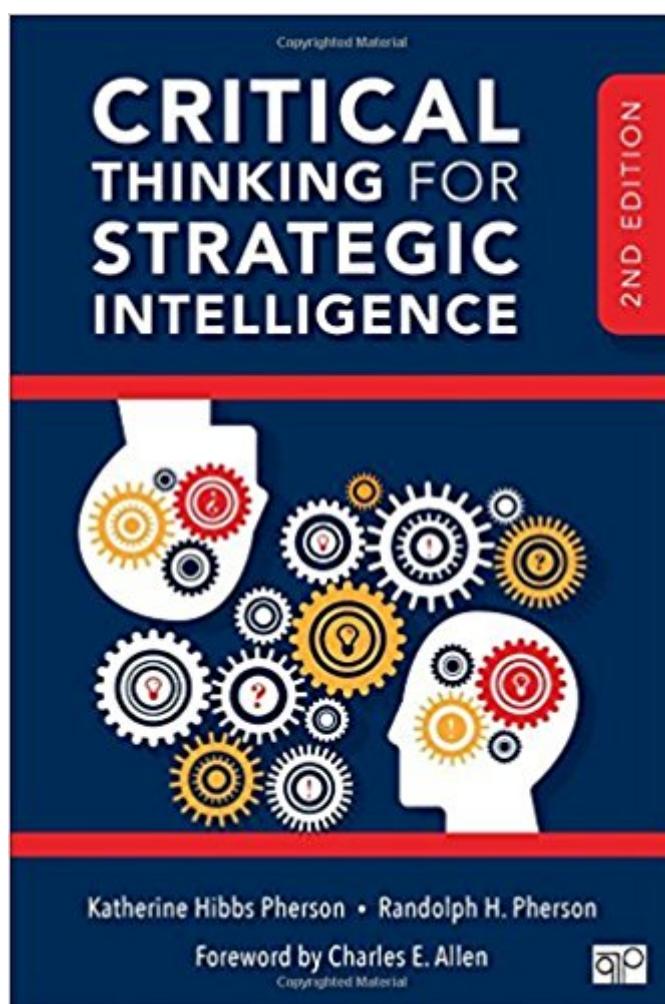


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Critical Thinking For Strategic Intelligence; Second Edition



Synopsis

This easy-to-use handbook is framed around twenty key questions that all analysts must ask themselves as they prepare to conduct research, generate hypotheses, evaluate sources of information, draft papers, and ultimately present analysis. Drawing upon their decades of teaching and analytic experience, Katherine Hibbs Pherson and Randolph H. Pherson have updated the book with useful graphics that diagram and display the processes and structured analytic techniques used to arrive at the best possible analytical product.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Pherson & Pherson's Critical Thinking for Strategic Intelligence is the best example of applying critical thinking I've ever found. The book actually provides the "how to" do the things formatted according to the phases of the intelligence cycle other books present conceptually." -- Dighton (Mac) Fiddner "With Critical Thinking for Strategic Intelligence, Kathy and Randy have continued to make significant contributions to the development of the profession of Intelligence Analysis. Their work has been focused on improving the skills and the professionalism of the practitioner. They have through their consulting, their training, and their publications set a standard for all of us to follow who are committed to the same goals. Their model is impressive." -- Dit Talley "Critical Thinking for Strategic Intelligence is easy to read and presents complex technical information in a format which is engaging and easy to follow. I love the marriage of theory and practice, including the

exercises like the analysis of case studies which shows the student what a real analyst does and what that process looks like." -- Mary Manjikian "Critical Thinking for Strategic Intelligence does an excellent job of teaching college students how to look at an issue; they figure out what is needed, find and evaluate information sources, and then put it all together in a coherent product which has facts, assumptions, implications, and conclusions. The book makes all these processes clearly identified." -- Kenneth Stiles "Critical Thinking for Strategic Intelligence is engaging, easy to read and understand, and provides support for the needed learning objectives. Additionally, these readings highlight the role and value of critical thinking in the intelligence process. The "Key Takeaways" sections are a great way to summarize the learning for the individual chapters. I could see it useful in discussion of the intelligence community, intelligence analysis, and the critical thinking skills required for many other courses." -- Scott Winegar

