

## Philosophy And The Mirror Of Nature Richard M Rorty

Looking at one's face in the mirror and finding one's self in the mirror are not the same. The former capacity is something we share with other animals; the latter is a skill: something we have to learn. What does it mean and what does it take to find oneself the mirror? This book provides a comparative anthropological enquiry into the unity and diversity of mirror gazing. The reader is encouraged to reflect upon and experiment with different mirror gazes through a range of case studies. Koukouti and Malafouris weave together anthropology with philosophy and draw on examples from literature and experiments from psychopathology in a way that has never been attempted before. The master metaphor is that of the mirror as trap. Mirror gazing is viewed on a par with hunting. Mirroring signifies the hunt for self-knowledge. In a time obsessed with the digital self-image, Koukouti and Malafouris reflect on the structures of consciousness that underpin the different ways of looking at and through the mirror. Combining metaphor, comparison and estrangement, they gesture towards a therapeutic alliance between body and mirroring. This allows us to look in the mirror, and think of our shared humanity differently.

In this 1989 book, Rorty examines human solidarity

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and liberalism through literature, philosophy, social theory and literary criticism.

Deconstruction is no game of mirrors, revealing the text as a play of surface against surface. Its more radical philosophical effort is to get behind the mirror and question the very nature of reflection. The Tain of the Mirror explores that gritty surface without which no reflection would be possible.

The last book by the eminent American philosopher and public intellectual Richard Rorty, providing the definitive statement of his mature philosophical and political views. Richard Rorty's Pragmatism as Anti-Authoritarianism is a last statement by one of America's foremost philosophers. Here Rorty offers his culminating thoughts on the influential version of pragmatism he began to articulate decades ago in his groundbreaking Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. Marking a new stage in the evolution of his thought, Rorty's final masterwork identifies anti-authoritarianism as the principal impulse and virtue of pragmatism. Anti-authoritarianism, on this view, means acknowledging that our cultural inheritance is always open to revision because no authority exists to ascertain the truth, once and for all. If we cannot rely on the unshakable certainties of God or nature, then all we have left to go on—and argue with—are the opinions and ideas of our fellow humans. The test of these ideas, Rorty suggests, is relatively simple: Do they work? Do they produce the peace, freedom,

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and happiness we desire? To achieve this enlightened pragmatism is not easy, though. Pragmatism demands trust. Pragmatism demands that we think and care about what others think and care about, which further requires that we account for others' doubts of and objections to our own beliefs. After all, our own beliefs are as contestable as anyone else's. A supple mind who draws on theorists from John Stuart Mill to Annette Baier, Rorty nonetheless is always an apostle of the concrete. No book offers a more accessible account of Rorty's utopia of pragmatism, just as no philosopher has more eloquently challenged the hidebound traditions arrayed against the goals of social justice.

In 'Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature' Richard Rorty presented his provocation and influential vision of the post-philosophical culture, calling upon professional philosophers to accept that epistemology is dead, that the analytic method is a myth, and that philosophy and science are merely forms of literature.

Richard Rorty is famous, maybe even infamous, for his philosophical nonchalance. His groundbreaking work not only rejects all theories of truth but also dismisses modern epistemology and its preoccupation with knowledge and representation. At the same time, the celebrated pragmatist believed there could be no universally valid answers to moral

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questions, which led him to a complex view of religion rarely expressed in his writings. In this posthumous publication, Rorty, a strict secularist, finds in the pragmatic thought of John Dewey, John Stuart Mill, William James, and George Santayana, among others, a political imagination shared by religious traditions. His intent is not to promote belief over nonbelief or to blur the distinction between religious and public domains. Rorty seeks only to locate patterns of similarity and difference so an ethics of decency and a politics of solidarity can rise. He particularly responds to Pope Benedict XVI and his campaign against the relativist vision. Whether holding theologians, metaphysicians, or political ideologues to account, Rorty remains steadfast in his opposition to absolute uniformity and its exploitation of political strength.

