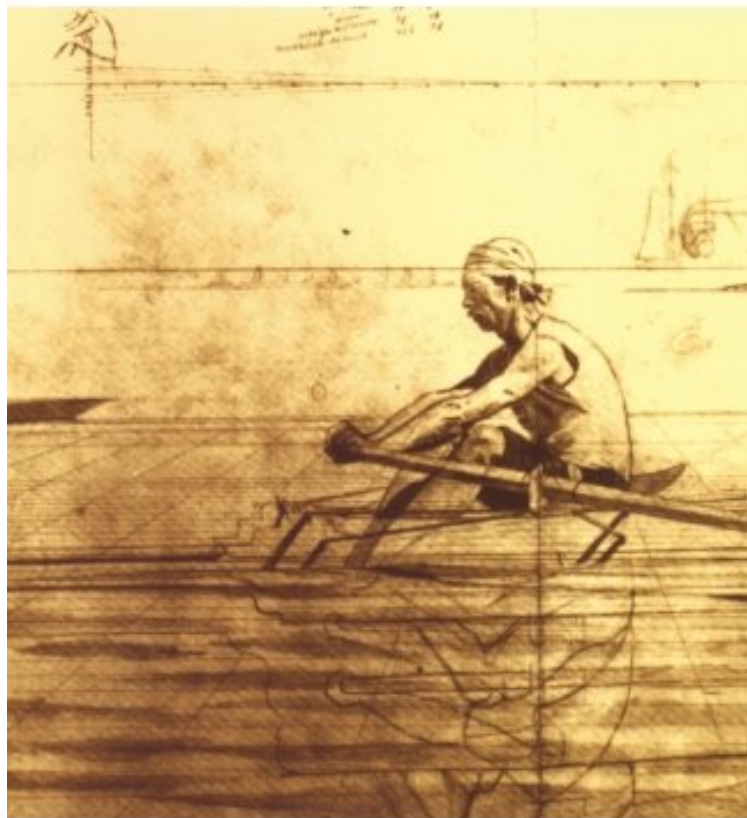


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The Revival of Pragmatism: New Essays on Social Thought, Law, and Culture (Post-Contemporary Interventions)

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Edited by Morris Dickstein



THE REVIVAL OF PRAGMATISM

New Essays on Social Thought, Law, and Culture

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From Brand: Duke University Press Books : The Revival of Pragmatism: New Essays on Social Thought, Law, and Culture (Post-Contemporary Interventions) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Revival of Pragmatism: New Essays on Social Thought, Law, and Culture (Post-Contemporary Interventions):

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Comprehensive, yet complex overview
By Bill Gonch
The revival of pragmatism, which can largely be traced to Richard Rorty's work provides an important framework for a variety of problems ranging from philosophical, through legal, cultural and literary. For someone who wants a good overview of the debates around pragmatism, this volume provides a good introduction. The variety of essays provides a good selection of the span of modern pragmatist thought. It includes excellent articles by both Rorty and Putnam, who have very different philosophical takes on pragmatism. A few excellent survey articles on the history of pragmatism and articles that engage specific applications of pragmatist thought. As might be expected, the summary article by Stanley Fish is sure to infuriate some readers. This is a book for someone who has a background understanding of pragmatism, but wants to learn more the uses to which it is being put. 15 of 21 people found the following review helpful.
important
By David C N Swanson
This is an excellent and important book of well-written positions from a variety of perspectives. A fan of pragmatism may be turned off by the 2nd through the 6th essays, but of the following 25 at least 23 or 24 are well worth reading. The section on law debates the question of whether philosophy influences or "supports" law. I came away, as I'd been before, convinced that moving to pragmatism in philosophy is likely to have a good effect on legal opinions and that Rorty is absurdly unfair to the value of his own work by stressing that law can get on without traditional philosophy. Of course it can, but what needs to be said is that we would be better off if it did. The concluding essay by Stanley Fish is wonderful and makes a point I've been trying to find someone to agree with for years, namely that religious tolerance is a contradiction in terms; tolerance is a restriction on religion. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Don't bother
By Franklin Ransom
Terrible book. Makes me want to not call myself a pragmatist. I'll stick with Peirce, James, and Dewey, thank you very much.