Katherine Hibbs Pherson, President of Globalytica, LLC, consults with government and private industry on building strong analytic communities, the use of structured analytic techniques, and security issues. She teaches certificate courses on structured thinking and presentation for the security association ASIS International and in the Intelligence Masters program at Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in Madrid, Spain. As Vice Chair of the Intelligence and National Security Association (INSA)'s Security Policy Reform Council, she was primary drafter of its white paper titled "Next Steps for Security Reform: Industry Proposals to Enhance Efficiency and Reduce Costs in National Security Contracts," which has generated a series of productive exchanges among government and industry. Ms. Pherson is also Chief Executive Officer of Pherson Associates, LLC, and a founding Director of the Forum Foundation for Analytic Excellence, a nonprofit established in 2011 to promote the effective use of critical thinking skills and structured analytic techniques by teaching, certifying, and applying these skills in universities in the United States and Europe. She retired from the Central Intelligence Agency in 2000 after a twenty-seven-year career in intelligence and security analysis and resource management. Her leadership in the security arena led to the adoption of a risk management methodology, the strengthening of overseas security countermeasures, and improvements in dealing with unsolicited contacts. As head of the Director of Central Intelligence's Center for Security Evaluation, she managed the Intelligence Community's involvement in rebuilding the penetrated US Embassy in Moscow. She is a recipient of the CIA's Distinguished Career Intelligence Medal and the Intelligence Community's National Distinguished Service Medal. She received her AB from Vassar College, an MA in Spanish linguistics and Latin American studies from the University of Illinois, and an MA in Randolph H. Pherson, Chief Executive Officer of Globalytica,

LLC, helps businesses and governments develop robust analytic capabilities within their organizations. He has authored seven books on structured analytic techniques, critical thinking and writing skills, strategic foresight analysis, and communicating analysis in the digital age. He collaborated with Richards J. Heuer Jr. in launching the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH) method, and they are coauthors of Structured Analytic Techniques for Intelligence Analysis, 2nd ed., 2015. Mr. Pherson has taught courses at the London School of Economics, Liverpool Hope University, England; the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin; Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Madrid; and the Autonomous University of Barcelona. He developed and holds the patent for a suite of collaborative Web-based software tools, TH!NK Suite(R). Mr. Pherson is also President of Pherson Associates, LLC and a founding Director of the Forum Foundation for Analytic Excellence. In 2000, he completed a twenty-eight-year career in the Intelligence Community, most recently serving as National Intelligence Officer (NIO) for Latin America. Previously at the CIA, Mr. Pherson managed the production of intelligence analysis on topics ranging from global instability to Latin America, served on the Inspector General's staff, and developed and implemented a strategic planning process for the CIA. He is the recipient of the CIA's Distinguished Intelligence Medal for his service as NIO for Latin America and the Distinguished Career Intelligence Medal. Mr. Pherson received his AB from Dartmouth College and his MA in International Relations from Yale University.

Excellent resource- well written and comprehensive.

Foremost, do know that the authors' target audience is fairly broad: "anyone who wants to think smarter and write better" (xv). So if you are worried about your qualifications, set those fears aside. This is written on a level that laypeople can easily comprehend, enjoy, and apply. And, certainly, professionals in the field will find a multitude of valuable concepts in this text as well. What distinguishes this from comparable texts is the anticipation of potential issues. For example, I found the "Stop!" boxes (that are scattered throughout the text) to be invaluable. Some of these boxes are merely thoughtful. For instance, one such box warns against assuming "that everyone participating in an online collaborative environment defines terms in the same way ..." (76). Sage advise. But some of these "Stop!" boxes offer brilliant wisdom that most discover through unfortunate trial and error. For instance, when creating visuals, "Never use a color palette until you have checked to see if all the colors selected also work when copied in black and white. The visual 'message' you are trying to convey could shift dramatically. For example, yellow often disappears and red can appear black" (232). I like the practicality of this. As far as critical thinking texts are concerned, this offers

excellent insight in a jargon-free manner. (As someone who teaches critical thinking/writing at the college-level, I have read a number of brutally jargon-laden texts that my students simply cannot/will not plow through). Thankful, this text is accessible to all. Now, it is just a little on the "dry" side. But, sometimes it's better to err on the side of quiet/dull than to go to far into the realm of zany (which a number of these texts attempt in an effort to capture and hold reader-attention). So sure, as a whole, it's not a scintillating page-turner, but it absolutely educates. The forward states that this text complements seven other Pherson texts. So, if you enjoy this work (and I suspect you will), do grab a few of the others in this series that interest you:-Analytic Writing Guide-Analytic Production Guide-Analytic Briefing Guide-Handbook of Analytic Tools and Techniques-Intelligence Analysis-Cases in Intelligence Analysis-Communicating Intelligence in the Digital Era

When the 1st endorsement is from a senior CIA executive, you know you picked up the right book. Great work on how to think better or properly or differently or whatever you think you need. Outstanding stories and examples. Pherson's book is like a work of art in the world of left brain thinking. Fun and extremely useful read for business executives and entrepreneurs.

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