



The Foundations of Arithmetic: A Logico-Mathematical Enquiry into the Concept of Number

Gottlob Frege , J.L. Austin (Translator)

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The Foundations of Arithmetic is undoubtedly the best introduction to Frege's thought; it is here that Frege expounds the central notions of his philosophy, subjecting the views of his predecessors and contemporaries to devastating analysis. The book represents the first philosophically sound discussion of the concept of number in Western civilization. It profoundly influenced developments in the philosophy of mathematics and in general ontology.

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From Reader Review The Foundations of Arithmetic: A Logico-Mathematical Enquiry into the Concept of Number for online ebook

Walt says

Russell's paradox be damned!

Logan says

Highly recommended as the first stop for anyone interested in the Philosophy of Mathematics or interested in understanding the potential relationships between mathematics and concepts.

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Steven Dunn says

I bought the book at a used bookstore for 15\$ (sort of ridiculous). But, after reading Anthony Kenny's exposition of Frege, I can say the book was interesting and not that much of a difficult read.

If you like mathematics, the theory of numbers and topics akin to the like (e.g. logic), then check out the book. If not,

then ignore the mundane review Frege gives to the concept of numbers.

Libcrypt says

Written like a knife, this concise exposition of Frege's philosophy of mathematics still stands up well to scrutiny today.

Alex Jones says

Read this for my philosophy of maths course and I really enjoyed it. Not just in an, for an academic book it was pretty readable and not too slow, kinda-way, but in an I'm a massive geek for all things mathematically philosophical or philosophically mathematical and genuinely liked reading it. As the book that led to most modern discussions within the area it is well worth reading, even if the system presented is as wrong as can be, there are still some salient points to be found.

Andrej Virdzek says

If you ever thought that 19th century mathematics has gotten far enough with the constructions of real numbers out of rationals and its continuous zeal for the foundations of analysis, you have not read this one. Herr Frege tries to construct natural numbers out of logic. Whatever one thinks of this book or the importance of the project these days, as a philosophical discussion this has one of the greatest forms that I have witnessed in philosophy.

This one contains discussions of Kant and J.S. Mill still relevant to this day, and especially the destruction of Mill's opinions on arithmetic is quite exciting even today.

This book is probably the founding document of modern analytic philosophy. In it all the topics which are foundational for the whole tradition are contained. Philosophy of language, logic, philosophy of mathematics and a certain disdain for a certain kind of epistemology. It is still written before Sinn und Bedeutung, so you need to be especially careful when Frege talks about Sinn of expressions here, as these thoughts are not so clear at this stage of his thinking. Here also the contextual principle is mentioned for the only time in Frege's philosophy.

I must give it 5 stars as a piece of philosophy, as a historical documents and also as a piece of prose. From the academic literature the only exposition that came near was Chomsky's Syntactic Structures.

Simon says

Originally read many years ago. Michael Dummett cites its #62 as the "most pregnant philosophical paragraph ever written"!

Dr. A says

Read this and reviews of other classics in Western Philosophy on the History page of www.BestPhilosophyBooks.org (a thinkPhilosophy Production).

Discovered and popularized posthumously by Bertrand Russell (see Russell and Alfred North Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica*), Ludwig Wittgenstein, and others, Gottlob Frege is now known as the father of modern logic and of analytic philosophy, and *The Foundations of Arithmetic* is his most important work.

Frege examines the philosophical foundations for mathematics, destroying some earlier theories (i.e. Psychologism, the idea that knowledge of numbers is subjective) and proposing a rigorous system that establishes objectivity for mathematics. In short, he proved how mathematical truths and numbers have properties that are independent of the subjects who think them.

This annotated edition of this, Frege's most important work, makes the work more accessible and meaningful for the general reader. It includes an introduction to Frege's life and works, outlining his influences and some key biographical details.

Read this and reviews of other classics in Western Philosophy on the History page of www.BestPhilosophyBooks.org (a thinkPhilosophy Production).

Diogo says

A very short, very concise, very dense attempt by Frege to address the business of logically deriving the primitive concepts of Peano. Not an inviting writing. I somewhat feel I'm not yet qualified to rate this work. It is nevertheless very entertaining & instructive to read him addressing the theories of others. Perhaps worthy of the hardship of braving through to the last page.

Reinhard Gobrecht says

Frege nennt in diesem Buch die folgenden wichtigen Grundsätze:

- Scharfe Trennung von Psychologischem und Logischem.
- Scharfe Trennung von Subjektivem und Objektivem.
- Die Bedeutung der Wörter ist im Satzzusammenhang zu erfragen.

-Der Unterschied zwischen Begriff und Gegenstand ist wichtig.

In diesem Buch unterscheidet Frege die Wahrheiten in analytische und synthetische und ferner in a priori und a posteriori Wahrheiten.

Was ist ein leerer Begriff?

Bejahung der Existenz als Verneinung der Nullzahl!

Eigenschaften von Begriffen - Eigenschaften von Dingen.

Umfang und Inhalt von Begriffen.

Null als Anzahl, welche dem Begriffe sich selbst ungleich zukommt.

Der eigentliche Gegenstand der Vernunft ist die Vernunft.

U. v. a. m.

Josie says

I have no recollection of having read this book but I have it on good authority that I did.

Jackie says

This was a fun read.

Unfortunately, Frege does some hand-waving throughout the book. He is attempting to show that arithmetic is an extension of logic. Critical to his argument is the definition of number as a concept expressable by second-order classical logic. In showing his definition of number is in fact correct, he isolates number away from the realm of psychology. There are some minor points throughout the text in which he relies on the reader's intuition and some popular beliefs to 'wave away' a point. Maybe he's done so because his treatment indirectly expresses how stupid the point in question was. Whatever the reason, the result is a break from rigorous definition.

My wish for the content of the book is to see it written in logical formalism.

Will says

Agonistic philosophy is rare enough after the Greeks. Frege's bashing of J.S. Mill ranks right up there with Schopenhauer's sarcastic hostility toward Fichte and Hegel, and Nietzsche making fun of everyone (but especially Kant).

Salvador says

Perhaps some the clearest writing I've ever encountered.

Rick Sam says

Review coming soon

Jake Yaniak says

Definitely the kind of book that makes you really think. In philosophy it is amazing just how much we take for granted. "What is a number?" such a simple question you would think...

Dmk says

It's hard to read it because of all philosophical nonsenses, but it gives you overall knowledge about understanding of natural numbers and Frege gives an amazing explanation about what he thinks that natural number is. I highly recommend it but it's possible that you will dislike some parts from the middle of book.

Walid Amoura says

Absolutely brilliant.

Eliot says

Yeah, yeah, his theory of numbers doesn't really make any sense. But, whatever. You try to define a number.
