Nordic Studies in Pragmatism

Helsinki — 2026

Jonathan Knowles

"Pragmatism, Truth, and Naturalism: Revisiting the Price-Rorty debate"

Nordic Pragmatism Network,
Helsinki 2026

www.nordprag.org

Pragmatism, Truth, and Naturalism: Revisiting the Price-Rorty debate

Jonathan Knowles
Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Introduction

Richard Rorty and Huw Price, two giants of contemporary pragmatism, share many core commitments but also put these to use in quite different ways. The—or at least a—starting point for both is a rejection of *representationalism*—roughly, as Rorty famously articulated it, the idea that we should understand our cognitive practices on the model of the mind or language *mirroring* nature or mind-independent reality (Rorty, 1979). Somewhat less roughly speaking, and particularly in Price's version, representationalism is the idea that truth and other semantic notions like reference are to be understood as substantial, explanatorily significant relations between bits of language and / or thought and things in the world (Price, 2011; 2013). Rorty expressed his own rejection of representationalism by saying there are only causal not semantic relations between language and the world and that our aim should be, as Dewey put it, to cope with reality, not to copy it. The idea that reality in itself is to be articulated by the mechanistic science that emerged in seventeenth century rather than theology served a useful emancipatory purpose in history, but the ultimate goal of the Enlightenment should be to free ourselves from *all* non-human standards for what we are entitled to say and thereby do (Rorty, 1999). In this way, truth itself for Rorty becomes an outmoded or at least uninteresting notion, reducing to a kind of compliment we pay to statements we agree with, though also sometimes a reminder—in its *cautionary* function—that we may change our minds in meetings with future audiences (Rorty, 1986).

Rorty further sees pragmatism as an anti-philosophical or at least anti-theoretical movement. Once one gets rid of the mirroring metaphor, the central constructive projects of modern philosophy—of understanding how our knowledge can be grounded in sensation and/or reason, and how the world must be in order that we should be able thus to know it—simply lapse, as, if in a slightly more roundabout way, do those of classical analytic philosophy with its 'linguistic turn' towards conceptual analysis. Rorty devoted less time to spelling out exactly how these arguments are meant to go, appealing rather to ideas in his favourite anti-representationalist analytic philosophers like Quine, Sellars and Davidson, in keeping with a more general pessimism about the point of philosophical argument.[1] His remit is to change not just our conception of knowledge, meaning and truth, but our whole conception of what philosophy and academic activity is and is good for. Philosophers, at their best, should be seen more like poets, offering stirring new visions in the furtherance of emancipatory and humanitarian aims.

Price, though a committed anti-representationalist, has not followed Rorty in this respect. For him, systematic theoretical philosophy survives in something like the Quinean mode, as an activity and inquiry continuous with science.[2] Representationalism on his picture is a view that, while often taken for granted in various so-called 'naturalistic' philosophical enquires, is in fact suspect from precisely a scientific perspective. This is the core of Price's critique of what he calls *object* naturalism (Price, 2004). In recent decades, many philosophers, partly in light of the failures of traditional philosophy that Rorty charts, have sought to ask seemingly more tractable questions about what things like consciousness, value, meaning, causation and so on are in the physical or natural world—reality as conceived and described by science—and debated various possible replies. For Price these questions are essentially asking what these terms *refer* to in the scientific world, or what the statements they figure in are *made true by* in this world. However, this representationalist model cannot itself be coherently justified within the naturalistic world view, argues Price (here providing arguments echoing those Hilary Putnam famously gave for re-

---

[1] In Knowles (2018) I question the stability of Rorty's anti-theoretical stance given his reliance on these seemingly theory-heavy philosophical figures.

[2] Though insofar as he does not see our different discourses as all scientific there may also be room within these for some kind of systematic but non-scientific enquiry, something that I think one might even call 'metaphysics' (see Knowles, 2023, ch. 7, and Knowles, 2025). (Thanks to Josh Gert for alerting me to this point in the current context).

jecting what he called 'metaphysical realism'; see Putnam, 1977, again Price, 2004, and for a comparison of Price's view with Putnam, Price, 1998). Nevertheless, a substantive and even strongly scientific kind of naturalism survives for Price: *subject* naturalism. On this line, our enquiries as naturalist philosophers should concern explaining why and how we *use* the various bits of language philosophers traditionally have found problematic, seeking a theory that itself takes as its point of departure a conception of ourselves as natural beings in a natural world. Though somewhat different kinds of explanatory theory may be suitable for different kinds of discourses, this will often appeal to genealogy and function. Moreover, this is the *only* substantive account of vocabularies available, representation having been rejected as a quantity suited for theoretical purposes. Price calls the resulting view *global expressivism* (also *global* pragmatism, see Price, 2011; 2013), indicating thereby both its debt to classical *local* expressivisms that have focussed on the function of, say, moral and modal talk (see Blackburn, 1993), and that it nevertheless distances itself from the idea that such accounts enunciate a contrast to any more genuinely cognitive or representational discourses. Metaphysical and ontological questions are, in turn, not answered within global expressivism, but deflated along with the semantic terms themselves (see e.g. Price, 1992).

Now Rorty himself expressed sympathy with subject naturalism and related it to his own Deweyean, Darwin-inspired kind of naturalism (Rorty, 2007). One might also think that Price could be seen as a Rortian 'edifying' philosopher in putting forward the novel ideas of subject naturalism and global expressivism, and that Rorty in any case was never a direct opponent of Quine's naturalistic conception of philosophy itself (that is, as opposed to how Quine used it as a defence of physicalism). Seen in this light, the differences between Rorty and Price might seem minimal, or at least mainly ones of focus rather than substance.

However, they did as a matter of plain fact disagree on at least one central issue: how the notion of truth should be understood. Rorty's line is that though truth has a distinctive conceptual profile, rendering attempts to reduce it to justification or usefulness futile, it is not a norm or goal of inquiry, for any genuine attempt to say what is true will be simultaneously an attempt to justify our beliefs (Rorty, 1995). For Price, by contrast, truth is as a matter of sheer sociological fact a distinct norm within our cognitive practices, one that applies even when requirements of sincerity and justification are met (Price, 2003, cf. Price, 2006). Rorty was not convinced of these arguments for such a 'third' truth norm for

reasons he laid out in a letter to Price and that led to an exchange on the issue (published as Rorty and Price, 2010).

