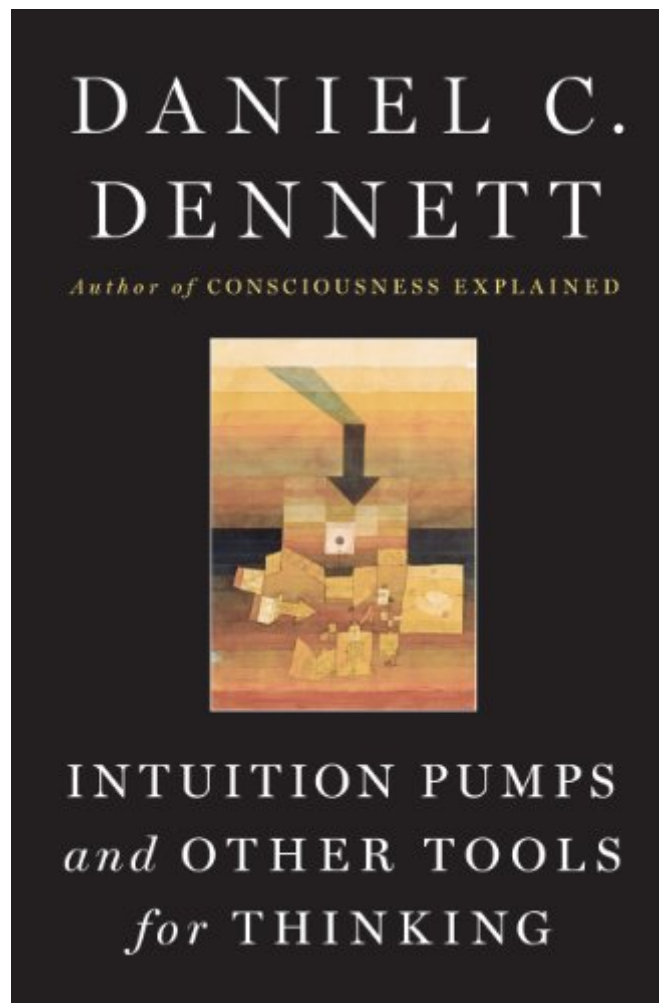




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Intuition Pumps And Other Tools For Thinking



Synopsis

Over a storied career, Daniel C. Dennett has engaged questions about science and the workings of the mind. His answers have combined rigorous argument with strong empirical grounding. And a lot of fun. *Intuition Pumps and Other Tools for Thinking* offers seventy-seven of Dennett's most successful "imagination-extenders and focus-holders" meant to guide you through some of life's most treacherous subject matter: evolution, meaning, mind, and free will. With patience and wit, Dennett deftly deploys his thinking tools to gain traction on these thorny issues while offering readers insight into how and why each tool was built. Alongside well-known favorites like Occam's Razor and *reductio ad absurdum* lie thrilling descriptions of Dennett's own creations: *Trapped in the Robot Control Room*, *Beware of the Prime Mammal*, and *The Wandering Two-Bitser*. Ranging across disciplines as diverse as psychology, biology, computer science, and physics, Dennett's tools embrace in equal measure light-heartedness and accessibility as they welcome uninitiated and seasoned readers alike. As always, his goal remains to teach you how to "think reliably and even gracefully about really hard questions." A sweeping work of intellectual seriousness that's also studded with impish delights, *Intuition Pumps* offers intrepid thinkers "in all walks of life" delicious opportunities to explore their pet ideas with new powers.

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Customer Reviews

I am a lay-reader, probably wouldn't qualify to attend any of Dennett's classes. I first discovered Daniel Dennett in "The Mind's Eye"; a long time passing. And his fluency with the English, Greek, Chinese, (or is it Japanese) and Computer (et al.) languages is, at least, intimidating. I find Dennett a master in use of metaphor and his stories significantly restructure my "deep structure" meanings. I've read most of the first half of the book straight through. Now I'm fishing, letting chapter titles hook me into reading the chapter, or moving on (around 1 hr at a sitting). I'm looking for those chapters on how to "overwrite" the "patterns and cycles" installed in me without my "conscious or unconscious" awareness. I find it a great book for the curious at heart, and a good book for those of us who find ourselves awake in the middle of the night for reasons we cannot explain.

