



## Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers (Philosophical Papers (Cambridge)) (Volume 3)

*By Richard Rorty*

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This eagerly awaited book complements two highly successful previously published volumes of Richard Rorty's philosophical papers: Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth, and Essays on Heidegger and Others. In this new, provocative collection, Rorty continues to defend a pragmatist view of truth and deny that truth is a goal of inquiry. In these dynamic essays, Rorty also engages with the work of many of today's most innovative thinkers including Robert Brandom, Donald Davidson, Daniel Dennett, Jacques Derrida, Jürgen Habermas, John McDowell, Hilary Putnam, John Searle, and Charles Taylor. The collection also touches on problems in contemporary feminism raised by Annette Baier, Marilyn Frye, and Catherine MacKinnon, and considers issues connected with human rights and cultural differences. Challenging, stimulating and controversial, this book will appeal to thoughtful readers around the world. Richard Rorty was an undergraduate at the University of Chicago, completed his graduate work at Yale, and taught at Princeton from 1961 until 1982. His first ground-breaking book, an attack on traditional epistemology, was *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979). His previous books with Cambridge have been *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (1989), a book that sold over 46,000 copies since publication and has been translated into seventeen different languages, and two volumes of philosophical papers: *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*, and *Essays on Heidegger and Others*. A recipient of a MacArthur Foundation grant, Rorty has lectured throughout the world. Also available *Objectivity, Relativism and Truth: Philosophical Papers: Volume 1* 0-521-35877-9 Paperback *Essays on Heidegger and Others: Philosophical Papers: Volume 2* 0-521-35878-7 Paperback

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Amazon.com Review**

The philosopher's task, Richard Rorty writes, is "to clear the road for prophets and poets, to make intellectual life a bit simpler and safer for those who have visions of new communities." The essays collected in *Truth and Progress* show that Rorty is more than up to the challenge. His pragmatic approach is as well suited to brokering peace between "coworkers" Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida as it is to addressing more violent disputes. As Rorty sees it, part of the reason feminism has not been entirely successful in achieving its goals, or ethnic conflicts still rage around the globe, is that we still cling to the notion of an inherent human nature. "Plato set things up," he explains, "so that moral philosophers think they have failed unless they convince the rational egotist that he should not be an egotist--convince him by telling him about his true, unfortunately neglected self. But the rational egotist is not the problem. The problem is the gallant and honorable Serb who sees Muslims as circumcised dogs. It is the brave soldier and good comrade who loves and is loved by his mates, but who thinks of women as dangerous, malevolent whores and bitches."

Instead of trying to answer the question, "What is human nature?" Rorty proposes that we ask ourselves what we would like human nature to be, then make every possible effort to be that. In doing so, he does not reject previous philosophic inquiry, although he believes that philosophers must be willing to admit, as scientists do, when their predecessors got things wrong. If inquiry is the continual grappling with and resolution of problems, rather than a quest for "truth," the lessons learned from the past become invaluable tools to apply to new problems as they emerge. Many people disagree with Rorty's conclusions, but they all seem to agree that he has liberated philosophy from detached contemplation of "the real" and reconnected it to the world we live in. *Truth and Progress* does what all good philosophy should do: it makes you think. --Ron Hogan

### **From Library Journal**

Rorty contends that the ideas that reality has an intrinsic nature and that truth is a correspondence with reality are inherently flawed and therefore hinder inquiry, the former allegedly because "reality" is a matter of how we conceptualize things and the latter allegedly because there cannot be a theory of the nature of truth. Rejecting those ideas, he believes we should not aim at truth but at solving problems, the solutions to which raise yet other problems, and that philosophy advances by increasing its imaginativeness rather than its rigor. He defends this conception of inquiry in carefully argued essays about the issues as they have been discussed by such philosophers as Davidson, Wright, Putnam, Searle, and Taylor, among others. There are also essays on such topics as cultural differences, democracy, and feminism. Of the 17 essays, four are new. Recommended for academic libraries. ARobert Hoffman, York Coll., CUNY  
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### **Review**

"This is vintage Rorty; always so clear, provocative, unsettling, and cunningly profound!" Cornel West

"In Rorty's constantly stimulating essays from the past decade one can trace his cautious engagement with and then fastidious withdrawal from the semantic fields that Lyotard and company so thoroughly muddled. The whole postmodernism debate, he rightly implies, has become at best a waste of time, at worst a fraud: an incoherent attempt to build a new historical and cultural meta-narrative while denying the possibility of any such thing." New Statesman

"His books and articles read like a one-person international review of books: he collects fiction, history, and

theory from around the world and marshalls it brilliantly according to the priorities of his anti-representationalist plot. However dense his discussions they retain a gratifying simplicity of outline. Rorty has created for himself the sort of cultural presence that once belonged to Mill, Russell, Ayer, or Joad. He is the only philosopher writing in English who has an enthusiastic non-specialist public, and like his predecessors, he offers the refreshing spectacle of cheeky sceptic who stands up to the obfuscators and shames them with his exemplary and readable prose. Rorty's new self is a brilliant old invention." The Times Higher Education Supplement

"Rorty's essays are nontechnical, historically informed, and philosophically provocative." Choice

"Rorty's fascinating presentation of recent intellectual history is impressive in its scope and penetration." Library Journal

"This volume is Rorty at his best, again and again making us see things from a new, unexpected angle, strenuously engaging with those of us who resist his startling and unsettling 'take' on things. Convinced or not, you come away feeling that this is what philosophy ought to be doing, steadily extending the range of imaginable thoughts." Charles Taylor

"Few writers have done as much as Richard Rorty has to make contemporary philosophy interesting and important to people who are not philosophers. He has done this partly by a prose that is unmatched for clarity and vernacular vigor, but mostly by insisting on seeing what real social good we can make of the ideas available to us. His work is one of the finest models of intellectual engagement we have." Louis Menand

"Truth and Progress....can be recommended not only to Rorty's admirers and to those who regard him as a leading enemy of reason but to anyone who wants to get a sense of a significant intellectual phenomenon. Thomas Nagel, Times Literary Supplement

"Rorty is at his best when writing about the history of philosophy." Jenny Teichman, The New Criterion

"Truth and Progress is evidence of a revitalized American pragmatism that, in Rorty's version, celebrates ethnocentrism, cultural relativism, and human social experimentation.... Shaped by Darwinism, it is romantically resonant with the American quest for a better life, and even a better life economically, and it has an eye always on practical consequences." Dan Barnett, Magill's Literary Annual 1999

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### **From reader reviews:**

#### **David Gaytan:**

This Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers (Philosophical Papers (Cambridge)) (Volume 3) book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is actually information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers (Philosophical Papers (Cambridge)) (Volume 3) without we understand teach the one who examining it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers (Philosophical Papers (Cambridge)) (Volume 3) can bring whenever you are and not make your bag space or bookshelves' come to be full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even phone. This Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers (Philosophical Papers (Cambridge)) (Volume 3) having fine arrangement in word and layout, so you will not feel uninterested in reading.

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People live in this new day of lifestyle always try to and must have the spare time or they will get lot of stress from both everyday life and work. So , when we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely of course. People is human not really a robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity do you possess when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer will certainly unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading publications. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, typically the book you have read is definitely Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers (Philosophical Papers (Cambridge)) (Volume 3).

**Jason Buckley:**

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