In this paper I want to revisit this debate, partly in the light of commentary on it due to David Macarthur (2020) and Michael Bacon (2012). My aim is both to clarify what is most fundamentally at stake here and also relate it to contemporary pragmatism's self-understanding as a naturalistic philosophy. Rorty's correspondence with Price involves or at least suggests two rather different responses to him. Macarthur and Bacon can be seen as running with one of these to argue that Rorty already has the resources to make sense of the phenomena Price's third norm is meant to explain. However, as I see things, the dialectical situation is not quite so simple. Firstly, these authors neglect to comment on an important part of Price's argument for his view revolving around the phenomenon of so-called *no-fault disagreements*. Moreover, their defence of Rorty depends on viewing him as the philosopher who conceded the need for the amendments to his view that were urged upon him by Bjørn Ramberg (2000). In his response to Ramberg, who builds on Davidson's argument for the necessity of a triangulation relationship between two speakers and the world in understanding human communication (Davidson, 1991), Rorty (2000) came to acknowledge (*inter alia*) a distinctive relation of 'getting it right' between our language and the world, conceived as a semantic and not purely causal relation.

In previous work (Knowles, 2013) I argued that Rorty need not have made this concession, and indeed should not have done insofar as Davidson's ideas conflict with central naturalistic commitments of Rorty's pragmatist position. In the current paper, I will not be taking a stand on precisely this issue, but I will be insisting that it is at least not clear that Rorty should have conceded what he did to Ramberg. Moreover, if we understand him as not doing so, the response to Price offered to him by Bacon and Macarthur is not readily available. The other of the two responses to Price remains, and is more in accord as I see things with Rorty's pre-Ramberg position; it is also one which, however else it fares, addresses the no-fault disagreement argument. I think spelling all this out—which will be the task of the first of two main sections of this paper—is important for understanding properly the dialectic of Price's dispute with Rorty, as well as what is more deeply at stake for pragmatism in it.

In the second section I will go on to suggest that in any case Price's argument for a third norm faces an objection that leads to a what I see as a dilemma for Price's position. The objection has been levelled by

Paul Showler (2021), building in turn on Paul Redding's critique of Price's subject naturalism (Redding, 2010). It concerns the reflective stability of Price's subject naturalistic explanations of our various cognitive practices, in the sense of whether our knowledge of these explanations would undermine our commitment to the cognitive practices themselves—in the case of the third norm, a commitment to censure one another when we disagree and thus 'seek out the truth' (as Price claims we do). Building on Showler, and *pace* Price's contrary opinion, I propose that the answer here—at least in the case of the third norm—is that it would, a result which in effect reduces Price's account to something much closer to Rorty's take on the significance of disagreement. Price could offer a response to this argument by way of giving a fuller characterization of the norm's function, but I will argue that the only way of doing this that also blocks the argument would require us to see this function in terms our capacity to track the truth in our natural environments. However, this looks like it will require us to accept a kind of *bifurcation* (Kraut, 1990) in our discourses: a distinction between those that are answerable to the real world out there and those that are not so. This is typically characteristic of local forms of expressivism (or pragmatism), but it is something that Price has resolutely sought to avoid and would seem to run against at least the spirit of his anti-representationalism.

The upshot, as I see things, is that anti-representationalist pragmatists face a stark choice between, on the one hand, a fairly hard-nosed form of their view that is, though more consistently naturalistic, perhaps dubiously coherent; and, on the other, a more liberal version that whilst able to accommodate the idea of truth as a norm and thereby explain assertion is enmeshed in a kind of argumentation that chimes less well with the ideas a thoroughgoingly naturalistic philosophy. Price's proposed middle-way—of accepting a truth norm that is nevertheless fully naturalistically explicable—is not, at least clearly, available. I will not be seeking to resolve the general issue about how naturalistic or normative pragmatism should be, but will in conclusion relate what I have said to some other recent contributions to the debate about pragmatism and naturalism.

1. Is truth a norm of enquiry?

For Rorty, a good pragmatist holds that differences in theory that make no difference in practice should be done away with in philosophy. In his paper 'Is truth a goal of inquiry?' he seeks to use this principle to argue

for a negative reply to this question—truth is not a distinct aim from that of justification, or at least for pragmatists should not be regarded as such. The paper was conceived in the first instance as critical review of Crispin Wright's *Truth and Objectivity* (Wright, 1991) but extends to a more general discussion of the realism-anti-realism debate of the 1970s and 1980s (as pursued by Michael Dummett, John McDowell and others) and how Rorty sees Davidson's approach to truth as having undermined the significance of that. Though there is a lot of detailed discussion, Rorty's main argumentative ploy is that the distinction between truth and justification, while one we can be brought to recognize in the sense that we can understand that achieving one is not necessarily achieving the other (as Wright correctly argues), is not one that we can make *use* of when we go about forming beliefs. Any episode of belief-formation, properly so called, must also be an episode of justifying the belief. For as Davidson pointed out, and Rorty also sees as following from Sellars' animadversions against the idea of givenness, 'nothing can count as a reason for holding a belief except another belief' (Davidson, 1986, 126). There is no getting at the truth directly through experience or intellectual insight. Thus, we should drop the idea that truth is a goal of enquiry, a line that also Davidson concurred in insofar as this is meant as kind of requirement distinct from that of justifying our beliefs (Davidson, 2005, 6).

There is no doubt much that Wright and the other thinkers Rorty discusses would have to say about the arguments and presuppositions of this paper. Huw Price in 'Truth as convenient friction' (Price, 2003) takes the less conventional line of contesting Rorty's claim on its own turf, as it were. Thus Price grants Rorty his pragmatist principle: a distinct norm should not simply derive from a distinction we can carve out in theoretical space but should actually guide and be operative in our behaviour. However, *pace* Rorty, Price claims that a truth norm does make precisely such a difference in our practice. His famous thought experiment aimed at showing this concerns an imaginary tribe of 'Mo'ans' ('merely opinionated asserters') who obey a *norm of sincerity* and a *norm of personal justification* in their assertions but not one of truth. For the Mo'ans, saying something you don't believe or that you have good reason to reject is an appropriate reason for censure. However, if you fulfil these requirements, no further objection is raised. Price then points out how different the Mo'ans are from us. For example, if you have good reasons, as you see things, to say that NATO has threatened Russia's legitimate sphere of influence, and I have, as I see things, good reasons to think it has not, we do not merely

shrug and go our separate ways. At the very least we feel that the other is mistaken, wrong—that they precisely have, as we say, a *false belief* and which is thus, and just insofar, defective. Hence, argues Price, there is evidently in general a third norm in play when we assert things—a truth norm. Moreover though this norm applies as a default it can in some contexts be waived. If you think strawberry ice-cream is best and I think chocolate ice-cream is, then our beliefs cannot both be true, but we tend to think there is nothing *wrong* with either view. The existence of such *no-fault disagreements* is for Price a kind of exception that proves the rule that the truth norm enunciates.

