



Truth (Central Problems of Philosophy)

Pascal Engel

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In this critical introduction to contemporary philosophical issues in the theory of truth Pascal Engel provides clear and authoritative exposition of recent and current ideas while providing original perspectives that advances discussion of the key issues. This book begins with a presentation of the classical conceptions of truth - the correspondence theory, the coherence theory and verificationist and pragmatist accounts - before examining so-called minimalist and deflationist conceptions that deny truth can be anything more than a thin concept holding no metaphysical weight. The debates between those who favour substantive conceptions of the classical kind and those who advocate minimalist and deflationist conceptions are explored. Engel argues that, although the minimalist conception of truth is basically right, it does not follow that truth can be eliminated from our philosophical thinking as some upholders of radical deflationist views have claimed. Questions about truth and realism are examined and the author shows how the realism/anti-realism debate remains a genuine, meaningful issue for a theory of truth and has not been undermined by deflationist views. Even if a metaphysical substantive theory of truth has little chance to succeed, Engel concludes, truth can keep a central role within our thinking, as a norm or guiding value of our rational inquiries and practices, in the philosophy of knowledge and in ethics.

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