

Out of Error

Further Essays on Critical Rationalism

David Miller,



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If there has been some modest advance, since Karl Popper's death in 1994, in the general understanding of his critical rationalist theory of knowledge and philosophy of science, there is still widespread resistance both to it and to the recognition of the magnitude of his contribution. Popper long ago diagnosed the logical problems of traditional enlightenment rationalism (as did some irrationalists), but instead of pretending that they are readily solved or embracing irrational defeatism (as do postmodernists), he provided a cogent and liberating rationalist alternative. This book promotes, defends, criticizes, and refines this alternative.

David Miller is the foremost exponent of the purist critical rationalist doctrine and here presents his mature views, discussing the role that logic and argument play in the growth of knowledge, criticizing the common understanding of argument as an instrument of justification, persuasion or discovery and instead advocating the critical rationalist view that only criticism matters. Miller patiently and thoroughly undoes the damage done by those writers who attack critical rationalism by invoking the sterile mythology of induction and justification that it seeks to sweep away. In addition his new material on the debate on verisimilitude is essential reading for all working in this field.

Contents

Preface; Karl Popper: a scientific memoir; Three stages of critical rationalism; What do arguments achieve?; Falsifiability: more than a convention?; Induction: a problem solved; Back to the frying pan; Being an absolute sceptic; How little uniformity need an inductive inference presuppose?; Critical rationalism's debt to Tarski; Beauty: a road to the truth?; Thirty years of language dependence; Is paraconsistent logic ever used?; Making falsification bite; In Memoriam; Bibliography; Index.

About the Author

David Miller was an assistant to Karl Popper in the 1960s, and worked closely with him for the next thirty years. He taught at the University of Warwick, UK, and has held appointments also at universities in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. He has been Honorary Treasurer of the British Society for the Philosophy of Science, Secretary of the British Logic Colloquium, and Chair of the British National Committee for Logic, Methodology & Philosophy of Science. His publications include *Critical Rationalism. A Restatement and Defence* (1994), and many papers in logic, probability, and the philosophy of science. His anthology *Popper Selections* (originally *A Pocket Popper*) has been translated into Albanian, Chinese, Georgian, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Romanian, Spanish, and Swedish.

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