However, and importantly for Price, we can say all this without seeing the third norm as concerning anything other than a deflationary notion of truth—that is, without seeing truth as a substantial property constituted by correspondence, coherence, ideal justification or anything else. What Rorty and other deflationists (such as Paul Horwich and Simon Blackburn, see Price, 2006) miss is that this does not preclude truth talk having a distinctive function in our lives, which is precisely to make us alive to disagreements of the above kind and spur us to try to resolve them and thereby make collective rational progress.

Rorty himself replied to Price's argument, offering as I understand him two different kinds of response (Rorty and Price, 2010, 253–5). In his initial correspondence, he suggests that the difference between fault-involving and no-fault disagreements boils down to the difference between the discussion having implications for cooperative action or not doing so. If the matter is, say, one on whose resolution our sending weapons to Ukraine or not will depend, we will engage in further debate if we disagree. On the other hand, if the disagreement concerns which variety of ice-cream is best, we won't—unless (Rorty adds, to underline his point) the producers suddenly decide they will henceforth only be making one kind (ibid., 253). Price retorts that this response does not draw the distinction in our practices where we in fact draw it, failing for example to explain philosophical exchanges or indeed disagreements about *whether* an opinion matters for cooperative success or not (ibid., 254). Rorty then in his follow-up changes tack, questioning the coherency of the Mo'an thought experiment and appealing to the social nature of language and justification urged for by thinkers like Wittgenstein, Brandom and Davidson to argue that justification is always social from the get-go. Price replies to this that the *near* incoherence of the thought experiment was precisely his point: the third norm is so ubiquitous and endemic to our epistemic practices that they are

as good as unrecognizable without them (ibid., 257). He also goes on to question whether the idea of what Rorty calls 'retail' norms (ibid., 256)— piecemeal prescriptions aimed at coordinating the 'noises we make'—is enough to do justice to the idea that what we are doing is making *assertions* at all, without the idea of an overarching truth norm (ibid., 257). It is also worth adding, as Price does in the original paper (Price, 2003, 175), that even if community wide standards are standardly necessary to achieve justification, there is still the possibility of challenging these standards, as has repeatedly been done in the history of thought. Given doing that makes sense to us, the idea of a third norm again seems vindicated.

Rorty does not offer any further reply at this point, but Michael Bacon and David Macarthur have sought to rebut Price on his behalf, building on Rorty's idea of justification as essentially communal and hence the Mo'an though experiment as being incoherent (Macarthur, 2020, Bacon, 2012). Macarthur further argues that Rorty has a dynamic conception of justi-fication, allowing even for communal norms or their deliverances to be challenged. As he puts it: 'A person who meets the norms of commu-nal warranted assertibility within a particular community is, contrary to Price's criticism, put under immediate normative pressure to adjust or change his or her views in light of better information and argument and more critically robust methods of inquiry' (Macarthur op. cit., § 13). Inso-far as Price assumes a static conception of communal justification, he thus misses his mark. Bacon (op. cit.) makes similar points, arguing that on a proper understanding of Rorty, Price's arguments amount to a distinc-tion without a difference. In support of this he quotes (ibid., 239) Rorty's remark that 'many (praiseworthy and blameworthy) social movements and intellectual revolutions get started by people making unwarranted as-sertions' (Rorty, 1998a, 50)—that is, assertions not justified by the norms of the time.

Do these responses effectively silence Price's critique? I want in a mo-ment to bring attention to what I see them as presupposing by way of their interpretation of Rorty. But before that it is significant to note that they do not address Price's argument for the third norm from the existence of no-fault disagreements. Such disagreements are clearly social in that we communicate them to one another and discuss them to an extent, but they do not trigger censure via the truth norm—at least, that is how Price un-derstands them, thus inferring that such exceptions prove the rule that a distinct norm is generally in play. Accepting Price's description of the situ-ation, it is not clear how Rorty, understood along Bacon and Macarthur's

lines, would accommodate this point. Of course, Bacon and Macarthur might reject the idea of no-fault disagreements as such, saying they do involve censure or else that they perhaps are not really genuine expressions of opinion at all. I won't go into that issue here. However it is I think important for a full understanding of what is at stake in the current context to register this lacuna, not least in light of the fact that Rorty's first reply takes the idea of no-fault disagreement seriously.

What understanding of Rorty's position is it that Bacon's and Macarthur responses presuppose? They take their defence as showing that Price is *clearly* wrong in his critique of Rorty, indeed, that there is really nothing at stake between them. This is not something Rorty himself seems to think, his disagreement with Price notwithstanding. Why this difference? I think the explanation is that they are understanding Rorty's view to be the version of this as it was revised in response to Bjørn Ramberg's Davidson-inspired critique of him (Ramberg op. cit.). In his reply to Ramberg (Rorty, 2000), Rorty acknowledged the existence of non-causal relations between language and the world—relations of 'getting it right'— as part of a structure that Davidson argues is a necessary backdrop of all communication and that involves a *triangulation* between interpreter, interpretee and world (see Davidson, 1991, cf. other papers in Davidson, 2001). I will presently present this exchange more fully and also explain why I think it is a presupposition of Bacon and Macarthur, but first I just want to underline that both these authors do clearly seem to take for granted this reading of Rorty. Thus Macarthur tells us that 'Rorty follows Davidson in holding that the concept of truth is part of a package-deal of concepts including belief and meaning that is required to make sense of the idea of rational agents rationally responsive to both their natural-causal and social-linguistic environments' (§ 5). Bacon similarly tells us that Rorty

> came to amend his position in a way which would seem to bring him into line with new pragmatists. In a sympathetic commentary on Rorty, Bjørn Ramberg argues that it is quite consistent to deny that sentences try to describe the world as it is in itself while affirming that sentences try correctly to describe particular objects and events. [. . .] Rorty came to agree with new pragmatists that the point of inquiry is to get things— snow, particles, deities—right.   Bacon, 2012

'New pragmatists' is a term Cheryl Misak coined to refer to pragmatists who think that though truth and justification have to be understood in relation to our practices, these practices themselves involve the idea of answerability to objective truth, contrary to Rorty's 'neo-pragmatism', at least as he originally conceived this (see Misak, 2007a). Ramberg's Davidson-inspired pragmatism is clearly, it would seem, a form of new pragmatism.

All that said, I think it is still less than wholly clear that Rorty *should* have made the concessions he did in response to Ramberg. I will not be taking a stand either way on this question here, but what I do want to insist on is that it was a genuine change of mind and hence that there are two clearly distinguishable versions of Rorty 'out there' so to speak. Moreover, seeing this is essential to understanding Rorty's debate with Price about the third norm, in my view.

