

Truth's Debt to Value *by* David Weissman



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Is something true because we believe it to be so or because it is true? How can a culturally bound community achieve scientific knowledge when values, attitudes, and desires shape its beliefs? In this book an eminent philosopher considers various schools of thought on the nature of truth. David Weissman argues that truth exists in the correspondence between statement and fact: what can be said about our world can be measured against a reality that has a character and existence independent of any property we ascribe to it. Weissman begins by evaluating the transcendental paradigm of Kant that has exercised enormous influence in the development of Western thought over the past two hundred years. He develops his critique of the Kantian model, in which value judgments underlie the perception or construction of truth, asserting that it is seriously flawed because it renders a determination of truth impossible. Weissman examines various value-driven perspectives on truth developed by such philosophers as Foucault, Derrida, and Rorty, for whom truth is only the set of affirmations, principles, and procedures sanctioned by power and value. However, says Weissman, truth is the required adjunct to desire. Knowing who we are, where we have been, and the consequences of what we have done is the essential preparation for choosing what to do next. We must respect the integrity of a world we have not made and find our way within it with the help of attitudes and desires that have been informed by truth.



Reviews of the **Truth's Debt to Value** by David Weissman

Venemarr

I purchased this book new back in about 1995. I've read this book twice. It is a great defense of realism and it reviews the many contenders for truth. I'm not sure I understand the book as well as I should but I'll likely read it again. A complex (for me) but an important work.

Malaunitly

Though this isn't his most fluid work, no one surpasses Weissman's brilliance as a defender of commonsensical, fallibilistic realism. Especially valuable in the current volume is his thoughtful -- and complete -- analysis of correspondence truth. See his earlier **Hypothesis and the Spiral of Reflection** for a more succinct statement of his views.

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