

BOOK NOTES (cont.)

Pragmatism: a Reader

Louis Menand, ed.

Vintage Books, 1997. xxxiv + 522 pp.
\$16.00.

ISBN 0-679-77544-7 (Paper)

Thanks to Louis Menand, we now have a thick new collection of seminal writings on pragmatism that begins with Peirce's 1868 "Consequences" paper—but only with a mere fragment of it where Peirce outlines his new program for philosophy—and that carries us forward well into the 1990s with selections from Richard Posner and Richard Poirier, and with a chapter called "The Future of History" by Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob. Peirceans will be disappointed with Menand's treatment of Peirce in his introduction where Peirce's role in the pragmatist movement is undervalued, but they will be amused to find that Menand's selections from Peirce's writings undermine his argument. For balance, teachers using Menand's book may want to assign H. S. Thayer's introduction to his 1970 collection on pragmatism. Overall, Menand's selections are excellent, clearly the result of some careful thinking, although the great leap forward from Mead to Rorty skips the entire development of pragmatism within modern analytic philosophy. It is noteworthy that Menand presents pragmatism as a vital force in contemporary culture and it is gratifying that his book has been published in such an accessible and respected series.

"We Pragmatists . . .": Peirce and Rorty in Conversation."

Susan Haack. *Partisan Review* (1997), pp. 91-107

In a fanciful moment one might muse, "Ah, if only Charles Peirce and Richard Rorty could be brought together to discuss philosophy and, more specifically, pragmatism—and we could witness their conversation!" Thanks to Susan Haack this conversation *has* taken place and is now in print for our pleasure and instruction. With herself as the astute and timeless interviewer, she has resurrected Peirce to debate Rorty in a lively and sometimes acid give and take. While we must confess that there is some make-believe in the mix, she has put no words in their mouths and has managed skillfully to convey the very spirit one might expect. This is a gem for classroom use. Haack's "Conversation" also appeared in *AGORA: Papeles de Filosofía* (1996) pp. 53-68 [ISSN 0211-6642] and in her recent book, to be noticed in our next issue, *Manifesto of a Passionate Moderate; Unfashionable Essays* (Chicago 1998), pp. 31-47.

*The Rule of Reason; The Philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce*Jacqueline Brunning and Paul Forster (eds.)
University of Toronto Press, 1997,
x + 316 pp. \$ 80.00; \$ 24.95
ISBN 0-8020-0829-1 (Cloth);
ISBN 0-8020-7819-2 (Paper)

The Rule of Reason is an excellent collection of essays with a slight accent on logic. Jaakko Hintikka discusses Peirce's place in the history of logical theory, Isaac Levi directs attention to the relation between inference and logic, Helmut Pape discusses Peirce's search for a logic of mental processes, and Robert Burch and Jay Zeman each make important contributions to existential graphs. The collection further contains papers by Sandra Rosenthal (derivation of the categories), Richard Robin (the proof of pragmatism), Paul Forster (indeterminism), Carl Hausman (the origin of interpretation), Christopher Hookway (sentiment and self control), Douglas Anderson (political dimensions of fixing belief), Susan Haack (the first rule of reason), Vincent Colapietro (the deliberative subject), and Tom Short (hypostatic abstraction). The collection comes with a very good introduction, and is dedicated to the memory of David Savan. There is no index.

William James, Charles Peirce, and American Pragmatism.

(The Audio Classics Series: The World of Philosophy.)

Nashville, Tennessee: Knowledge Products, 1996. (Box 305151, Nashville, Tennessee 37230).

Two audio cassettes. 2.5 hours.

This audio recording turns out to be much more fun to listen to on a long car journey than one might think. First this introduction to the origins of pragmatism, though prepared by professors, is actually delivered by people pleasant to listen to. Lynn Redgrave, the narrator, pauses on many occasions to let other voices render the original writers. The unidentified portrayer of Peirce brings out the fact that much of his writing does have to be delivered out loud in a certain authoritative, if not demanding, tone in order to parse it meaningfully. There are equally distinctive and seemingly true-to-life voices of others, including James, Dewey, Morris Cohen, Max Fisch, William Kingdon Clifford, and H.S. Thayer. Starting with the squirrel anecdote ("Does the man go round the squirrel or not?"), this two-and-a-half hour presentation moves from Peirce, through the differences with James, to a synthesis in Dewey. No background in logic or mathematics is needed; the main purpose is to convey just why this American philosophy is important for anyone who wishes to think about thinking. There seems to be a slight favoritism

shown to James to the extent that he comes across as somewhat more humane than Peirce, but the script, prepared by James Campbell and edited by John Lachs and Wendy McElroy, is generally a balanced and edifying production. This audio presentation would provide a lively and useful introduction to a course on pragmatism.

The Continuity of Peirce's Thought

Kelly A. Parker.

Vanderbilt University Press, 1998, xvi + 268 pp., \$ 39.95

ISBN 0-8265-1296-8 (Cloth)

In this book Parker shows how the principle of continuity functions in phenomenology and semeiotic, two of the philosophical sciences—the ones most examined by Peirce—that mediate between mathematics and metaphysics. Parker does a very good job in showing how Peirce's studies in mathematics shape his metaphysics. The book begins with an outline of Peirce's architectonic philosophy and an analysis of Peirce's views on the nature of mathematics. Next he compares Peirce's concept of infinitesimals with that of Cantor, and shows how and for what reasons Peirce disagrees with him. In the following three chapters Parker discusses Peirce's phenomenology and semeiotic. The concluding chapter contains a discussion of Peirce's scientific metaphysics. Parker's book is partly intended as an introduction into Peirce's philosophy. This makes Peirce's notion of continuity, which is difficult to grasp, more accessible, especially for readers without a background in mathematics. Parker succeeds well in showing the systematic character of Peirce's philosophy.

The Role of Pragmatics in Contemporary Philosophy

Paul Weingartner, Gerhard Schurz, Georg Dorn (eds.)

Contributions of the Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society, vol. VI, bd. vi, 1997, pp. 51-1064.

Two of the ninety papers for 20th international Wittgenstein Symposium in Kirchberg am Wechsel, 1997, on the role of pragmatics in contemporary philosophy, address Peirce. In "Peirce's Rejection of the Unknowable as a common ground for Pragmatists" (598-603), Gianmatteo Mameli argues that Peirce's definition of reality as potential intelligibility can be seen as the common ground for all pragmatists, and that the pragmatist vs. antipragmatist controversy amounts to the question whether it makes sense to think there are truths that are in principle inaccessible to intelligent minds. In "Peirce, Putnam und die Wahrheit" (876-882), Richard Schantz shows that Putnam's internal realism can be seen as a continuation of Peirce's epistemic conception of truth.