Although long considered the most distinctive American contribution to philosophy, pragmatism with its problem-solving emphasis and its contingent view of truth lost popularity in mid-century after the advent of World War II, the horror of the Holocaust, and the dawning of the Cold War. Since the 1960s, however, pragmatism in many guises has again gained prominence, finding congenial places to flourish within growing intellectual movements. This volume of new essays brings together leading philosophers, historians, legal scholars, social thinkers, and literary critics to examine the far-reaching effects of this revival. As the twenty-five intellectuals who take part in this discussion show, pragmatism has become a complex terrain on which a rich variety of contemporary debates have been played out. Contributors such as Richard Rorty, Stanley Cavell, Nancy Fraser, Robert Westbrook, Hilary Putnam, and Morris Dickstein trace pragmatism's cultural and intellectual evolution, consider its connection to democracy, and discuss its complex relationship to the work of Emerson, Nietzsche, and Wittgenstein. They show the influence of pragmatism on black intellectuals such as W. E. B. Du Bois, explore its view of poetic language, and debate its effects on social science, history, and jurisprudence. Also including essays by critics of the revival such as Alan Wolfe and John Patrick Diggins, the volume concludes with a response to the whole collection from Stanley Fish. Including an extensive bibliography, this interdisciplinary work provides an in-depth and broadly gauged introduction to pragmatism, one that will be crucial for understanding the shape of the transformations taking place in the American social and philosophical scene at the end of the twentieth century. Contributors. Richard Bernstein, David Bromwich, Ray Carney, Stanley Cavell, Morris Dickstein, John Patrick Diggins, Stanley Fish, Nancy Fraser, Thomas C. Grey, Giles Gunn, Hans Joas, James T. Kloppenberg, David Luban, Louis Menand, Sidney Morgenbesser, Richard Poirier, Richard A. Posner, Ross Posnock, Hilary Putnam, Ruth Anna Putnam, Richard Rorty, Michel Rosenfeld, Richard H. Weisberg, Robert B. Westbrook, Alan Wolfe

.com Beginning with a historical survey by editor Morris Dickstein of the 20th-century revival of pragmatism in American philosophical circles, this collection of academic essays continues with a typically bold assertion from pragmatism's most prominent modern advocate, Richard Rorty. "Mill's *On Liberty* provides all the ethical instruction you need," he writes, "all the philosophical advice you are ever going to get about your responsibilities to other human beings." Other contributors consider the influence of pragmatism on social thought, law, and culture. While most of the writers share to some degree the enthusiasm with which federal judge Richard A. Posner elaborates upon the notion of "pragmatic adjudication," there are some naysayers. Richard Weisberg, for example, in his proposal for a countertradition of "codifiers," suggests, "The challenge for us is to develop and perfect our own private beliefs and, if they are good enough, to make them public." And, in his concluding remarks, literary critic Stanley Fish throws some cold water on the fire: Some people do philosophy, some people (lots more) don't and those who do have not ascended to some rarefied realm of reflection or critical self-consciousness from which they bring back the news to their less enlightened brethren; they merely have the knack of doing a trick some others can't do and the competence they have acquired travels no further than the very small arenas in which that trick is typically performed and rewarded. The *Revival of Pragmatism* is an intriguing collection of essays that manages for the most part to achieve clarity of prose equal to its rigor of intellect. --Ron Hogan "[T]he diverse types of contributions to *The Revival of Pragmatism*" . . . make the collection a fitting representation of the status of pragmatism discussion in the U. S. today." --Mark Bauerlein, "Philosophy and Literature" "*The Revival of Pragmatism*" is a substantial collection of essays by some of

the most distinguished philosophers, legal theorists, cultural historians, and literary critics writing today. . . . Among the pleasures of the volume are some essays that stray outside the usual fare of philosophy, law, and political theory." -- Alan Ryan, "New York Times Book "About the Author Morris Dickstein is Distinguished Professor of English at Queens College and at the Graduate School of the City University of New York. His previous books include *Double Agent: The Critic and Society* and *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties*.