

Abstract In an environment characterized by the emergence of new and diverse (and often opposed) philosophical efforts, there is a need for a conception of philosophy that will promote the exchange and critical consideration of divergent insights. Depending upon the operative conception, philosophical efforts can be viewed as significant, insightful and instructive, or unimportant, misguided and not “real” philosophy. This paper develops John Dewey's conception of philosophy as a mode of inquiry in contrast with Bertrand Russell's conception of philosophy as a mode of analysis. I argue that while Russell's analytic conception of philosophy justifies the dismissal of non-analytic philosophies, Dewey's conception of philosophy provides a theoretical framework for the comparison, evaluation and interaction of alternatives.