To appreciate all this a little better, I will now give a slightly more detailed recap of Ramberg's article and Rorty's response to this. This has as its backdrop Davidson's arguments about the status of intentional psychology, i.e. the psychology of belief, desire and action. Davidson famously argued for a form of physicalism or monism about such mental states and events, but also for a non-reductive such form (Davidson, 1970). For intentional explanations are governed by what he called a *constitutive ideal of rationality*, hence rendering these 'anomalous', i.e. in an important sense non-law like and in any case irreducible to laws of fundamental science. Further, this non-reductive character is importantly distinct from that of (other) special sciences, like biology and geology, insofar as the latter are only contingently irreducible (Davidson, 1987). Rorty, on the other hand, his admiration for Davidson notwithstanding, rejects—or did, pre-Ramberg, reject—any asymmetry between intentional and scientific descriptions on the grounds that it corresponds to Quine's distinction between (mere) underdetermination and indeterminacy, an idea that itself depends on accepting that physics has a kind of priority in delineating what is real (Rorty, 1998b; 1972). However, Ramberg argues that even once we reject the underdetermination/indeterminacy distinction, or at least its metaphysical significance (as Davidson himself came to do, Ramberg convincingly argues), this still allows space for thinking that intentional descriptions are in some way special. And here Ramberg's line, following Davidson's later ideas about triangulation as a precondition of communication, is that intentional descriptions—the *vocabulary of agency* as he puts it—concern the very *presuppositions of talking about anything*. Furthermore,

the vocabulary of agency makes ineliminable appeal to the idea of objective truth. Our situation is not fundamentally Cartesian: we do not first and foremost know our own subjective minds and work outwards from there; rather our knowledge of the world and that of other minds come along in a package together with knowledge of our own minds (Davidson, 1991). Rorty thus should, but also can, consistently with his rejection of substantial epistemology and metaphysics and representationalism, appropriate Davidson fully within his pragmatism, though must thereby also accept that the idea of objective truth, of 'getting it right' is inexorably involved in the vocabulary that makes it so much as possible to make assertions.

Now Rorty as noted accepts this critique of his views in his reply to Ramberg. As he is eager to point out, doing so does not entail an enormous concession, for what we get right (or wrong) are only particular things like snow, tables and foreign policies, not the 'world' or 'reality in itself'. Even so, truth as such has to be acknowledged as an eliminable and irreducible part of our basic mode of engaging in conversation with one another.

If one accepts this amendment to Rorty's view, there is in my view much plausibility in Bacon's and Macarthur's claim that Price's objection against it fails to stick—at least, putting aside the question of no-fault disagreements. If our aim in belief formation, though rightly classed as usefulness, solidarity or justification by Rorty, is also simultaneously that of 'getting it right', then we can clearly always ask of any belief or description we offer whether it *does* get things right, i.e. whether it is true—where this is thus understood as an aim of belief, if not an aim it makes sense to aim at independently of justification. With this idea in place we seem to have all we could want by way of explaining what makes those who say things inconsistent with what we do at fault in our eyes, for they will then be not living up to the aim of getting things right.

However, I think we also need to consider the non-amended version of Rorty. As already noted, I have previously argued that it is not as clear as many have assumed that Rorty should have made the concessions he made to Ramberg (Knowles, 2013). That piece was framed as a reply to Carl Sachs' use of Ramberg's paper and Rorty's response to this to motivate the idea that Rorty moved from a *non-reductive physicalist* (or *non-reductive naturalist*) picture, in which the idea of there being one discourse that trumps all others is jettisoned, to a *pragmatic naturalism*, which affords the vocabulary of agency a kind of transcendental priority,

albeit of a 'non-foundational' sort (Sachs, 2009). My basic point against
Sachs was that there is surely something non-naturalistic about a philos-
ophy that admits *any* kind of transcendental priority to a certain kind of
description, whether this status is conceived foundationalistically or oth-
erwise. I also argued it conflicted with the Darwinist aspects of Rorty's
naturalism: the vocabulary of agency, though normative, also provides
explanations of what would seem to be (and at least for Davidson are)
something quintessentially human insofar as we are the only real believ-
ers, since we are the only language-users (Davidson, 1984); and if these
explanations then differ essentially from those we apply to animals' be-
haviour, this conflicts with the idea that we are continuous with them.
I also argued that Davidson's reasoning underlying the transcendental ne-
cessity of triangulation for thought and meaningful talk is not, in any case,
as probative as many have taken it to be.

I am not concerned with the last set of arguments here, but the first
two are relevant in relation to our current focus. Rorty's appropriation
of Davidson was I think always infused with a sense of deliberate mis-
understanding, precisely in order to emphasise his co-opting of Davidson
to his own 'edifying' ends. That he should take over what looks like an
undiluted bit of *a priori* transcendental philosophy, as Davidson seemed
to see his triangulation argument, looks on the face of it to be out of kilter
with this approach. More significantly, I think it is clear from much else
that Rorty wrote that his views on truth are and are meant to be much less
systematic and unified than Davidson's, suggesting that there is an iden-
tifiable position distinct from that which, under pressure from Ramberg,
he later came to endorse. What Rorty especially liked in Davidson, apart
from his anti-representationalist rejection of the idea of scheme-content
dualism, was his eschewal of the idea that there could or should be a *the-
ory* of truth. However, he did not take over Davidson's idea that truth
provides a kind of universal key to understanding many of the central
problems of contemporary philosophy. The word 'truth' has precisely
no core meaning or explanatory function, rather it has several *different*,
irreconcilable uses for Rorty—endorsing, disquotational and cautionary
ones (Rorty, 1986). Rorty tells us it is 'weird' and 'pointless' to say that
a statement can be true for you and false for me simply in virtue of the
different uses we make of them; so we should not say that truth *reduces* to
usefulness, as William James (perhaps) did (Rorty, 1998a, 2). But this just
shows that truth, like the monotheistic conception of God, is so formal
and unitary as to be uninteresting (ibid., 3). It also pertinent to stress here

Rorty's deep opposition to epistemology and thus, indeed, to the very idea of justification as traditionally understood. Although much of what he says about truth not being a goal of enquiry revolves around a contrast with what he calls 'justification', it is important that he does not see this concept, as precisely many philosophers would, as having essential connections to truth. His basic line on justification seems to be rather a form of Jamesian pragmatism, i.e. one on which practical usefulness is what is at stake in any actual discussion of what to think, and the basis of the various 'retail norms' we obey in various different contexts. There are no *general* 'marks of truth', let alone an algorithm for getting at it. Truth for Rorty is a property we attribute *after the fact*: that of finding a certain way of thinking or describing propitious. And even though we can say of a belief that, though justified, it might not be true,—as if it were somehow falling short of a natural *telos*—the more fundamental point, I take it, is just the fundamental *contingency* of our various historically situated takes on things (Rorty, 1989). I see all this as being not just consistent with but also conducive to remaining with what Sachs calls 'non-reductive physicalism', Rorty's initial form of naturalism, which in no way trades in the idea of a special form of philosophical or transcendental condition, and moreover is concerned to see us as continuous with the rest of nature.

