



# The Empiricists (A History of Western Philosophy)

By R. S. Woolhouse

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"One of the great historic controversies in philosophy," according to Bertrand Russell, is that between empiricists--"best represented by the British philosophers, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume"--and rationalists. This book sets the empiricists in their contemporary and cultural context, examines their various approaches to philosophy, and highlights the significance of their ideas to 20th-century thinking. By focusing on what the "empiricists" actually have to say, rather than on their classification as such, Woolhouse incidentally shows how unreliable these conventional labels can be.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Among the strengths of the book is Woolhouse's treatment of empiricism as both a theory and a methodology. He accurately notes, for example, that Bacon was primarily motivated by empiricism as a method of inquiry while others, like Locke, provided more theoretical accounts of the view called "empiricism"....In addition, the book is easy to read, and although of necessity it contains a great deal of philosophical jargon, that jargon is almost always explained in such a way as to make it comprehensible to an educated reader....Ideal for a graduate student who is preparing for general exams in the history of philosophy, or for an instructor who, after a long time of not teaching such material, is looking for a good source covering the major issues that might be treated in an undergraduate course whose focus is on empiricism." *Teaching Philosophy*

#### From the Back Cover

'One of the great historic controversies in philosophy' was how Bertrand Russell described the ideological conflict between rationalist and empiricists-the conflict between reason and experience as sources of knowledge and ideas.

#### About the Author

R. S. Woolhouse is Reader in Philosophy at the University of York.

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