

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS, Henry Hazlitt has been active in the business world as a lecturer and prolific writer, specializing in the complex sphere of economics and finance. Author of *Economics in One Lesson*, *The Failure of the "New Economics": An Analysis of the Keynesian Fallacies*, and *What You Should Know About Inflation*, Hazlitt, with his insight into the intricacies of social economics, has the appreciation of specialists and laymen alike.

The author began his career as a reporter for *The Wall Street Journal*. He became Literary Editor of the *New York Sun* in 1925, of *The Nation* in 1930, and succeeded H. L. Mencken as Editor of the *American Mercury* in 1933. He subsequently wrote the financial and economic editorials for *The New York Times* until September of 1946 when he became writer of the "Business Tides" column for *Newsweek*. His twice-a-week column for the *Los Angeles Times* syndicate began in 1966.

But before all that, when he was 21, Henry Hazlitt's first book had been published — *Thinking as a Science*. It was written, he explains, because "I primarily wanted to teach myself how to think more efficiently, independently, and, if possible, originally. I had already sensed that 'he who teaches, learns.'"

When the book was republished 53 years later, in 1969, by Nash Publishing Corporation, 9255 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90069 (\$4.95), instead of extensive revision of the original text, the author prepared an Epilogue, reproduced here by permission. Hopefully, the reader will want to review the Introductory Course — read the entire book.

THE ART OF

I HAVE LEFT the text of the first edition of this book practically unaltered. But I promised in the Preface that I would outline in an epilogue the changes I would make today if I were writing an entirely new book on the same subject. Here is that outline.

As thinking is primarily an activity, an art, the new book would probably not be called *Thinking as a Science*, but, perhaps, *The Art of Thinking Scientifically*, or, simply, *The Art of Thinking*.

There would be one or two major changes from the present book, at least in emphasis. I am more and more impressed, as I grow older, with how little the individual could accomplish in any direction whatever if he had to depend entirely on his own unaided efforts. He could not survive his first few years of life without the help of his parents or guardians. He could

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not think at all (or only at the level of a chimpanzee) if he did not inherit from the society and civilization in which he was born the priceless gift of an already-created language. Without this he would not only be unable to reason logically, he would have nothing worthy to be called a "concept." He could not frame a sentence; he could not even name things. We think in words, even in conversations. Our language, concepts, and logic are part of the social inheritance of all of us.

This has several important corollaries. One of them is that before the individual can even dream of "thinking for himself," or solving a simple problem, he must first acquire at least an elementary knowledge of what mankind has already learned, discovered, or invented before him. Even if he receives what is called a good mod-

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ern education, it will take him till the age of eighteen or more to acquire even the rudiments of what he needs to know.

So my new book would emphasize far more than my previous one the need of extensive reading and study before the reader can profitably launch on "thinking for himself" or arriving at "independent" conclusions. That, of course, should always be his goal; but the road to that goal is long, hard, and often roundabout.

How to Study

My new book would therefore have a chapter on "How to Study." One of the topics considered in it would be the possibility of increasing one's reading speed, and the methods of achieving this. But my new book would emphasize what some of the teachers of the new "speed reading" methods unfor-