

# Acknowledgments

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The Editors



# Introduction

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Among the obvious characteristics of the philosophical (and interdisciplinary) tradition known as pragmatism is its commitment to empiricism and naturalism. The world is a rich array of multifarious natural formations, with human culture growing out of pre-linguistic and pre-cultural structures. The human mind and its cultural achievements are not beyond nature but are, rather, emergent products of natural complexes. This natural and cultural world we live in can be investigated and, to a large degree, known by human beings through experimental science following the basic philosophical guidelines of dynamic empiricism.

It might seem that a pragmatist philosophy of this kind must firmly reject any commitment to Immanuel Kant's transcendental philosophy. After all, Kant is a prime example of philosophical rationalism and apriorism, insisting on a fixed, universal structure of the human cognitive capacity and a corresponding fixed set of conceptual categories in terms of which we experience any possible objects and events to be encountered in the world. Similarly, in ethics, Kant is a rigoristic rationalist postulating a universal moral law, the categorical imperative, to be found by means of pure practical reason. His views seem to be very far from the pragmatists' dynamic conception of experimental scientific inquiry and the equally experimental account of ethics most of the pragmatists have subscribed to.

On the other hand, several pragmatist thinkers, early and late—from Charles S. Peirce to Hilary Putnam and beyond—have taken very seriously the deeply “Kantian” features of their pragmatism. While Kantian transcendental philosophy or its specific views, such as transcendental idealism or the strict system of deontological ethics, may be unavailable to

pragmatists, it does not follow that the pragmatist tradition would have to reject Kantian ideas altogether. On the contrary, pragmatism can be seen as a tradition crucially indebted to Kant in various ways.

When speaking about “Kantian” philosophy in this volume, we mean something that is based on Kant’s ideas but not necessarily strictly confined within Kant’s own philosophical system. Pragmatists, like many others, can be “Kantian” thinkers in a relaxed and reinterpreted sense while rejecting many or most of Kant’s original philosophical ideas and arguments. They may, for instance, offer a pragmatically reinterpreted version of transcendental idealism as a kind of practice-embedded constructivism. The papers collected here indicate various ways in which such reinterpreted pragmatic Kantianisms can be formulated. However, many of the contributors to this volume are also highly critical of such suggestions and argue that pragmatism ought to remain fundamentally non- or even anti-Kantian.

Continuing such a critical discussion is, we should observe, congenial to both Kantian critical philosophy and the critical, fallibilist spirit of pragmatism. Thus, pragmatism and Kantianism can join forces exactly by engaging in a genuine inquiry into the ways in which, and the degree to which, they may or may not be able to philosophically join forces.



The book has been organized into five main parts. We will here very briefly introduce the contents of the volume, but the individual essays will mostly speak for themselves; the rich array of scholarly interpretations of the relation between Kant and pragmatism is impossible to summarize here. In some cases, the individual papers can be read as entering into implicit critical dialogues with each other regarding the usefulness of viewing Kantian philosophy and pragmatism as relevantly similar or analogous approaches.

The first part focuses on philosophical issues regarding cognition and science, that is, Kant’s (and the pragmatists’) “theoretical philosophy”. Joseph Margolis’s essay, “Between Pragmatism and Rationalism”, based on his keynote talk at the conference, opens the discussion by insightfully criticizing various attempts to view pragmatism as a species of Kantian transcendental philosophy. In the next paper, “Kant and Peirce on Pragmatic Maxims”, Henrik Rydenfelt examines whether, and how exactly, Peirce’s pragmatic maxim could be claimed to be indebted to Kant. Gio-

vanni Maddalena in his “Anti-Kantianism as a Necessary Characteristic of Pragmatism” draws heavily on Peirce in maintaining that pragmatism is (or at least ought to be) inevitably anti-Kantian. Hemmo Laiho’s “Kant’s Universalism versus Pragmatism” finds universalism the key issue dividing Kant and the pragmatists: as pragmatists emphasize contingent, evolving, and changing human practices, they cannot really, Laiho maintains, endorse universalizability in the sense in which Kant subscribes to it.

Opening the second part of the volume exploring methodological issues and the philosophy of communication, Guido Baggio seeks a quasi-transcendental account of Peircean sem(e)iotics in his “Sense, Sign’s Sense, and Gesture: For a Quasi-Transcendental Semiotics”. In her essay, “Kant and Pragmatists: On the Supremacy of Practice over Theory”, Agnieszka Hensoldt investigates the thesis about the primacy of practice by comparing Kant to three major pragmatists: Peirce, Dewey, and Rorty. Tom Rockmore joins the conversation with his paper, “Kant, Pragmatism and Epistemic Constructivism”, which interprets both Kant’s and (some) pragmatists’ views as species of constructivism in epistemology.