For better or worse, Rorty has shaped the trajectory of academic philosophy. A decade after his passing, his legacy is ever present, especially in context of the growth of the far right, the struggle over the meaning of justice and equity, and the ecological crises we face. Edited by Randall Auxier, Eli Kramer, and Krzysztof Piotr Skowroński, *Rorty and Beyond* brings together leading international philosophers from the United States and Europe to reevaluate Rorty's legacy and explore what lies beyond his life and work. This collection covers a diverse territory, exploring Rorty's legacy regarding theories of truth,

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accounts of nature and naturalism, the historical situation of professional philosophy, the private and public aspects of religion, the place of literature in cultural politics, and points beyond Rorty, such as what we may hope for after his critical attack on certainty and ultimacy. Scholars, specialists, and those new to Rorty will all find insight, useful criticism, and edification in this volume.

People in the ancient world thought of vision as both an ethical tool and a tactile sense, akin to touch. Gazing upon someone—or oneself—was treated as a path to philosophical self-knowledge, but the question of tactility introduced an erotic element as well. In *The Mirror of the Self*, Shadi Bartsch asserts that these links among vision, sexuality, and self-knowledge are key to the classical understanding of the self. Weaving together literary theory, philosophy, and social history, Bartsch traces this complex notion of self from Plato's Greece to Seneca's Rome. She starts by showing how ancient authors envisioned the mirror as both a tool for ethical self-improvement and, paradoxically, a sign of erotic self-indulgence. Her reading of the *Phaedrus*, for example, demonstrates that the mirroring gaze in Plato, because of its sexual possibilities, could not be adopted by Roman philosophers and their students. Bartsch goes on to examine the Roman treatment of the ethical and sexual gaze, and she traces how self-knowledge, the philosopher's body, and the performance of virtue all played a role in shaping the Roman understanding of the nature of selfhood. Culminating in a profoundly original

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reading of Medea, *The Mirror of the Self* illustrates how Seneca, in his Stoic quest for self-knowledge, embodies the Roman view, marking a new point in human thought about self-perception. Bartsch leads readers on a journey that unveils divided selves, moral hypocrisy, and lustful Stoics—and offers fresh insights about seminal works. At once sexy and philosophical, *The Mirror of the Self* will be required reading for classicists, philosophers, and anthropologists alike.

If the postmodern is a collage--as some critics have suggested--or if collage is itself a kernel of the postmodern, what does this mean for our way of understanding the world? *The Frame and the Mirror* uses this question to probe the distinctive question of the postmodern situation and the philosophical problem of representation.

Tournier treats pairs both lowly and exalted - moving from fork and spoon, horse and bull, cat and dog, to fear and anguish, poetry and prose, body and soul, being and nothingness. Hardly an exhaustive inventory of traditional pairs, his selection nonetheless opens the door to patterns deeply embedded in culture and civilization, speech and writing, memory and habit.

"In the last sentence of a posthumously published article, Richard Rorty wrote: "...individual men and women are more fully human when their memories are amply stocked with verses". Equally, we might say that they are more humane and wide-ranging thinkers when their minds are amply stocked with Rorty's subtle thoughts. We should be grateful for the editors of this anthology for giving us so many." Philip Kitcher, Columbia University

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"Pragmatist," "historicist," "literary," "anti-analytical," "postmodernist," "neo-liberal," "humanist," "ethnocentric" — all these (and many other) terms have been applied to Richard Rorty, both as compliments and as insults. This careful selection from his writings, along with Christopher Voparil's excellent introduction, explains why. It charts Rorty's many philosophical twists and turns and it illuminates the intellectual and political commitments that provide his thinking with a deep continuity. And it brings back, for a broad audience, Rorty's characteristic voice: both simple and sophisticated, witty and passionate, light-handed and erudite, controversial and accommodating, detailed and sweeping, critical and hopeful — above all, unmistakably individual and deeply missed." Alexander Nehamas, Princeton University "The Rorty Reader is a remarkable editorial accomplishment. By bringing together a wide variety of Richard Rorty's controversial and yet inspiring writings, Bernstein and Voparil provide an excellent introduction to this important thinker. The addition, their own insightful introductory chapter, makes the collection essential reading for everyone who wants to gain a better understanding of not just the significance of Rorty's philosophical contribution, but that of modern thought in general." Alan Malachowski, University of Stellenbosch The Rorty Reader represents the first comprehensive collection of the writings of Richard Rorty, one of the twentieth century's most influential thinkers, best known for the controversial *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979). Gathering together key essays from over four decades of writings, the volume offers an in-depth introduction to the philosopher's life

