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### **Truth and Truthmakers**

Truths are determined not by what we believe, but by the way the world is. Or so realists about truth believe. Philosophers call such theories correspondence theories of truth. Truthmaking theory, which now has many adherents among contemporary philosophers, is the most recent development of a realist theory of truth, and in this book D. M. Armstrong offers the first full-length study of this theory. He examines its applications to different sorts of truth, including contingent truths, modal truths, truths about the past and the future, and mathematical truths. In a clear, even-handed and non-technical discussion he makes a compelling case for truthmaking and its importance in philosophy. His book marks a significant contribution to the debate and will be of interest to a wide range of readers working in analytical philosophy.

D. M. ARMSTRONG'S many publications include *A Materialist Theory of Mind* (1968) and *A World of States of Affairs* (1997).

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D. M. ARMSTRONG

*Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, University of Sydney*



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For Charlie Martin, who introduced me  
to the notion of a truthmaker

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## *Preface*

My thoughts on truthmakers have only developed slowly. A brilliant shaft of light from Charlie Martin introduced me to the notion many years ago, but it took me a long time to understand the full implications of his idea. And only since 1997 have I put truthmaking itself at the centre of my work on metaphysics.

The concept of truthmaking has become widely diffused throughout the Australian philosophical community, and I am conscious of debts to John Bigelow, John Fox, Frank Jackson, George Molnar, Daniel Nolan, Greg Restall and probably others who have helped to create a climate of thought. In the meanwhile the same enterprise, and – rather wonderfully – the very same word, came to birth in the other hemisphere in a seminal 1984 article by Kevin Mulligan, Peter Simons and Barry Smith. Their subsequent work has since flowed together with the thinking that Martin taught, to the enrichment of us all. In England mention should be made of Hugh Mellor and his students. And in 2002 a conference on the topic of truthmakers was held in Manchester, one that I had the pleasure of attending. Martin returned to North America after some years at Adelaide and then Sydney, settling in the University of Calgary, from where his insistence on truthmakers had influence on a number of persons in the US and Canada, notably John Heil. I thank him for his help with this book. An American philosopher who uses the notion in his work but was not influenced by Martin is Herbert Hochberg. I thank him for valuable comment, especially on chapter 2.

Bertrand Russell in his later work spoke of the ‘verifier’, but was working with the notion of the truthmaker. He, I suppose, is the major ancestor of this powerful concept that is now available to the realist metaphysician, and is used by many of them.

A special issue of the periodical *Logique et Analyse*, edited by Peter Forrest and Drew Khlentzos and subtitled *Truth Maker and Its Variants*, has come to my notice at too late a point to take account of it. But it contains

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*Preface*

what seem to be a number of very useful contributions to truthmaker theory. It is to be noted that its asserted date of publication (2000) does not correspond to the date of its actual appearance. I would like to thank Angela Blackburn for her admirable copyediting.

*Sydney 2003*