

The Nature of Truth

By Sergio Troncoso

Arte Público Press (1-800-633-2783 or 713-743-2998)

ISBN-10: 1558857915

ISBN-13: 978-1558857919

Publication date: March 31, 2014 (revised and updated edition in paperback)

Northwestern University Press (1-800-621-2736 or 1-847-491-2046)

ISBN-10: 0810119919

ISBN-13: 978-0810119918

Publication date: July 15, 2003 (hardcover)



*Bronze Award for Multicultural Fiction in *ForeWord Review's* Book of the Year Awards

*Finalist for Genre Fiction in Housatonic Book Awards

*Finalist for Thriller and Suspense in *ForeWord Review's* Book of the Year Awards

*Top Ten Best Fiction Books for 2014 by *TheLatinoAuthor.com*

A graduate student at Yale, Helmut Sanchez discovers an ugly truth about his boss, a world-renowned German professor. In a letter written fifty years ago, Werner Hopfgartner absolved Austria of any guilt for its participation in the Second World War. What kind of sick mind would rationalize away the murder of millions of Jews, gypsies and other subversives, Helmut wonders. How can it be that he has been helping, and even admiring, such a person? As the young researcher continues his quest for answers in Austria and Italy, Helmut uncovers even more horrific facts about his boss, which fuels a dangerous obsession for justice. What will Helmut do with the truth he discovers?

But he isn't the only one who hates Hopfgartner. Regina Neumann, a colleague in the department, seeks to nail the aged scholar for his sexual involvement with young co-eds, a sordid practice everyone knows about but ignores. Hopfgartner has also left behind many former lovers and students. Award-winning author Sergio Troncoso has penned a suspenseful novel that explores right and wrong, good and evil, and the murky borders in between.

Discussion Questions for *The Nature of Truth*:

<http://sergiotroncoso.com/truth/questions/index.htm>

Praise for *The Nature of Truth*:

“*The Nature of Truth* is the best psychological drama I've read in a long time. Like Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*, the main character descends into a ghost-plagued anxiety where he must discover the nature of truth. He commits the most heinous act, for only by taking action can he relieve his own existential crisis. Fascinating reading.”

—Rudolfo Anaya, author of *Bless Me, Ultima* and *Zia Summer*

“*The Nature of Truth*...was received with gratitude and has since been read with pleasure.... It's rare to find a novel with a university setting in which the substantive academic matters—institutional mores, politics, etc.—are well handled, or even plausible. The particularities of Yale and New Haven were of course appealing to a reader like me, but they didn't blind me to the book's other virtues, which were *Ausgezeichnet*.”

—John Hollander, author of *Harp Lake*, *In Time and Place*, *Tesseract & Other Poems*, and *Figurehead*

“Are Chicanos limited to rewriting that same story over and over again about where we came from and who we are? Sergio Troncoso has widened the field for all of us, writing a novel with a range and depth that is fearlessly consumed with issues of the mind. What a gutsy book!”

—Dagoberto Gilb, author of *The Magic of Blood* and *Woodcuts of Women*

“At the heart of this intricate novel is the story of a young man's unraveling as he resolves to avenge an atrocity. The philosophical subtleties and moral ambiguities of vengeance are not easily dramatized but Troncoso handles them with assurance. An ambitious and penetrating book.”

—Alec Wilkinson, author of *A Violent Act*, *The Riverkeeper*, and *Big Sugar*

“This unusually rich and finely crafted novel compellingly explores the many different ways --both good and bad-- that the desire for truth exerts its influence on us. A powerful and philosophically informed novel.”

—Michael Della Rocca, Professor and Chair, Department of Philosophy, Yale University

“With an acute eye for detail, Sergio Troncoso tells the story of how one man's search for truth turns into a nightmare, involving an entire community. Fast-paced and chilling, *The Nature of Truth* explores the outermost limit of moral certitude.”

—Anne Landsman, author of *The Devil's Chimney*

Book reviews for *The Nature of Truth*:

“Troncoso, primarily known for his US-Mexican Border works, is, as *The Nature of Truth* suggests, the brightest and most able of the modern Border writers and thinkers.”

—*Prime Number Journal*

“Troncoso's writing is vivid, philosophical, and at times poetic.”

—*Revista Camino Real*

“The subtlety, and fairness, with which Troncoso presents these conflicting frameworks [Nietzschean valor, Christian pragmatism, and blind inductivism] stand as the novel's crowning intellectual achievement, side by side with the artistic one: a convincing tale of murder and ruminating guilt.”

—*Janus Head, a journal of Philosophy, Literature and Psychology*

“Troncoso excels as a narrator, a storyteller, and a creator of vivid characters and images.”
—*Southwest Book Views*

“A suspenseful psychological thriller in the tradition of *Crime and Punishment*.”
—*The Believer Magazine*

“I hope it isn't the kiss of death to invoke the name of Dostoyevsky in praise of Sergio Troncoso's impressively lucid first thriller.... As Dagoberto Gilb says in a jacket quote, ‘Troncoso has widened the field for all of us.’”
—*The Chicago Tribune*

“This well-written, fast-paced, introspective novel raises many questions about truth and evil, and wonders if eventually ‘murder even defeats the murderer.’”
—*Multicultural Review*

“Engaging the complex issues of race and identity into the battle of ideologies regarding crime and punishment, Sergio Troncoso's *The Nature of Truth* single-handedly redefines the Chicano novel and the literary thriller....*The Nature of Truth* is a unique meditation on redemption and retribution that tackles racism, homophobia, and anti-Semitism with sensitivity and skill. Troncoso's legacy is in having expanded the social and geographical terrain of the Chicano narrative with enviable aplomb.”
—*The El Paso Times*

“Troncoso recognizes that, though truth lies within the community, a failure to acknowledge the validity of other communities is the root of lethal lies.”
—*The Forward*

“Mr. Troncoso pulls out every punch with this story and you won't be disappointed.... If the author's purpose in writing this novel was to entertain and engage the reader, he did so splendidly.”
—*TheLatinoAuthor.com*

SERGIO TRONCOSO is the author of *Crossing Borders: Personal Essays, The Last Tortilla and Other Stories*, and the novel *From This Wicked Patch of Dust*. He co-edited *Our Lost Border: Essays on Life amid the Narco-Violence*. He graduated from Harvard College and studied international relations and philosophy at Yale University. He won a Fulbright scholarship to Mexico, where he studied economics, politics, and literature. Troncoso was inducted into the Hispanic Scholarship Fund's Alumni Hall of Fame and the Texas Institute of Letters. He was born and raised in El Paso, Texas and now lives in New York City.

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