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and prolific body of work. Topics addressed include the continuities and transformations that span Rorty's early training in the history of philosophy, his engagement with the analytic tradition, and the 1979 publication that brought him international renown. Particular attention is devoted to his later political writings, including his turn to literature as the vehicle of moral reflection most suitable to democratic life, and his embrace of philosophy as cultural politics. With selections from *The Linguistic Turn* (1967), *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979), *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (1989), *Achieving Our Country* (1998), and his four volumes of philosophical papers, including *Philosophy as Cultural Politics* (2007), as well as in-depth interviews and revealing autobiographical pieces, *The Rorty Reader* offers a compelling and representative view of Rorty's relationship with American pragmatism and the overall intellectual trajectory of his philosophical and political thought. Christopher J. Voparil is on the Graduate Faculty of Union Institute & University in Cincinnati, OH, where he teaches philosophy and political theory. He is the author of *Richard Rorty: Politics and Vision* (2006), and has published articles in *Contemporary Pragmatism*, *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, and *Education and Culture*. He is also the current Secretary of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. Richard J. Bernstein is Vera List Professor of Philosophy at the New School for Social Research, New York. His most recent book is *The Pragmatic Turn* (Polity, 2010).

In this highly original work, Robert Nozick develops new



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views on philosophy's central topics and weaves them into a unified philosophical perspective. It is many years since a major work in English has ranged so widely over philosophy's fundamental concerns: the identity of the self, knowledge and skepticism, free will, the question of why there is something rather than nothing, the foundations of ethics, the meaning of life. Writing in a distinctive and personal philosophical voice, Mr. Nozick presents a new mode of philosophizing. In place of the usual semi-coercive philosophical goals of proof, of forcing people to accept conclusions, this book seeks philosophical explanations and understanding, and thereby stays truer to the original motivations for being interested in philosophy. Combining new concepts, daring hypotheses, rigorous reasoning, and playful exploration, the book exemplifies how philosophy can be part of the humanities.

Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature Princeton University Press

Tidl. 2. pr., with corrections, 1980

The second volume of Richard Rorty's collected papers discusses recent European philosophy focusing on the work of Heidegger and Derrida. On his death in 2007, Richard Rorty was heralded by the New York Times as "one of the world's most influential contemporary thinkers." Controversial on the left and the right for his critiques of objectivity and political radicalism, Rorty experienced a renown denied to all but a handful of living philosophers. In this masterly biography, Neil Gross explores the path

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of Rorty's thought over the decades in order to trace the intellectual and professional journey that led him to that prominence. The child of a pair of leftist writers who worried that their precocious son "wasn't rebellious enough," Rorty enrolled at the University of Chicago at the age of fifteen. There he came under the tutelage of polymath Richard McKeon, whose catholic approach to philosophical systems would profoundly influence Rorty's own thought. Doctoral work at Yale led to Rorty's landing a job at Princeton, where his colleagues were primarily analytic philosophers. With a series of publications in the 1960s, Rorty quickly established himself as a strong thinker in that tradition—but by the late 1970s Rorty had eschewed the idea of objective truth altogether, urging philosophers to take a "relaxed attitude" toward the question of logical rigor. Drawing on the pragmatism of John Dewey, he argued that philosophers should instead open themselves up to multiple methods of thought and sources of knowledge—an approach that would culminate in the publication of *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, one of the most seminal and controversial philosophical works of our time. In clear and compelling fashion, Gross sets that surprising shift in Rorty's thought in the context of his life and social experiences, revealing the many disparate influences that contribute to the making of knowledge. As much a book about the growth of

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ideas as it is a biography of a philosopher, Richard Rorty will provide readers with a fresh understanding of both the man and the course of twentieth-century thought.