First philosophy book I have read outside of the classroom. A must read for anyone who likes to think and would like some other tools to do so. Multiple times during the book I would find myself saying "I never thought of it that way". Look forward to perusing the selection of other notable philosophers of my time.

Some books change you, this one sent me into an existential crisis. I never understood evolution theory so well, from both materialistic and philosophical perspective. What would you do if you unequivocally learned that you were a robot today? would you change anything? The doors this book opens are beyond explanation.

From time to time I find myself wanting to read Breaking the Spell or Darwin's Dangerous Idea over again and again. Now I am using this book instead for quick daily fixes of Dennett's wit and insights. I am at 2/3 of it and I am loving it. True, as many have posted, the "wow!" factor of DDI is not there in every single page, but it still is a remarkable collection of thought provoking case histories and experiments. Highly recommended for thinkers in all fields.

Before starting to read Dennett in more detail this will be a nice introduction for whatever you'll be willing to continue to study about his work. It contains all of Dennett's great insights into thinking about thinking, evolution, free will, consciousness. Most of what is written here you'll find in his other books but that doesn't make it a bad book. It's a nice compilation of all his great work. IT ALSO

CONTAINS NEW MATERIAL (about 25% of the book) drawn from his new papers and articles. This was a needed summary book and after you read this appetizer you can then plunge into Dennett's masterpieces : Consciousness Explained, Elbow Room, Darwin's Dangerous Idea and Freedom Evolves. Nice work!

I found myself flipping back through the pages, looking for the core ideas that interconnected the fairly short chapters. This author definitely did some thinking, way more than average for most academic texts. The ideas were there, so I was not disappointed. This text has some hidden ideas, which is more than what most books can say. Maybe not everyone would find the same ideas, but there were hints of concepts like a 'coherent brain' and 'psychic people' --- but these New-Agey type concepts were selected carefully, and only underpin the more advanced, although less lexical interpretations of the text. The lexical interpretation is perhaps the most major interpretation, and would involve a lot of inferencing and referencing of --- I suppose --- the entire body of reasoning, including all kinds of things that aren't obvious outside of core academia. For reasons like this, this book is not really easy to pick up or put down --- in a good way. I originally assumed this text to be simplistic, with a few good ideas, perhaps original ones. What I came away with was something far different: a real, whole-cloth approach to life, from a real, authentic mind. While some of his opinions are on the abstruse side, and the text certainly seems dense to some if not all readers, like Aristotle, there is cohesiveness and content, in spite of the obstruction. Basically the only thing better than this in philosophy is a book of aphorisms, or perhaps something even more intelligent (or more likely, more concise), if that is possible. I suspect this guy could take some lessons from Strunk & White, but like all philosophers, he's above par for his chosen game. I don't regret reading this book, and that says something. I think I set a high standard, and this text basically exceeded mine. If someone wants a slightly more original core concept, I recommend The Dimensional Philosopher's Toolkit or other books by Nathan Coppedge, but it's a close call. Dr. Dennett may be an easier read for most audiences, and largely comes off as more intelligent, however that might be interpreted. However, Dennett's specialty is the cognitive sciences, which I'm afraid has a kind of liberal-artsy reputation recently. In other words, it doesn't influence logic or metaphysics as directly as it might. That's my critique. Overall, good review, good book, worth reading. Conventional in places (= high marks) to the highly unconventional mind (that is, young, ambitious college-bound people), but original and authentic in its intelligence in general.

As the other readers commented Dennett is revisiting all striking topics available in his previous

books but adding this time some new ideas. The book is giving some thinking tools to help readers understand difficult tasks like evolution...etc but adding not a life changing idea that is different from what he previously written. Occam's razor, universal acid and likes are not clear cut notions to use for understanding the challenging concepts. when you read "universal acid" don't think you would have a clear idea about evolution if you have not read a lot before. The book is just good. not so mind boggling to be recommended.

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