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situational truths are episodically sovereign. What do we have? The commentary on literature is interesting and, as I said, well written. The novels covered by Evans include *Absalom, Abasalom! The Hamlet*, and *Go Down, Moses*. One might say, to follow Evans quoting James's *The Meaning of Truth*, that this book is a "sort of spiritual double or ghost of [the facts] apparently!" (152). Furthermore, the chapters on James and pragmatism are highly informative, with luminous passages of James's prose chosen for analysis and citation. I think the chapter titled, "William James and the Transaction of Confidence" the best in the book, and stand alone in quality. I have already recommended it to my advanced students.

Committed as I am to supporting collaborations between literature and philosophy, I remain at once admiring and incredulous before this project, whose early encouragement in the dissertation stage came from Richard Poirier at Rutgers, a scholar and critic who almost single handedly imported the pragmatism of William James and Richard Rorty into literary criticism. No one else was doing this (doing it well) in the heyday of Deconstruction and New Historicism. Poirier wrote the magisterial *Poetry and Pragmatism* (1992) and *The Renewal of Literature: Emersonian Reflections* (1987). Now we have a new work in that tradition, and it is noble in its upholding of a framework of meaning and set of values loyal to its origins.

Christopher Schreiner

University of Guam

***Pragmatism as Post-Postmodernism***. Larry A. Hickman. New York: Fordham UP, 2007, 284 pages, \$28.

In this volume of essays, each chapter flows together so seamlessly that the whole could easily be mistaken for a single monograph. Authored by Larry Hickman, the Director of the John Dewey Center, these essays coalesce around two major themes: (i) John Dewey's pragmatism is, to borrow Richard Rorty's turn-of-phrase, "waiting at the end of the road" that postmodernists have been trekking and (ii) Dewey's ideas have far-reaching implications for several areas of contemporary philosophic interest, such as global citizenship, technology, logic, religion and the environment. In memoriam to Dewey, John Herman Randall, Jr., remarked: "The best way of honoring Dewey is to work

on Dewey's problems—to reconstruct his insights, to see, if need be, farther than Dewey saw" (cited by James Gouinlock in the "Introduction" to *The Moral Writings of John Dewey*, liv).

Part I of the book addresses the first of the two themes. In the initial essay, Hickman demonstrates that Dewey's philosophy anticipates the postmodern project of eschewing philosophical pretensions to apodictic certainty, and surpasses it by putting "to work what the postmodernists had simply dismissed" (p. 20). Whereas Dewey joins with postmodernists in rejecting traditional metaphysics, he departs from postmodernists (particularly Rorty) by providing a naturalistic alternative: a metaphysics of experience. The second essay concerns the topic of global citizenship and whether Deweyan democracy can accommodate the plural differences of peoples and groups around the world. Hickman's answer is that "what various cultures hold as good is much too rich and varied to be understood or judged [by the Deweyan democrat] in terms of one principle or set of principles" (p. 43). Still, "the Pragmatic hotel cannot accommodate the democrat and the dictator" (p. 47). Thus, the chapter offers a cogent response to Robert Talisse's objection that Deweyan pragmatists cannot be political pluralists (see his *A Pragmatist Philosophy of Democracy*, 2008; for my own response, see "In Defense of Democracy as a Way of Life" forthcoming in *Transactions of the C. S. Peirce Society*). The final essay brings the ideas of contemporary scholars of classical pragmatism into dialogue with those of several postmodernists and neo-pragmatists.

Part II of *Pragmatism as Post-Postmodernism* speaks to Dewey's influence on what Hickman calls the 'technosciences.' While Dewey is widely appreciated (even outside of the discipline of Philosophy) as a philosopher of education and democracy, he is rarely, if ever, heralded for his contributions to the philosophy of technology—an omission that Hickman (among others) hopes to remedy. The first essay criticizes Jürgen Habermas's dualistic treatment of strategic and communicative action, as well as his insistence (shared with other critical theorists) that the human sciences and technological sciences "proceed on the basis of a wholly different method . . . [such] that the two methods are at bottom irreconcilable" (p. 71). Critical theorists fear that by enshrining instrumental rationality philosophers such as Dewey subordinate human

ends (or values) to the means or technologies of science. While some features are shared by Dewey's theory of inquiry and Habermas's model of communicative action, Dewey believed that the scientific method, including its instrumentalism, can serve to advance social (scientific) inquiry and enrich human life. The middle two essays articulate Deweyan responses to two contemporary philosophers of technology. In the final essay of this section, titled "Doing and Making in a Democracy," Hickman connects Dewey's philosophy of technology with his democratic theory.