Early Christianity faced the problem of the human word versus Christ the Word. Could language accurately describe spiritual reality? *The Mirror of Language* brilliantly traces the development of one prominent theory of signs from Augustine through Anselm of Canterbury, Thomas Aquinas, and Dante. Their shared epistemology validated human language as an authentic but limited index of preexistent reality, both material and spiritual. This sign theory could thereby account for the ways men receive, know, and transmit religious knowledge, always mediated through faith. Marcia L. Colish demonstrates how the three theologians used different branches of the medieval trivium to express a common sign theory: Augustine stressed rhetoric, Anselm shifted to grammar (including grammatical proofs of God's existence), and Thomas Aquinas stressed dialectic. Dante, the one poet included in this study, used the Augustinian sign theory to develop a Christian poetics that culminates in the *Divine Comedy*. The author points out not only the commonality but also the sharp contrasts between these writers and shows the relation between their sign theories and the intellectual ferment of the times. When first published in 1968, *The Mirror of*

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Language was recognized as a pathfinding study. This completely revised edition incorporates the scholarship of the intervening years and reflects the refinements of the author's thought. Greater prominence is given to the role of Stoicism, and sharper attention is paid to some of the thinkers and movements surrounding the major thinkers treated. Concerns of semiotics, philosophy, and literary criticism are elucidated further. The original thesis, still controversial, is now even wider ranging and more salient to current intellectual debate.

Richard Rorty was a seminal figure in philosophy, transforming the discipline during the last quarter of the 20th century and setting it on a new path for the 21st. An early, implacable critic of the widespread preoccupation with questions of truth, representation, and the foundations of knowledge, Rorty promoted a new type of philosophical pragmatism with great persuasive power, and many have credited him with inspiring the renewed interest in the thought of classical American philosophy, especially his hero John Dewey. Always controversial, Rorty's books and essays were read as carefully by his critics as by his admirers. This book includes in its nearly 1,000 pages Rorty's intellectual autobiography, 29 previously unpublished critical and descriptive essays by famous scholars, Rorty's replies to most of them, and a complete bibliography of his published works. Since Rorty

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passed away in 2007, his contributions to this volume have a special importance as among his final writings.

Islamic philosophy and Sufism evolved as distinct yet interweaving strands of Islamic thought and practice. Despite differences, they have shared a concern with the perfection of the soul through the development of character. In *The Polished Mirror*, Cyrus Ali Zargar studies the ways in which, through teaching and storytelling, pre-modern Muslims lived, negotiated, and cultivated virtues. Examining the writings of philosophers, ascetics, poets, and saints, he locates virtue ethics within a dynamic moral tradition. Innovative, engaging, and approachable, this work – the first in the English language to explore Islamic ethics in the fascinating context of narrative – will be a valuable resource for both students and scholars.

A collection of Rorty's essays complementing two previously published volumes, touches on the work of many of today's most innovative thinkers.

A groundbreaking reference work on the revolutionary philosophy and intellectual legacy of Richard Rorty. A provocative and often controversial thinker, Richard Rorty and his ideas have been the subject of renewed interest to philosophers working in epistemology, metaphysics, analytic philosophy, and the history of philosophy. Having called for philosophers to abandon representationalist

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accounts of knowledge and language, Rorty introduced radical and challenging concepts to modern philosophy, generating divisive debate through the new form of American pragmatism which he advocated and the renunciation of traditional epistemology which he espoused. However, while Rorty has been one of the most widely-discussed figures in modern philosophy, few volumes have dealt directly with the expansive reach of his thought or its implications for the fields of philosophy in which he worked. The Blackwell Companion to Rorty is a collection of essays by prominent scholars which provide close, and long-overdue, examination of Rorty's groundbreaking work. Divided into five parts, this volume covers the major intellectual movements of Rorty's career from his early work on consciousness and transcendental arguments, to the lasting impacts of his major writings, to his approach to pragmatism and his controversial appropriations from other philosophers, and finally to his later work in culture, politics, and ethics. Offers a comprehensive, balanced, and insightful account of Rorty's approach to philosophy Provides an assessment of Rorty's more controversial thoughts and his standing as an "anti-philosopher's philosopher" Contains new and original exploration of Rorty's thinking from leading scholars and philosophers Includes new perspectives on topics such as Rorty's influence in Central Europe Despite

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the relevance of Rorty's work for the wider community of philosophers and for those working in fields such as international relations, legal and political theory, sociology, and feminist studies, the secondary literature surrounding Rorty's work and legacy is limited. A Companion to Rorty address this absence, providing a comprehensive resource for philosophers and general readers.