Of course, in light of his response to Ramberg, Rorty might also backtrack on some of the above ideas. But my point here is just that, whether this transition overall was called for or not, it was precisely that—a shift (even acknowledging that it is not one that affects the underlying commitment to anti-representationalism). Moreover, as I read the exchange he has with Price, Rorty is still fairly firmly in his more austere, Jamesian frame of mind when he is writing this, at least in the first correspondence and indeed also to a large extent—the references to Wittgenstein, Brandom and Davidson notwithstanding—in the second. The dialectical situation that both seem to accept is that Price's points against Rorty bring out points of weaknesses in the latter's view that need to be addressed if it is to be upheld. Price thinks acknowledging the third norm is the most stream-lined way for a pragmatist like Rorty to do this. To go Davidsonean in the way Ramberg sketches may in the wider scheme of things be an even better line for pragmatists to take, but it also removes us quite radically from the dialectical framework of the Price-Rorty exchange—yielding the result, as Macarthur and Bacon see it, that Price's argument simply 'misses its target' (Macarthur op. cit., § 13).

Given these clarifications, we can now I believe make more meaningful headway in assessing how successful Price's arguments for the third norm actually are. As I have hopefully now made clear, I think that, if we assume a version of Rorty modified in line with his concessions to Ramberg, then there is little in what Price says that could amount to any objection to him (at least, again, putting the issue of no-default disagreement to one side). But what if we keep to Rorty's original view? Here, his first line of resistance, the idea of fault being attributed only when cooperative action is at stake, in fact strikes me as having more going for it than Price sees. After all, we humans think and reflect about many things and argue about them only sometimes when we disagree. Sometimes these arguments are very seriously and doggedly pursued, sometimes much less so. The dismissive remark '*Whatever...*' may often end a discussion when the participants feel pursuing it is not worth the candle. It is probably true as Price says that such practical usefulness is not always a requirement for serious engagements as we actually pursue these, but of course for a progressive pragmatist like Rorty—who I take precisely is seeking to change things—that would not be a strong objection.

It is also worth pointing out that Price's point that we can have disputes about *whether* a dispute has implications for practical cooperation— whether this is *true*—is not clearly a weighty objection given a backdrop of a more general pragmatism about truth and enquiry. Price's idea is reminiscent of one of Bertrand Russell's original objections to James' pragmatist theory of truth: that it is often hard to *know* whether a belief is useful, indeed, often harder than just knowing whether it is true or not (Russell, 1910, 74). This objection at least suggests, one might think, that since we will have to know whether a belief is useful, we will have to know whether it is *true* that it is useful, thereby introducing a vicious circularity into the pragmatist account of truth. A similar objection could presumably be raised against Rorty insofar as he often claims we can never know whether a belief is true but only whether it is useful or justified; for how can we know the latter without knowing the *truth* about a belief's status as useful and/or justified? I take it however that an answer, for both James and Rorty, can build on Cheryl Misak's point that the pragmatist is not really concerned to deny the idea of truth as 'correspondence to the facts', but rather, having pointed out its practical impotence, to trace the implications of using the truth concept in practical contexts (Misak, 2007b). This implies that the evaluation of our doxastic and cognitive practices must most fundamentally be conceived in terms of the practical spin-off of these

things—possibly on the whole and in the long run, but at least *not* in terms of the question of whether some belief is *really* useful, i.e. whether it is *true* that it is useful, in some absolute sense. Thus this pragmatist can again say that to the extent we can raise a question whose resolution seems to makes no difference to practice, we should simply let it lie.

Price might still think that the truth norm marks such a robust distinction in our actual practices that it needs to be acknowledged. He might also think Rorty is bending over backwards to protect his account from what is in essence meant as a friendly amendment—one that is least meant to be fully compatible with *both* his Deweyean Darwin-inspired naturalism and his anti-representationalism. Somewhat more offensively, Price might also argue that Rorty in any case will struggle to make sense of assertion without it.

Whether Price's account itself is adequate in this last regard is in my view not totally obvious, in light of what I will say in the next section, but I will not be commenting upon this further in the sequel. Summing up for now, it is probably fair to say that Price's account at least captures the phenomenon *as they stand* better than at least the pre-Rambergian time-slice of Rorty does, and that this latter figure would have to be somewhat revisionary about what we take it to be rational to debate. In the next section however I will argue that Price's account faces a strong, independent objection, given the kind of explanation the third norms is meant to have on his subject naturalist view, and given also he wants to remain faithful to his anti-representationalism. His middle-way for a naturalistic pragmatism is thus not clearly available.

2. Why Price's view of truth should be rejected by anti-representationalists

Price's subject naturalism is, as we have seen, a scientific project that aims, not to vindicate our practices, but to explain them as natural responses of a natural creature in a natural world. At the same time, the practices themselves are not meant to be threatened by these explanations, for semantic notions of truth and reference do not relate us to the world outside language and thought, but apply insofar as we make recognizable moves within the 'game of giving and asking for reasons', as Robert Brandom puts it (Brandom, 1998). From the perspective of the practices themselves, as it were—the internal perspective, in Carnap's sense (see Price, 2009)—we are making claims about things and their properties and debating their

correctness, whether it is ethics, art history or quantum mechanics we are engaged in. Moreover, given the rejection of representationalism, there is no perspective from which we can or at least need to say that what we are doing in any of these cases fails to latch onto 'how things really are'.[3]

Of course, science itself, including that involved in doing subject naturalism, is also one of (or a set of) our practices and thus something we can be or become aware of as giving explanations of our other vocabularies. Does or would having this awareness raise any problems for Price's programme? Some have thought so, in particular Paul Showler (op. cit.), who builds on ideas due to Paul Redding (op. cit.). The basic thought is that if all philosophy can do is to tell us that our cognitive responses of various kinds—our judgements, in the sense of *what* we judge—are in some way a function of how *we* are and not just of how *things* are, this will tend to undermine our faith in these responses and our conviction that we are, or even can be, getting things right—making true assertions—at all. Price is aware of this kind of worry—he calls it *dialogical nihilsm*—and has responded that even one apprised of the naturalistic basis underlying our cognitive practices will not be able to desist from engaging in them even if they felt so-inclined insofar as they are so central to our way of living (2003, 187 ff.; cf. Price, 1996, § 13). We could no more stop caring about truth than we could about food or sex upon finding out that we are not responding to any properties of 'desirability' out there in the world (Price, 2003, 187). But Price also suggests that even if such knowledge could destabilize our practices this would not be a reason to think his account false, but only for 'keeping the conclusion quiet' (ibid.).

