

FOUR

Relativism, Truth, and Reality

*There is nothing so
powerful as truth,
and often nothing
so strange.*

— DANIEL WEBSTER

WE GIVE YOU A PARABLE:

Four men came upon a duck — or what seemed a duck.

"It quacks like a duck. It waddles like a duck. It's a duck,"
said the first man.

"To you it's a duck, but to me it's not a duck, for we each
create our own reality," said the second man.

"In your society it may be a duck, but in mine it's not; re-
ality is socially constructed," said the third man.

"Your conceptual scheme may classify it as a duck, but
mine doesn't; reality is constituted by conceptual schemes,"
said the fourth.

This discussion may seem to be a strange one, but you
may have engaged in such a discussion yourself. Have you