Richard Rorty is notorious for contending that the traditional, foundation-building and truth-seeking ambitions of systematic philosophy should be set aside in favour of a more pragmatic, conversational, hermeneutically guided project. This challenge has not only struck at the heart of philosophy but has ricocheted across other disciplines, both contesting their received self-images and opening up new avenues of inquiry in the process. Alan Malachowski provides an authoritative overview of Rorty's considerable body of work and a general assessment of his impact both within philosophy and in the humanities more broadly. He begins by explaining the genesis of Rorty's central ideas, tracking their development from suggestions in his early papers through their crystallization in his groundbreaking book, "Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature". Malachowski evaluates some of the common criticisms of Rorty's position and his ensuing pragmatism. The book examines the subsequent evolution of his ideas, focusing particularly on the main themes of his second major work, Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity. The political and cultural impact of Rorty's writings on such diverse fields as feminism, cultural and literary theory, and international relations are also considered, and the author explores why Rorty's work has generally found its warmest reception in these areas rather than among mainstream

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philosophers.

When it first appeared in 1979, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* hit the philosophical world like a bombshell. In it, Richard Rorty argued that, beginning in the seventeenth century, philosophers developed an unhealthy obsession with the notion of representation: comparing the mind to a mirror that reflects reality. Rorty's book is a powerful critique of this imagery and the tradition of thought that it spawned. Today, the book remains a must-read and stands as a classic of twentieth-century philosophy. Its influence on the academy, both within philosophy and across a wide array of disciplines, continues unabated. This edition includes new essays by philosopher Michael Williams and literary scholar David Bromwich, as well as Rorty's previously unpublished essay "The Philosopher as Expert."

Richard Rorty is one of the most provocative figures in recent philosophical, literary and cultural debate. This collection brings together those of his writings aimed at a wider audience, many published in book form for the first time. In these eloquent essays, articles and lectures, Rorty gives a stimulating summary of his central philosophical beliefs and how they relate to his political hopes; he also offers some challenging insights into contemporary America, justice, education and love.

This book discusses the ideas of Donald Davidson, on the nature of understanding and meaning, and the nature of truth and knowledge, providing an account of Davidson's holistic and hermeneutical conception of linguistic interpretation, and, more generally, of the mind.

Richard Rorty is one of the most influential, controversial and widely-read philosophers of the twentieth century. In this GuideBook to *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* Tartaglia analyzes this challenging text and introduces and assesses: Rorty's life and the background to his philosophy the key



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themes and arguments of Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature the continuing importance of Rorty's work to philosophy. Rorty and the Mirror of Nature is an ideal starting-point for anyone new to Rorty, and essential reading for students in philosophy, cultural studies, literary theory and social science. Undeniably iconoclastic, and doggedly practical where others were abstract, the late Richard Rorty was described by some as a philosopher with no philosophy. Rorty was skeptical of systems claiming to have answers, seeing scientific and aesthetic schools as vocabularies rather than as indispensable paths to truth. But his work displays a profound awareness of philosophical tradition and an urgent concern for how we create a society. As Michael Bérubé writes in his introduction to this new volume, Rorty looked upon philosophy as "a creative enterprise of dreaming up new and more humane ways to live." Drawn from Rorty's acclaimed 2004 Page-Barbour lectures, *Philosophy as Poetry* distills many of the central ideas in his work. Rorty begins by addressing poetry and philosophy, which are often seen as contradictory pursuits. He offers a view of philosophy as a poem, beginning with the ancient Greeks and rewritten by succeeding generations of philosophers seeking to improve it. He goes on to examine analytic philosophy and the rejection by some philosophers, notably Wittgenstein, of the notion of philosophical problems that have solutions. The book concludes with an invigorating suspension of intellectual borders as Rorty focuses on the romantic tradition and relates it to philosophic thought. This book makes an ideal starting place for anyone looking for an introduction to Rorty's thought and his contribution to our sense of an American pragmatism, as well as an understanding of his influence and the controversy that attended his work. Page-Barbour Lectures

