

Contents

Preface	xiii
Introduction	i
Part 1. The Problem	5
1. The sceptical challenge to rationality	7
Introduction	7
Humean scepticism	8
Rationality and justification	16
Psychological and epistemological scepticism	19
Scepticism: a summary	21
Part 2. Inconclusive Arguments Against Scepticism	23
2. The pragmatic argument: Carnap	25
The pragmatic answer to scepticism	25
Carnap's argument	26
Internal criticisms of Carnap's argument	27
Existential presuppositions and metaphysical theories	33
External criticisms of the pragmatic argument	36
Conclusion	38
3. The appeal to common sense: Moore	40
Common sense	40
The primacy of common sense	43
The rational justification of common sense	48
Summary and conclusion	58
4. The implications of ordinary language: the paradigm case argument	60
Introduction	60
The first thesis	61
The second thesis	63
The third thesis	69
Conclusion	75
5. Science as a touchstone of rationality: Popper	76
Fallibilism and the sceptical challenge	76
Popper's critical rationalism	77
Criticism of critical rationalism: the metaphysical presuppositions of science	80
Conclusion	90
	ix

CONTENTS

6. The illegitimacy of the sceptical challenge: Winch	92
Introduction	92
A coherence theory of rationality	94
Two internal criticisms	97
External criticism	100
Conclusion	106
The state of the argument	107
Part 3. Rationality	109
7. The requirements of the theory of rationality	111
External and internal accounts of rationality	111
Explanation of preanalytic facts	113
Rationality and logic	114
Rationality and success in action	114
Rationality and criticism	114
Defense of presuppositions	115
The rationality of theories	115
Psychological, formal, and philosophical accounts of rationality	116
Conformity to standards of rationality	117
8. A theory of rationality: the external account	118
Introduction	118
Problem-solving	120
Problems of life and problems of reflection	122
Removable problems and enduring problems	126
Conclusion	131
9. A theory of rationality: the internal account	133
Introduction	133
Logical consistency	135
Conceptual coherence	149
Explanatory power	153
Criticizability	157
Conclusion	163
10. The value of rationality	164
Why should a person accept a rational theory?	165
The justification of rationality	167
Reason and emotion	170
Rationality and practice	181
Rationality and politics	184
Conclusion	190
The state of the argument	192

Part 4. The Refutation of Scepticism	195
11. A refutation of solipsistic scepticism	197
Solipsism and scepticism	197
The strategy of the criticism	198
The refutation of solipsistic scepticism	201
An analogy	210
12. Metaphysics, rationality, and vision	213
Metaphysics and scepticism	213
Metaphysical vision	215
The rationality of metaphysical vision	222
13. Metaphysics, rationality, and presuppositions	230
Introduction	230
Collingwood's account of metaphysics	231
The nature of presuppositions	235
Regulative presuppositions	237
Categorial presuppositions	244
Ontological presuppositions	250
The state of the argument	254
Conclusion	256
Notes	261
Index	269