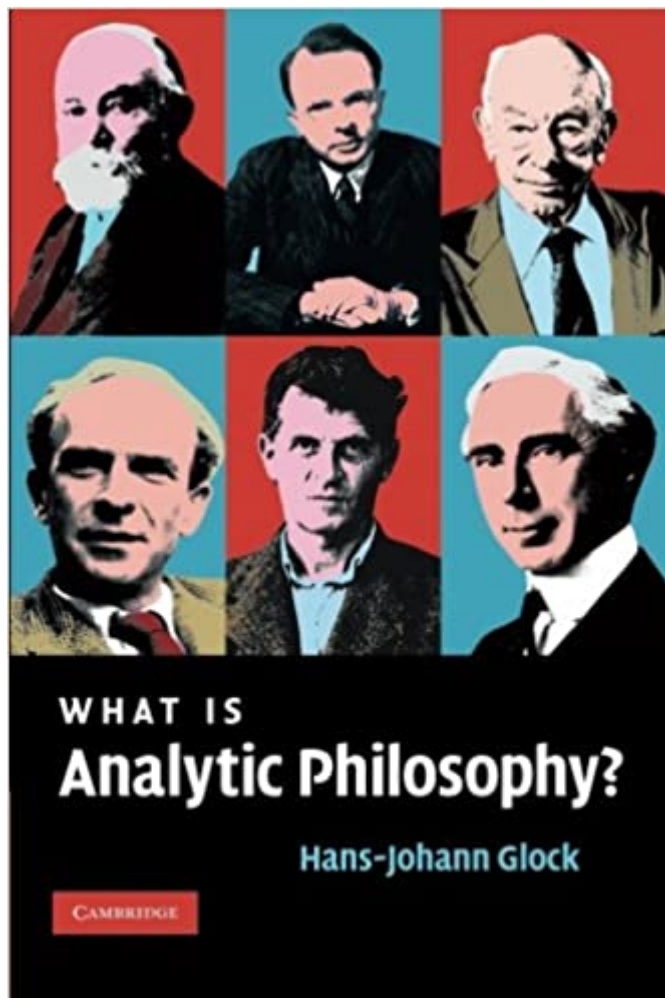


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What Is Analytic Philosophy?



Synopsis

Analytic philosophy is roughly a hundred years old, and it is now the dominant force within Western philosophy. Interest in its historical development is increasing, but there has hitherto been no sustained attempt to elucidate what it currently amounts to, and how it differs from so-called 'continental' philosophy. In this rich and wide-ranging book, Hans Johann Glock argues that analytic philosophy is a loose movement held together both by ties of influence and by various 'family resemblances'. He considers the pros and cons of various definitions of analytic philosophy, and tackles the methodological, historiographical and philosophical issues raised by such definitions. Finally, he explores the wider intellectual and cultural implications of the notorious divide between analytic and continental philosophy. His book is an invaluable guide for anyone seeking to understand analytic philosophy and how it is practised.

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Customer Reviews

"Glock argues that while there is no single trait shared by all and only analytic philosophers, a complex network of similarities -- "family resemblances" in Wittgenstein's phrase -- ties them together and distinguishes them from other philosophical movements...Anyone interested in analytic philosophy will want to read this insightful, elegantly written book. Summing up: Recommended." -D. Haugen, Choice

In this wide-ranging textbook, Hans Johann Glock considers the pros and cons of various definitions

of analytic philosophy, and tackles the methodological, historiographical and philosophical issues raised by such definitions. This is an invaluable guide for anyone seeking to understand analytic philosophy and how it is practised.

I cannot help but echo the Notre Dame Philosophical Review's opinion: this is, indeed, a great book. Sure, there are flaws here and there, but that's nitpicking. Glock really does know his stuff, and he doesn't make any of the errors standard works on this topic do. He understands analytic philosophy, knows its competitors, and helps us to delimit the bounds of our own discipline. The book is essentially divided into three topics: historical hatchet-work, defenses of analytic philosophy, and substantive metaphilosophy. For anyone new to the field of analytic philosophy, he offers a nice overview of where we've come from. For those skeptical of it, he should help disabuse readers of some analytic monolith, or the bizarre yet widely repeated notion that analytic philosophy is positivistic. For those already in the tradition, he offers a great synoptic view of the discipline and some genuinely interesting metaphilosophical ruminations. Not only this: his writing style is clear, engaging, and entertaining. Indeed, there's a possibility he'll actually make reader smile. Even if you disagree with many of his more substantive points (indeed, I disagree with several major points he makes), nobody should pass up this book. The book is eminently readable by anyone with a modicum of interest in what philosophers do nowadays. There is no reason this book cannot be read by any intelligent reader, and, in my opinion, there is no reason that it shouldn't.

This reads like an essay for an introductory philosophy class. It is a lengthy list of citations and quotations from various philosophers with very little to tie them together. It offers all manner of opinions but gives you very little insight into them. The author offers no original opinions and conveys no real understanding or insight into what he discusses. If I were given this as an assignment, I would give it a C.

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