Part III contains two essays pertaining to another philosophical area in which Deweyan pragmatism, while having gained some traction in recent years, still lacks a solid foot-hold: philosophy of the environment. In the first essay, Hickman argues that the naturalism and instrumentalism of Dewey's pragmatism harmonize with Aldo Leopold's environmental philosophy. Leopold's notion of environmental management resembles a species of what Dewey calls 'inquiry.' According to Hickman, "Dewey's Pragmatic Instrumentalism is an encouragement to 'management,' in just the Leopoldian sense, that is, as an intelligent reworking of what is unsatisfactory in order to render it more satisfactory" (p. 143). Rather than conceive nature as distinct from or in competition with human communities, both Leopold and Dewey see "human beings themselves . . . as one of many forces within the larger domain of nature"—a view Hickman refers to as 'nature-as-culture' (p. 144). In the second essay, "Green Pragmatism," Hickman shows how Dewey's writings, particularly his essay "Is Nature Good?," are relevant to more recent academic exchanges about the value of the natural environment.

In part IV, "Classical Pragmatism," the essays fit more loosely together than those in the previous sections of book. Hickman explores the points of contact between Dewey's works on aesthetics, ethics, logic, religion and evolutionary theory and the works of other notable scholars, including Michael Eldridge, Charlene Haddock Seigfried, Max Scheler and Charles Sanders Peirce.

If there is one flaw in this volume, it is the relative neglect of Dewey's collaboration with Arthur F. Bentley (except for a brief mention of their correspondence on p. 27). Hickman's essays on Dewey's theory of inquiry and Peirce's logic would have been excellent occasions to

comment on their significant, though underappreciated, contribution to logical theory: *Knowing and the Known* (1945). A common bias among Dewey scholars is that this work, instead of developing Dewey's 1938 *Logic*, departs from its spirit, reflects the overbearing influence of Bentley on Dewey (who was at the time an octogenarian) and, therefore, merits little scholarly attention. However, Dewey and Bentley engaged in an extended correspondence, collected in *John Dewey and Arthur Bentley: A Philosophical Correspondence, 1932-1951* (1964) and the result was no less than an improved version of Dewey's 1938 *Logic*. It was improved in ways that incorporated the insights of Peirce's logic and developed Dewey's earlier work in a direction that the aging pragmatist expressly intended. Indeed, Dewey writes, "You [Bentley] shouldn't lean too heavily on the [1938] *Logic*; it wasn't a bad job at the time, but I could do better now [with *Knowing and the Known*]; largely through association with you and getting the courage to see my thing [logical theory] through without compromise" (Cor. 595, see also 184, 420, 481, 483-4).

Nevertheless, Hickman's book represents a significant contribution to the literature on classical pragmatism as well as an overture (whether intended or not) to philosophers interested in contributing to several fertile new areas for Dewey scholarship. They provide an excellent example, following Randall's remark, of a preeminent Dewey scholar "honoring Dewey" by "work[ing] on Dewey's problems . . . [and] reconstruct[ing] his insights, to see, if need be, farther than Dewey saw."

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***The Drama of Possibility: Experience as Philosophy of Culture.*** John J. McDermott. Douglas R. Anderson, ed. Fordham UP, 2007. 564 pages. Cloth, \$85.00. Paper \$30.00

The collection of John McDermott's essays created by Douglas Anderson is a magnificent opening into the depth and breadth of the life and work, indeed, of the drama of possibility that McDermott lives. The essays address the dimensions of experience recurring in McDermott's work: the exploration of the development and significance of American culture, the pivotal role of Emerson, James, Dewey and Royce as guides in exploring the stream of experience