

Graham Priest

Doubt Truth to be a Liar

Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006

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REVIEW

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This is a book about dialetheism, the theory that there are some truth-bearers (sentences, propositions, or what have you) of the form α and $\neg\alpha$ such that both of the pair are true. As Graham Priest puts it, “Dialetheism is the view that some contradictions are true. . .”¹ This book does not, however, offer a sustained defense of dialetheism nor a rigorous exploration of the appropriate logic for a dialetheist to endorse. Those subjects have been sufficiently dealt with in Priest’s prior work and they play only a minor role in the present book.²

Instead, this book is concerned with the relation between dialetheism and the philosophical notions of truth, negation, rationality, and logic. It is meant to supplement the dialetheist project by explaining where and how the commitment to dialetheism intersects with our conceptions of these core philosophical notions. Because it is not principally concerned with the motivations for dialetheism and because it is not too heavy-handed with the formal logic, this book will appeal to philosophers of many stripes.

There are four parts to the book. The first part, on the notion of truth, includes discussion of such topics as whether Aristotle has posed a threat to dialetheism by his defense of the Law of Non-Contradiction that “opposite assertions are not simultaneously true”³, whether any amongst a handful of popular theories of the nature of truth are incompatible with dialetheism, and whether truth is trivial.

The second part of the book is devoted to the notion of negation and includes discussion of such topics as the nature and behavior of negation, whether ‘Boolean Negation’ is a coherent logical operation,

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¹Priest, 2006, 1.

²See especially *In Contradiction*, Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987.

³Kirwan, 1993, 11^b14.