He goes on (p. 188 f.) to consider a related worry that one might have with his view on truth that carries over in an instructive way to explanations for particular discourses, such as ethics. This is that his line entails a kind of fictionalism (about variously truth, value or whatever) which itself might seem to be destabilizing of our practices. And here he simply points out that his view is not a form of fictionalism. Subject naturalism—or perhaps we should rather the stress the overall position of global expressivism—does not *deny* the existence of anything we are pretheoretially committed to or suggest our talk is *dis*connected from what it is meant to be about. Naturalistic explanations for Price do not, in particular, amount to any kind of *debunking* of our practices, as others have averred (typically in relation to ethics, see e.g. Street, 2006). In virtue

---

[3] For more on how I understand the 'can' versus 'need' issue and its significance, see Knowles (2023, ch. 2.2).

of the overall deflationary attitude to the semantic notions, this kind of dialectic is simply not joined.

Is Price's view of truth and his overall subject naturalist programme then not after all vulnerable to Showler's and Redding's critique? In my view, things are not quite so straightforward. To start with, I believe that when it comes to the question of why we discuss and debate things at all, which is what Price's truth norm is meant to explain, the impact of thinking in subject naturalistic terms is importantly different from what it is in relation to explaining particular discourses. In the former case the phenomenon in question is the domain-general one of our making claims, disagreeing with one another and (we hope or assume) making progress by trying to show our opponents are mistaken or accepting the force of better argument ourselves. Price's subject naturalist explanation here is that we do this is because of a natural tendency to regard opinions contrary to our own, regardless of their justificatory status, as being at fault. How is this different from a subject naturalistic account—an expressivist account, let us say for concreteness, albeit in the 'globalist' sense—of ethical talk? This may, I take, to a certain extent, give an answer to why we go in for talking ethically, in terms of what adaptive (biological or cultural) function it serves. However, given that we do so talk and think, it does not, and is not intended to explain our ethical *existence* or *being*, so to speak: it does not explain the world of moral value that we encounter in virtue of our being a certain kind of creature in a certain kind of natural environment. Price here talks of different discourses bringing with them different 'i-worlds' ('i' for internal) (Price, 2013, 56). Like the projections of a holographic data projector, these are not to be thought of as projected onto a preexisting natural 'screen', but spring into being in thin air, as it were, along with our talking the relevant talk (Price, 2011, 29). Even the world of science—what Price calls the 'e-world'—is at root just the i-world of science, not the metaphysical basis for everything else (Price, 2013, 55). By contrast, in relation to the third norm it seems a functionalist account of this—the account of why we behave in accord with it—will be, at least potentially, explanatorily exhaustive of what there is to say about the relevant phenomenon here. To think and make claims and argue is not something that characterises any particular world or way of 'being in the world' but is just a functional feature of all creatures capable of rational activity. As I argued above, on Price's behalf, an expressivistic account of ethics does not threaten (say) ethical commitment and assertion, because it does not engage with the *world* of ethics, given global expressivism. By

contrast, it is very unclear how the naturalistic account of the third norm could do anything other than engage with our discursive practices *understood just as such*, for these do not bring any *particular* i-world with them.[4] And so the question plausibly can arise here, as it cannot in relation to particular domains of discourse, as to whether knowledge of the functional explanation that Price envisages of this norm could undermine our faith that seeking the truth is *quite generally* an important thing to do.

Now Price might still protest here that even if that faith were undermined on gaining this knowledge, it would and could not dislodge the disposition itself: we would still continue to debate with those we disagree with (as we noted above). However, as Showler retorts (op. cit., 4323), it is not clear that this is in fact correct. It seems, by contrast, quite conceivable that a person might begin to doubt that there is, say, any ethical or political truth—perhaps because there seem to be so many different and irresolvable disagreements about these things. Couldn't then their knowledge that we are spurred to engage with people who disagree with us only because of some natural tendency to do so potentially lead this person to give up on such debate, and the idea that there is any truth to be discovered here, entirely? Indeed, as we have seen through the phenomena of no-fault disagreement, Price himself allows that there are areas where we do not engage in debate even though we do hold contrary opinions. If this accepted, is it not at least highly conceivable that losing faith in the normativity we pretheoretically take to motivate the resolution of disagreements would impact on our tendency to engage in such resolution in quite different kinds of cases? We should also bear in mind Rorty's point here that when cooperative action depends on it, we will any case need to coordinate 'the noises' we make to one another. So even if our knowledge of the basis of the truth norm were to lead us to doubt its applicability in many areas, this would thus not lead to complete dialogical nihilism. (This of course in turn suggests that the light between Price and Rorty on these matters may not after all be very great, as Bacon and Macarthur also argue, though understood now as applying to the pre-Ramberg Rorty.)

Now as we saw above, Price also thinks that, even though dialogical nihilism is not a practical threat, even if it were, this would not undermine his theory about the origin of the third norm, but only give us a

---

4 Price also talks of the 'i-world' in the Wittgensteinean sense as 'everything that is the case', but this is not some kind of real totality for him insofar as he rejects metaphysical realism.

reason for keeping it secret. However, without further ado it is difficult to assess the import of this remark. Price implies that abiding by the norm is good for us in conducing us to debate and argument, but he never in fact makes it totally clear why this is a good thing or indeed can be on his view. An obvious thought for many, I take it, when they first encounter Price's line, is that the third norm has some kind of biological or perhaps culturally adaptive function: we disagree with those with contrary opinions because doing so in the past has had some kind of favourable upshot and thus been selected for. Price tells us little about what this 'upshot' might be other than helping himself to the pre-theoretical idea of 'cognitive progress'. However, I think an anti-representationalist—one who does not see cognitive practices as converging on the nature of a single 'reality'—needs to say at least a little more by way of what they understand by this notion.

A more concrete way of thinking about the function in question that evolutionary psychologists have discussed recently is in terms of its social utility. Thus according to Dan Sperber and Hugo Mercier, the primary function of argument and debate is not to get at the truth or make better decisions but to persuade our conspecifics of the correctness of our own views (Sperber and Mercier, 2018). Now if that were correct, then perhaps the kind of reflective knowledge of the origins of the truth norm that Showler thinks would undermine our practices could rather uphold our tendency to try to convince others who disagree with us, for we would understand that we ourselves had something to benefit from it, say, in terms of social prestige. However, I think this is in fact rather doubtful. As Cesare Cozzo (2011) has argued in another critique of Price, our pretheoretical understanding of argument acknowledges a clear distinction between persuasion and rational conviction—between what Cozzo calls epistemicially virtuous and non-virtuous modes of argument (such as coercing or even threatening people into agreement with you). If Price's norm has its evolutionary ground most fundamentally in the latter kind of activity, it is not all clear that faith in our epistemic practices as we pretheoretically think of them could survive our getting to know this.