A philosophical look at the twisted, high-tech near-future of

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the sci-fi anthology series *Black Mirror*, offering a glimpse of the darkest reflections of the human condition in digital technology *Black Mirror*?the Emmy-winning Netflix series that holds up a dark, digital mirror of speculative technologies to modern society—shows us a high-tech world where it is all too easy to fall victim to ever-evolving forms of social control. In *Black Mirror and Philosophy*, original essays written by a diverse group of scholars invite you to peer into the void and explore the philosophical, ethical, and existential dimensions of Charlie Brooker’s sinister stories. The collection reflects *Black Mirror*’s anthology structure by pairing a chapter with every episode in the show’s five seasons—including an interactive, choose-your-own-adventure analysis of *Bandersnatch*—and concludes with general essays that explore the series’ broader themes. Chapters address questions about artificial intelligence, virtual reality, surveillance, privacy, love, death, criminal behavior, and politics, including: Have we given social media too much power over our lives? Could heaven really, one day, be a place on Earth? Should criminal justice and punishment be crowdsourced? What rights should a “cookie” have? Immersive, engaging, and experimental, *Black Mirror and Philosophy* navigates the intellectual landscape of Brooker’s morality plays for the modern world, where humanity’s greatest innovations and darkest instincts collide. American pragmatist Rorty and the French analytic philosopher Engel present their radically different perspectives on truth and its correspondence to reality. "What's the Use of Truth?" is a rare opportunity to experience each side of this impassioned debate clearly and concisely.

30 years ago Richard Rorty argued that philosophers had developed an unhealthy obsession with the notion of

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representation: comparing the mind to a mirror that reflects reality. The book now stands as a classic of 20th-century philosophy.

Theatrical characters' dual existence on stage and in text presents a unique, challenging case for the analytical philosopher. *Analytic Philosophy and the World of the Play* re-examines the ontological status of theatre and its fictional objects through the "possible worlds" thesis, arguing that theatre is not a mirror of our world, but a re-creation of it. Taking a fresh look at theatre's key elements, including the hotly contested relationships between character and actor; onstage and offstage "worlds"; and the play-text and performance, Michael Y. Bennett presents a radical new way of understanding the world of the play.

Christopher Peacocke presents a philosophical theory of subjects of consciousness, together with a theory of the nature of first person representation of such a subject of consciousness. He develops a new treatment of subjects, distinct from previous theories, under which subjects were regarded either as constructs from mental events, or fundamentally embodied, or Cartesian egos. In contrast, his theory of the first person integrates with the positive treatment of subjects--and it contributes to the explanation of various distinctive first person phenomena in the theory of thought and knowledge. Peacocke brings his points to bear on the contributions to these issues made by Hume, Kant, Frege, Wittgenstein, and Strawson, and then goes on to distinguish and characterize three varieties of self-consciousness, which are key to explaining features of

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our knowledge, social relations, and emotional lives. The theses of *The Mirror of the World* are of importance not only for philosophy, but also for psychology, the arts, and anywhere else that the self and self-representation loom large.

The most important work by one of America's greatest twentieth-century philosophers, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* is both the epitome of Wilfrid Sellars' entire philosophical system and a key document in the history of philosophy. First published in essay form in 1956, it helped bring about a sea change in analytic philosophy. It broke the link, which had bound Russell and Ayer to Locke and Hume--the doctrine of "knowledge by acquaintance." Sellars' attack on the Myth of the Given in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* was a decisive move in turning analytic philosophy away from the foundationalist motives of the logical empiricists and raised doubts about the very idea of "epistemology." With an introduction by Richard Rorty to situate the work within the history of recent philosophy, and with a study guide by Robert Brandom, this publication of *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind* makes a difficult but indisputably significant figure in the development of analytic philosophy clear and comprehensible to anyone who would understand that philosophy or its history.

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