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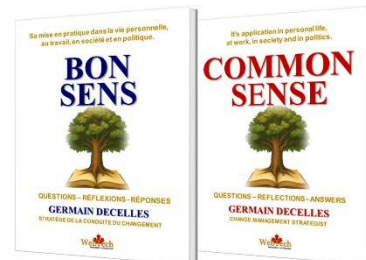
COMMON SENSE – THE BOOK

A critical reading

In a perspective of supporting the reader, we used the Copilot AI software in order to offer two levels of critical analysis of the book *Common Sense*.

A: A critical approach

B: An argued (or reasoned) defense



A: A CRITICAL APPROACH

This analysis offers a critical reading of the book *Bon Sens*, one that is deliberately firmer, more dialectical, and more demanding. In its study, Copilot AI adopts an approach that consists in treating the work as a thesis to be examined rigorously. The aim is to put it to the test, confront its arguments, identify its limits, and explore its possible contradictions. The objective is not to discredit it, but to reveal its true scope.

Such an approach requires taking the text seriously, analyzing its internal coherence, the strength of its arguments, and its conceptual intentions. This reading does not limit itself to approving or refuting; it seeks to understand what the work asserts, what it actually demonstrates, and what it leaves unresolved. It is within this perspective that the analysis is situated, aiming to bring out the value of the book by subjecting it to a methodical and rigorous examination.

1. A rehabilitation of common sense... that risks turning it into a myth.

The book aims to restore common sense to a central place in modern life.
But this ambition encounters a fundamental tension:

Common sense is presented as a rare resource, while at the same time being assumed to be accessible to everyone.

This is a classic contradiction:

- If common sense is universal, why is a book needed to teach it?
- If it is rare, how can it be universal?

This ambiguity sometimes weakens the thesis.

One senses that the author wants both to democratize and to sanctify common sense — a difficult balance to maintain.

2. A critique of complexity... that sometimes oversimplifies.

The book often contrasts common sense with the artificial complexity of the contemporary world.
It is appealing, but it can become problematic.

Dialectically, one could say:

- Yes, complexity can be a smokescreen.
- But no, simplicity is not always synonymous with truth.

Some situations require technical, abstract, and specialized thinking.

In such cases, common sense can become an **anti-intellectual alibi**, a way of rejecting what one does not understand.

The risk:

Confusing clarity with reductionism.

3. An ethics of responsibility... that relies on an idealized subject

The book values individual responsibility, humility, and constant adjustment.

This is admirable, but it presupposes an almost Stoic subject, always capable of distance, lucidity, and self-mastery.

- Yet, philosophically, this is debatable:
Human beings are shaped by biases, impulses, and determinism.
- Common sense can be distorted by culture, education, and social background.
- Individual responsibility does not always suffice to counterbalance the structures that influence our decisions.

The book sometimes tends to **psychologize** what is also **social, political, and economic**.

4. An open method... but sometimes too vague.

The proposed method — observe, understand, decide, adjust — is elegant.

But it may appear:

- Too general,
- Too obvious,

- Too weakly equipped.

One could say:

The book describes what someone with common sense already does, without explaining how to actually acquire it.

This is the paradox of pragmatic approaches:
they are powerful in action, yet difficult to transmit in theoretical form.

5. A philosophy of autonomy... that overlooks power relations.

The book values autonomy, lucidity, and personal decision-making.

But this view can be criticized:

- Not everyone has the same room to maneuver.
- An individual's common sense can be crushed by the constraints of an organization.
- Lucidity is not always enough to change a situation.

The risk is slipping into **a meritocratic ideology**:
if you don't succeed, it's because you lack common sense.

Yet critical philosophy (Foucault, Bourdieu, Arendt) reminds us that:
Individual freedom is always embedded within structures.

The book says little about this.

6. A practical wisdom... that sometimes lacks radicalness

The book offers a modest, every day, embodied form of wisdom.
That is its strength. But it is also its limitation.

One could fault it for:

- Not going far enough in social critique,
- Failing to question the systems that produce absurdity,
- Focusing on the individual rather than on structures.

It is a philosophy of **adjustment**, not of **transformation**.

Dialectical conclusion

Thesis: common sense is an essential resource for living better.

Antithesis: common sense is a vague concept, sometimes idealized, sometimes instrumentalized.

Synthesis: common sense is useful, but only if it is understood as a **critical practice**, aware of its limits, its biases, and its social conditions.

The book opens this path but does not always follow it through to the end.