Here we are of course entering complex territory, both conceptual and empirical. Some might argue that the very distinction between virtuous and non-virtuous argumentation needs to be rethought from a perspective that looks at our social activities from an evolutionary perspective. It seems at least clear from what we are beginning to understand about this perspective that what we might think of as our 'epistemic responsiveness

to our environment' will be mediated by complex, interacting systems of norms in the highly social kind of organism we humans are. However, we do not need to go into further details here, for I think we in any case have enough to see the contours of dilemma for Price.

His characterisation of the third norm can either prescind from any account of how it puts us in epistemic touch with our environment (possibly characterising the function in non-epistemic terms), or not so prescind. On the one hand, taking the former case, we must face, I maintain—and as Showler argues—the problem of understanding how knowledge of the origin of such a norm could avoid having undermining effects on our truth-seeking practices, as we pretheoretically understand these (cf. Cozzo's point). On the other hand, taking the latter case, to the extent the characterisation of the third norm goes into how it puts us epistemically in touch with our environments, though it may then become reflectively stable, it becomes difficult, or at best unclear, to see how this can be made compatible with anti-representationalism. For in this case it will be hard to see how the ultimate aim of belief formation—as steered by the third norm, made reflectively stable through our knowledge of the function of this—could avoid being answerability to precisely *those* truths: *truths about our natural environments*. And if that is the case then it seems we will backsliding into precisely a kind of bifurcation between different kinds of truth, or at least different kinds of belief: those that represent how things are and those that though perhaps purporting to do this in fact do not. And saying this is surely to opt out of anti-representationalism and global expressivism.

One might perhaps object here that it was never part of Price's view that all the truth-evaluable or truth-apt assertions we make are 'answerable' to anything other than themselves, as it were, at least insofar as they are sincere and have some kind of rationale from the perspective of the person making them. This is precisely what assertions in no-fault disagreements show, one might say. So if the same thing ends up having to be said about assertions about non-naturlistic domains like value, beauty, modalilty and so on, then that too doesn't indicate any divergence from anti-representationalism—for their *semantics* can still be essentially the same as that of claims about the natural world (i.e. a deflationary one).

I am not quite sure how to answer this but I am quite sure that it is desperate. I have been concerned in this paper, to an extent at least, to do some justice to the phenomenon of no-fault disagreements. However, though I am inclined to think many of our disagreements are ones where

we do not impute fault, I am not so sure that I have any clear way of understanding why this so that is not either classically expressivist (i.e. *emotivist* or similar)—or else Rortian, that is, framed in terms of them not mattering to cooperative action. Appealing just to their failure to generate disagreement, as Price does, seems too flimsy a basis for putting theoretical weight on them. What does seem clear, given Showler is right anyway, is that discovering our discussions about the putative truth of various propositions is driven by something other than a tendency to find out how these would answer to what they are about would surely undermine our faith that we are really involved in epistemic practices in relation to them; and also, that if we discovered it was driven by a tendency to find out about only certain kinds of truth, then we would reasonably conclude that these are what epistemic activity should really be concerned with.

Perhaps this is not *strictu dictu* in tension with anti-representationalism. But it does look like a view on which a much stronger kind of naturalism than that which Price wants to acknowledge would be vindicated: a kind of object naturalism similar to Quine's, on which talk of anything that is non-physical or non-extensional is at best a kind of 'second grade system' (Quine, 1969, 24). This kind of view is indeed compatible with anti-representationalism (Quine was himself a deflationist; see Knowles, 2017 for more general discussion of the logical compatibility of object naturalism and anti-representationalism). But much of the point of global expressivism I take it lies in its capacity to make this kind of physicalist view seem unmotivated (Knowles, 2023, ch. 2.2). If it instead ends up endorsing a view like Quine's, that would seem like a serious drawback.

In sum, then, I think Showler's objection sticks: Price fails to justify the idea that the third, truth norm could survive reflectively incorporation into our practices—at least, he fails as long as he wants to uphold his anti-representationalism and/or global expressivism. His view either seems to collapse into that of Rorty's first response to him, on which disagreements where fault is attributed are those where collaborative action is at stake, or else must leave behind much of what motivates the wider project of global expressivism (if not anti-representationalism itself).

Conclusion

One important aim of this paper has been to revisit the Price-Rorty debate about truth and offer what I think is some necessary clarification of the di-

alectical situation between them in light of recent commentary on Rorty's view (including his own). In the course of this, and especially through the arguments of section 2, I hope to have shown that anti-representationalist pragmatists face a stark choice between a more and less committedly naturalist form of their view. As noted in the Introduction, this is between a fairly hard-nosed naturalism that is perhaps however only dubiously coherent, and a more liberal naturalism that whilst able to accommodate more straightforwardly the ideas of truth as a norm and assertion is less faithful to a thoroughgoingly naturalistic picture. Price's proposal involving a subject naturalistic explanation of a third, truth norm, while promising a *media res* that combines the best of both, seems not to be available without relapsing into representationalism or at least departing from much of what makes global expressivism attractive.

Other contemporary pragmatists are alive to these sorts of issues. Thus Joshua Gert has recently argued, *contra* most famously Brandom, that a more austere form of pragmatism that eschews primitive normative notions as part of its theoretical tool-kit is not only viable but, from the perspective of (neo-)pragmatism itself a preferable version of the programme (Gert, 2024). He takes himself here to be defending Price's view which also involves, as we have seen, a kind of scientific naturalism albeit of a non-metaphysical variety. On the other side of the divide, we find, in addition to Brandom, thinkers like Lionel Shapiro (see e.g. Shapiro, 2022) as well as David Macarthur (2014), who have both argued that Price's global expressivism should or indeed must embrace a form of liberal naturalism. I do not have much more to offer by way of direct contribution to the debate here, but in light of what I have argued in this paper it is important, I believe, to appreciate that exactly *Price's* way of understanding how our cognitive practices are meant to be fully explicable from a thoroughgoingly naturalistic point of view is not an attractive one for the neo-pragmatist. Whether this also spells the death knell for other ways one might do this, such as that developed by Gert, remains an open question. It also remains an open question whether the project of global expressivism itself presupposes something like the idea of a distinctive truth norm for our discourses—however exactly we explain the existence and status of this—or whether the project can also be given sense to within Rorty's more austerely Jamesian way of understanding truth, assertion and epistemic norms. But these must be questions for subsequent work.[5]

References

Blackburn, Simon (1993). *Essays in Quasi-Realism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bacon, Michael (2012). "On the apparent differences between contemporary pragmatists: Richard Rorty and the New Pragmatism", *Humanities* 1:3, 229–245, `DOI:10.3390/h1030229`.

