**The Problem with Truth**

Most of us have a concept of Truth by which we lead our every existence – something is the case or it is not, something is or is not and either something happened or it did not. So, what’s the problem you well may ask?

Unfortunately, once you explore the notion of truth a little bit more closely, as Professor Grayling exposed, several issues become apparent which question the notion of an absolute truth out there.

From a philosophical perspective several theories of truth have been decided to explain the notion of Truth, including the Correspondence, Coherence and the Pragmatism theories:

1. Correspondence theory of Trust

Correspondence to some facts seems closest to our everyday understand of the truth. Either some fact is true or untrue – a binary fact exists in the world or does not. There simply isn’t room for ambiguity. This notion of Truth works well for questions of confirmable facts such as the number of coins in a jar. This kind of truth of fact can be established straightforwardly by counting the number of coins. However, it runs into problems when having to deal with counter factual and conditional facts such as non-presence and conditional presence of facts.

2. Coherence theory of Truth

In order to overcome these problems philosophy restricted itself to the notion of Coherence of logical statements and their internal consistency. At times this could be expressed in linguistic logic such as a) All men are mortal b) Socrates is a man, c) therefore Socrates is mortal. This can be abstracted and generalised in notation as a) a=b, b) b=c, c) a=c. This represents internal coherence of the steps involved, but may not say anything about the steps in the argument itself. Bertrand Russell pointed out that the statement, 'The present king of France is bald' is linguistically coherent but does not represent reality and thus not the truth. In other words, the internal consistency of an argument does not necessarily make the argument true itself.

Given these various problems, the philosophical discipline of Pragmatism, which originated in America at the end of the 19th Century, took a different approach. Rather than asking 'What is Truth?’, pragmatists ask 'What are the consequences of something being true. At the most basic level this means 'does it work?’ or 'what does it do? You may well say that you could think of many instances where the value of an action may not express anything about its truth value. Consequently, truth in pragmatic terms is explored in notions such as reaching the end of enquiry, something that can be asserted with warrant and people can agree to as being the best explanation, given the basis of current knowledge. Truth, therefore, is provisional and contextual, rather than absolute.

Well, not surprisingly people started to ask question the value of the word truth itself and whether it added any value. From a linguistic perspective, did the word Truth add anything to a state of affairs? Here we find the deflationary account of Truth. This comes in different guises but its essence is that the value of the word Truth is limited only to describing common meanings of Truth across several categories. For example, to say that the Theory of Evolution is true, is significantly more convenient than having to state every argument within the Theory. Truth in effect is reduced to a linguistic collective term or a state of affairs or the inevitable consequence of logically valid arguments.

The more radical position of Deflationary theory is the Redundancy Theory of Truth. This eliminates the need for the term Truth altogether by asserting that the word itself adds nothing to the state of affairs under discussion. For example, nothing useful is added to the sentence 'London is the capital of England' by adding 'It is true that ...’. Now, this kind of elimination may seem appropriate for linguistic constructs and is relevant in the world of logical notation. The question remains – Is this all there is to the notion of Truth?

What has become clear is that the intuitive and everyday notion of Truth we all seem to live by is, in fact, much more complex once you begin to scratch under the surface. The Truth may no longer 'be out there', eternally and universal but this does not mean that there is no such thing as Truth. Like all abstract concepts, Truth represents a principle, a paradigm but it can only ever emerge in specific contexts and actual and individual situations.

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