B: AN ARGUED (OR REASONED) DEFENSE

It is a reasoned, structured, and rigorous response that examines each of the previously formulated critiques in turn. The goal is not to avoid these objections, but to show how the book **Common Sense** proves coherent on the philosophical, methodological, and ethical levels.

1. The book does not idealize common sense: it problematizes it.

Critique: common sense would be presented as both universal and rare.

Defense: this tension is not a weakness, but the very core of the concept.

The book adopts a stance close to classical moral philosophy:

- **Common sense is universal in principle:** every human being can access it.
- **It is rare in practice:** few people cultivate it consciously.

This is exactly the structure of the virtues in Aristotle:

Everyone can be courageous, but few actually are.

The book therefore does not mystify common sense:

it **deconstructs** it and **recontextualizes** it as a skill to be exercised, not as a natural gift.

2. The book does not simplify the world: it simplifies access to the world

Critique: valuing simplicity could risk sliding into simplism.

Defense: the book does not advocate simplicity *against* complexity, but simplicity *after* complexity.

It stands within a tradition that runs from Pascal to Einstein:

‘Things should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.’

The book does not deny the necessity of expertise.

It fights instead against:

- Artificial complexity,
- Unnecessary jargon,
- Deliberate confusion,
- Sophistication that masks the absence of substance.

It does not say: ‘Everything is simple.’

It says: ‘what is essential must be capable of being clarified.’

This is an **anti-obscurantist** position, not an anti-intellectual one.”

3. The book does not assume an ideal subject: it proposes a subject in the making.

Critique: the book’s ethics would rely on an individual who is too lucid, too responsible.

Defense: the book does not describe an actual subject, but a regulative horizon.

As in Kant, the ideal is not a description but a direction.

The book does not say:
'You are already capable of all this.'

It says:
'Here is what you can strive toward.'

This is an ethic of progression, not perfection.
It acknowledges biases, limits, and determinism, yet maintains that:

- Attention can be cultivated,
- Lucidity can be trained,
- Responsibility can be expanded.

This is not naïve: **it is voluntarist.**

4. The method is not vague: it is deliberately minimal.

Critique: observing, understanding, deciding, adjusting would be too general.

Defense: the strength of this method lies precisely in its universal portability.

It works like:

- The scientific method (observe → hypothesis → test → revision),
- Aristotelian prudence (perception → deliberation → action → correction),
- Continuous-improvement cycles (PDCA: *Plan – Do – Check – Act*).

It is not a recipe; it is a **mental framework.**

A simple yet robust framework that can be applied:

- In management,
- In human relationships,
- In decision-making,
- In problem-solving.

Simplicity is not a flaw: it is a **condition for usability.**

5. The book does not ignore structures: it chooses its field of action

Critique: too individualistic, not attentive enough to power relations.

Defense: the book does not deny structures; it focuses on what the individual can actually control.

It adopts a pragmatic stance:

- We do not control systems.
- We control our decisions, our perceptions, our reactions.

This is a philosophy of **local agencies**, not a global critical theory.

And this local agency is far from negligible: an individual endowed with common sense is harder to manipulate, infantilize, or instrumentalize.

Common sense becomes a **micro-resistance**, a form of inner sovereignty.

6. The book is not lacking in radicalness: it is radical in a different way

Critique: the book lacks transformative ambition.

Defense: it proposes transformation by capillarity, not by rupture.

It does not seek to overturn the world, but to transform:

- The way of seeing,
- The way of understanding,
- The way of acting.

This is an everyday radicalness, close to:

- Phenomenology (return to the real),
- Stoicism (self-mastery),
- Pragmatism (concrete effectiveness).

It is not spectacular, but it is lasting.

Synthesis: why the book holds together

In the face of criticism, one can argue that *Common Sense*:

- Assumes a philosophy of lucidity,
- Proposes an ethic of progressive responsibility,
- Offers a simple yet effective method,
- Strengthens individual autonomy,
- And advances a realistic, not utopian, form of transformation.

It does not claim to solve everything.

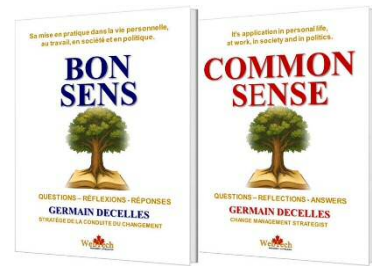
It proposes an **art of living within complexity**, without getting lost in it.

And that is precisely what gives it its strength.

Available:

This 390-page personal development book, available in both French and English and published by WebTech Publishing, is available online at www.lulu.com

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