<table>
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<th>Theories of Truth</th>
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| **Correspondence Theory** | - there is a relationship between people’s internal beliefs and the realities of the external world  
- truth is an agreement between thought and reality  
- a belief is true if it agrees with a fact or coincides with something about the physical world  
- **Bertrand Russell** - something is true if it corresponds with something independent of the perceiver. Neither truth nor falsehood can exist without beliefs. | - it is oversimplistic  
- it only covers some types of truth situations  
- it doesn’t tell us about the truth of concepts or things outside our perception (e.g. deities) |
| **Coherence Theory** | - **G. W. F. Hegel** said a belief is considered true because it is consistent with an existing belief or body of knowledge  
- emphasizes the consistency of ideas in relation to one another rather than between belief and fact  
- e.g. you will believe that a ghost moved your homework if that idea is consistent with the rest of your beliefs about the supernatural, life after death, etc. | - it can’t guarantee truth because your body of knowledge could be based on other untrue things  
- **A.C. Ewing** said that coherence theory seems to rely on correspondence theory |
| **Pragmatic Theory** | - **Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey** said truth and falsehood related to the usefulness and uselessness of beliefs or statements  
- **James**: “Truth is made, just as health, wealth, and strength are made, in the course of experience.”  
- pragmatists say humans create their own truth, that there are no fixed truths  
- **Richard Rorty** says there is no point in even trying to define truth | - belief can be true but not useless or false and useful  
- what happens when groups with opposing accepted truths interact with each other?  
- what if someone in power creates a damaging truth and has the power to impose it on many people? |
| **Zen Buddhism** | - **D.T. Suzuki** explained that in Zen, knowledge consists of *intuitive knowledge* and *knowledge from reason*  
- knowledge from reason requires dissecting and analyzing something from its pieces/components  
- the Zen way is to use intuitive knowledge, which involves understanding the things oneness or essence | - scientific understanding greatly benefits from dissection of ideas, objects, etc. to know about smaller and smaller concepts and components of the universe |
1. Examine the photo of a sculptor’s depiction of *Archaeoraptor liaoningensis*. The picture of a reconstructed bird-like dinosaur originally appeared in *National Geographic*. The sculpture was created using as evidence a skeleton that had been discovered in China. After publishing the article, the magazine’s editors discovered that the skeleton was a hoax. Which epistemological school of thought does this incident support? Why? Does this incident change the way you would respond to the question, **What is truth?** Explain why.

2. Some contemporary philosophers such as Richard Rorty have suggested that the search for truth is futile. What are your thoughts on this position?

3. Psychologists and psychiatrists frequently work with people who must come to terms with their perceptions of truth, whether in the form of a painful memory of the past or the painful realization of the truth of their present circumstances. Which theory of truth (or combination of them) might create an approach that might help someone heal the pain associated with these truths?