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Theories of Truth: A Critical Introduction

By Richard L. Kirkham



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Theories of Truth provides a clear, critical introduction to one of the most difficult areas of philosophy. It surveys all of the major philosophical theories of truth, presenting the crux of the issues involved at a level accessible to nonexperts yet in a manner sufficiently detailed and original to be of value to professional scholars. Kirkham's systematic treatment and meticulous explanations of terminology ensure that readers will come away from this book with a comprehensive general understanding of one of philosophy's thorniest set of topics.

Included are discussions of the correspondence, coherence, pragmatic, semantic, performative, redundancy, appraisal, and truth-as-justification theories. There are also chapters or sections of chapters on the liar paradox, three-valued logic, Field's critique of Tarski, Davidson's program, Dummett's theory of linguistic competence, satisfaction, recursion, the extension/intension distinction, and an explanation of how theories of justification, properly understood, differ from theories of truth.

A persistent theme is that philosophers have too often failed to recognize that not all theories of truth are intended to answer the same question. When the various questions are made distinct, it is apparent that many of the "debates" in this field are really cases of philosophers talking past one another. There is much less disagreement within the field than has commonly been thought.



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Editorial Review

Review

Kirkham has accomplished just what he set out to do, to write an accessible but accurate introduction to an area of philosophy that is a mystery even to many professional philosophers -- the theory of truth. To my knowledge there is no other such introduction.

(Richard Foley, Professor and Chair, Department of Philosophy, Rutgers University)

Kirkham's Theories of Truth will be an invaluable resource for students of this topic. I know of nowhere else where one can find a conspectus of comparable breadth and depth of the main theories now of interest to philosophers. It is particularly to be recommended for its lucid exposition of Kripke's attempt to solve the Liar Paradox

(C.J.F. Williams, University of Bristol)

Kirkham's book is a superb introduction to the metaphysics and semantics of truth. Kirkham also makes an important original contribution to the subject by insisting that we keep track of the purposes to which a theory of truth is to be put. This is one introductory book that will be of as much interest to specialists as to beginning students.

(**Frederick F. Schmitt**, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

Users Review

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Lola Taylor:

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