Brandom, Robert (1998). *Articulating Reasons*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Cozzo, Cesare (2012). "Gulliver, truth and virtue", *Topoi: An International Review of Philosophy* 31:1, 59–66.

Davidson, Donald (1970). "Mental events", reprinted in his *Essays on Actions and Events* (pp. 207–228). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980.

Davidson, Donald (1984). "Thought and talk", reprinted in his *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (pp. 155–170). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

Davidson, Donald (1986). "A coherence theory of truth and knowledge" in: E. Lepore (ed.), *Truth and Interpretation: Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson* (pp. 307–319). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Davidson, Donald (1987). "Problems in the explanation of action", in: P. Pettit, R. Sylvan and J. Norman (eds.), *Metaphysics and Morality: Essays in Honour of J. J. C Smart* (pp. 35–49). Oxford: Blackwell.

Davidson, Donald (1991). "Three varieties of knowledge", reprinted in Davidson (2001) (pp. 205–220).

Davidson, Donald (2001). *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective: Philosophical Essays Volume 3*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Davidson, Donald (2005). *Truth, Language, and History: Philosophical Essays Volume 5*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gert, Joshua (2024). "Naturalism, normativity, and neopragmatism", unpublished ms. (paper delivered at *Forum for the Theory of Science*, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway, 19th March 2024).

Knowles, Jonathan (2013). "Non-reductive naturalism and the vocabulary of agency", *Contemporary Pragmatism* 10:2, 155–172.

Knowles, Jonathan (2017). "Global expressivism and the flight from metaphysics", *Synthese* 194:12, 4781–4797.

Knowles, Jonathan (2023). *Representation, Experience, and Metaphysics: Towards an Integrated Anti-Representationalist Philosophy*. Cham: Springer Verlag.

Knowles, Jonathan. (2025). "Should metaphysics be (re)conceived as metalinguistic negotiation?" Metaphilosophy 56:3–4, 356–372, `https://doi.org/10.1111/meta.70003`.

Kraut, Robert. (1990). "Varieties of pragmatism", *Mind* 99: 394, 157–183.

Macarthur, David (2014). "What's the Use? Price and Wittgenstein on naturalistic explanations of language", AL-MUKHATABAT: Special Issue on Wittgenstein, 9, 77–95.

Macarthur, David (2020). "Does Rorty have a blindspot about truth?", *European Journal of Pragmatism and American Philosophy* xii–1, http://journals.open edition.org/ejpap/1851; https://doi.org/10.4000/ejpap.1851

Misak, Cheryl (ed.) (2007a). *New Pragmatists*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Misak, Cheryl (2007b). "Pragmatism and deflationism", in: Misak (2007a) (pp. 68–90).

Price, Huw. (1992). "Metaphysical pluralism" reprinted in Price (2011) (pp. 34–53).

Price, Huw. (1996). "Two paths to pragmatism", in: R. Casati and C. Tappolet, (eds.), *European Review of Philosophy* 3 (pp. 109–147). Stanford: clsi Publications.

Price, Huw (1998). "Ramsey, reference and reductionism", unpublished ms., available at https://philpapers.org/archive/PRIRRA-2.pdf (accessed 14.11.25).

Price, Huw (2003). "Truth as convenient friction", reprinted in Price (2011) (pp. 163-183).

Price, Huw (2004). "Naturalism without representationalism", reprinted in Price (2011) (pp. 184–199).

Price, Huw (2006) "Blackburn and the war on error", *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 84:4, 603–614, https://doi.org/10.1080/00048400601079177.

Price, Huw (2009). "Metaphysics after Carnap: The ghost who walks?", reprinted in Price (2011) (pp. 280–303).

Price, Huw (2011). *Naturalism without Mirrors*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Price, Huw (with Simon Blackburn, Paul Horwich, Michael Williams and Robert Brandom) (2013). *Expressivism, Pragmatism, and Representationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Putnam, Hilary (1977). "Realism and reason", *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, 50: 6, 483–498

Ramberg, Bjørn (2000). "Post-ontological philosophy of mind: Rorty versus Davidson" in: R. Brandom (ed.), *Rorty and his Critics* (pp. 351–370). Oxford: Blackwell.

Redding, Paul (2010). "Two directions for analytic Kantianism: Naturalism and idealism", in: M. De Caro and D. Macarthur (eds.), *Naturalism and Normativity* (pp. 263– 285). New York: Columbia University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1972). "Indeterminacy of translation and truth", *Synthese* 4: 23, 443–462.

Rorty, Richard. (1979). *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1986). "Pragmatism, Davidson, and truth' in: E. Lepore (ed.), *Truth and Interpretation: Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson* (pp. 333–355). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1989). *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1998a). *Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers, Volume 3*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, Richard (1998b). "McDowell, Davidson, and spontaneity", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 58:2, 389–394.

Rorty, Richard (1995) "Is truth a goal of enquiry? Davidson vs. Wright", *Philosophical Quarterly*, 45:180, 281–300.

Rorty, Richard (1999). "Pragmatism as anti-authoritarianism", *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 53:207, 7–20.

Rorty, Richard (2007). "Naturalism and quietism" in his *Philosophy as Cultural Politics: Philosophical Papers Volume* IV (pp. 147–159). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, Richard and Price, Huw (2010). "Exchange on 'Truth as convenient friction'" in: M. De Caro and D. Macarthur (eds.), *Naturalism and Normativity* (pp. 253–261). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Russell, Bertrand (1910). "William James's conception of truth", reprinted in: S. Blackburn and K. Simmons (eds.), *Truth* (pp. 69–82). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sachs, Carl (2009). "Natural agents: a transcendental argument for pragmatic naturalism", *Contemporary Pragmatism* 6:1, 15–37.

Shapiro Lionel (2022). "Price's subject naturalism and liberal naturalism" in: M. De Caro and D. Macarthur (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Liberal Naturalism* (pp. 152– 164). Abingdon, Oxon. and New York: Routledge

Showler, Paul (2021). "Why subject naturalists need pragmatic genealogy", *Synthese* 199:1–2, 4313–4335.

Sperber, Dan and Mercier, Hugo (2018). *Enigma of Reason: A New Theory of Human Understanding.* New York*:* Penguin.

Street, Sharon (2006). "A Darwinian dilemma for realist theories of value", *Philosophical Studies* 127, 109–166, `https://doi.org/10.1007/s11098-005-17 26-6`.

Wright, Crispin. (1991). *Truth and Objectivity*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.