



Wittgenstein at His Word (Continuum Studies in British Philosophy)

By Duncan Richter

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Wittgenstein's work is notoriously difficult to understand and, at least superficially, deals almost exclusively with obscure and technical problems in logic and the philosophy of language. He once asked rhetorically: "What is the use of philosophy ... if it does not improve your thinking about the important questions of everyday life?". This book explains how Wittgenstein's idea of the value of philosophy shaped his philosophical method and led him to talk and write about the abstruse questions he dealt with in most of his work.

This is not just another introductory overview of Wittgenstein's philosophy. It is one of the few that provide such an overview while also referring constantly to ethics and religion. Moreover, its interpretation of Wittgenstein is far from orthodox, as standard treatments of his work disregard or downplay his claims about what he was doing and why. Duncan Richter takes him at his word, showing the connections between Wittgenstein's aims, the various subjects he worked on (psychology, religion, aesthetics, etc.), and the way in which he worked on them.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Richter has an original and very stimulating approach to Wittgenstein, and his new book will be of interest to specialists and non-specialists alike.” —Professor Cora Diamond, University of Virginia

"Richter's book is smoothly written, draws usefully on a wide variety of secondary sources, and offers an interesting and novel account of the structure of Wittgenstein's writing. A virtue of the book is its placing Wittgenstein's work in the setting of his personal views about culture and value...Those relatively new to Wittgenstein may find the book useful as an orientation to his work, and others may be stimulated by the questions it raises and its exploration of Wittgenstein's remarks on ethics and religion." —Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews, August 2005 (*Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews*)

'There is much to admire about this book. It has an easy style and without doubt it addresses issues that anyone embarking on a study of Wittgenstein's work ought to get to grips with. Moreover, it discusses — in a very useful way — how we might begin to understand and put into perspective Wittgenstein's views on ethics and religion... this book is a very useful supplement.' ~ Prof. Daniel D. Hutto, *Journal of ISSEI* (Professor Daniel D. Hutto)

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About the Author

Duncan Richter teaches philosophy at the Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Virginia.

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