The third part discusses various topics in anthropology, psychology, and religion. Phillip McReynolds’s “Does Pragmatism Need a Concept of Autonomy?” explores the key Kantian notion of human autonomy, fundamental to Kant’s practical philosophy, in relation to pragmatism, while Matthew Crippen’s “Pragmatic Evolutions of the Kantian *a priori*: From the Mental to the Bodily” suggests that Kant’s transcendental conception of the *a priori* evolves in pragmatism into not just a mental or psychological but even a bodily way of categorizing experiential reality. Michela Bella offers a more detailed comparative study of Kant’s and William James’s psychological views in her paper, “James and Kant on Empirical Psychology”. Concluding the third part, Sami Pihlström suggests in his “Jamesian Pragmatism, Rortyan Ironism, and Kantian Antitheodicy” that pragmatism—from James to Rorty—needs Kantian critical resources in order to deal with the problem of evil and suffering central not only to the philosophy of religion but to any ethically adequate understanding of human reality.

Ethics and aesthetics are more explicitly the main themes of the fourth part of the book. Sarin Marchetti’s “Kant, James, and the Practice of Ethics” focuses on the comparison between Kant and James, especially regarding the practical question concerning the nature of ethical life, while Alexander Krémer analyzes Richard Rorty’s critical stance toward Kant’s ethics in his paper, “Rorty on Kant’s Ethics”, drawing attention to Rorty’s

refusal to accept the kinds of foundationalism, universalism, and rationalism that seem to be indispensable to Kant's moral philosophy. The dialogue on the reconcilability of Kantian and pragmatist ethical approaches is continued by Chris Skowroński in his essay, "Does the Pragmatist Reflection on the Ethical and Aesthetic Values Need the Kantian Axiology for its (Pragmatist) Future Developments?", which seeks to show that pragmatists may very well utilize Kantian resources in inquiring into values and valuation.

In the fifth and final part of the book, the contributors tackle various social and political issues from their Kantian and pragmatist perspectives. Jacquelyn Kegley asks, in her "Kant as Public Intellectual and Political Theorist", whether there is a sense in which Kant could be seen as a "public intellectual", arguing that Kant's public essays and political letters do bring him closer to the pragmatists than has sometimes been understood, especially regarding philosophy as a politically relevant activity promoting enlightenment. One political issue busily commented on by several pragmatists is feminism; perhaps somewhat surprisingly, Shannon Sullivan shows in her "Kant and Pragmatist Feminism" that pragmatist feminists may find some aspects of Kant's moral philosophy useful for their purposes, especially when read through Josiah Royce's philosophy of loyalty. The final paper of the volume, "Peace, Bread and Ideas for a Cosmopolitan World: Addams' Unknown Pragmatist Legacy Today", by Núria Sara Miras Boronat, focuses on Kantian cosmopolitanism and (social, this-worldly) eschatological hope in comparison to Jane Addams' pragmatist political philosophy.



As can be seen by anyone reading these essays, the authors have studied the relations between Kant and various thinkers in the pragmatist tradition extensively and in great historical detail. However, it must also be noted that the contributions are by no means guided by a merely historical interest. In their different ways, they seek to further develop pragmatist—as well as Kantian—philosophy by re-examining these comparative issues in their historical and systematic complexity.

Therefore, we sincerely hope that this volume will be of interest to scholars of Kant and pragmatism not only because of the new historical light it sheds on the questions concerning the actual relations between the two philosophical orientations, but also because it suggests various

new ways of moving on in our pragmatist and Kantian philosophizing. The future of pragmatism (and of Kantianism) crucially depends on the ways in which we are able to come to terms with the history of our philosophical approaches, and, conversely, the ways in which we interpret that history may partly depend on how exactly we—pragmatically—see those approaches in terms of their potential future results. In this sense, for pragmatists—as well as for Kantians—historical and systematic philosophy ought to be developed hand in hand. Above all, both ought to be developed in the spirit of critical philosophy, a spirit that crucially joins the two approaches examined in this collection. While John Dewey was in many ways a non- or even anti-Kantian thinker, his characterization of philosophy as a “critical method for developing methods of criticism” could very well have been penned by Kant himself.

Believing in the future of both pragmatism and Kantianism, we wish our readers interesting moments of critical philosophical understanding and insight.