

A critical discussion of selected chapters of the first volume of Scott Soames's *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century*. It is argued that this volume falls short of the minimal standards of scholarship appropriate to a work that advertises itself as a history, and, further, that Soames's frequent heuristic simplifications and distortions, since they are only sporadically identified as such, are more likely to confuse than to enlighten the student. These points are illustrated by reference to Soames's discussions of Russell's logical system and the place of the theory of descriptions in his ontological development. It is then argued that Soames's interpretation of the point of G. E. Moore's famous "proof" of an external world, while not straightforwardly undermined by the textual evidence, is nonetheless questionable, and plausibly overlooks what is novel in Moore's discussion. This, it is argued, is his attempt to offer a common sense "refutation of idealism", rather than (as is more commonly supposed) an anti-skeptical argument "from differential certainty".