

# EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

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**D**ear readers, please join me in a tour of this new issue of *Dewey Studies*. Like its predecessors, this issue includes original articles, a research note, an interview and book reviews. I invite all of you to consider contributing such articles, notes, interviews and reviews to future issues of *Dewey Studies*, and to encourage your colleagues and students to do so as well.

The issue begins with two original articles. In the first, “John Dewey’s Pragmatic Philosophy as a Critique of Economic Discourse,” Maciej Kassner considers Dewey as a critic of the dominant economic discourses of capitalism. This useful essay gathers materials from Dewey’s corpus and brings them together to forge a coherent critical philosophy of economics. At least one prominent economist, Frank Knight of the University of Chicago, took up and harshly critiqued Dewey’s social and economic views on broad meta-ethical and epistemological grounds, an episode that led to an exchange of letters between the two and subsequently generated some scholarly attention.<sup>1</sup>

In the second article, “Field Philosophy: Deweyan Inquiry on Climate Change Adaptation Perspectives,” Anthony Voisard makes the thoroughly Deweyan move of turning from the abstractions of mainstream environmental philosophy to a pressing real-world environmental problem, and marshalling philosophical and empirical resources to generate hypotheses concerning action steps to resolve it.

Shane Ralston contributes a research note on Dewey and Remembrance Education: that is, education promoting respect based on collective remembering of suffering due to war and injustice that must not be forgotten. Ralston continues in a Deweyan mode by generating five ideas from Dewey’s philosophy that can guide effective practices of remembrance education.

In our interview for this issue, Jessica Heybach dialogues

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<sup>1</sup> See Luca Fiorito, “Frank Knight, John Dewey. And American Pragmatism: A Further Note,” in Ross B. Emmett, Jeff E. Biddle, eds, *Research In The History Of Economic Thought And Methodology: A Research Annual*, Emerald Group Publishing,

with Clara Fischer, Co-director of the Dewey Studies Research Centre at University College Dublin, on contemporary issues in feminist philosophy and pragmatism. Fischer explains that when she was finishing up her graduate work she drew inspiration from Charlene Seigfried, who “presented pragmatism as a third alternative to the analytic/continental traditions in philosophy, and as a framework that could provide answers to certain impasses in feminist theory at the time, such as between a too rigid, biological essentialism v. a too fluid postmodern constructionism.” Fischer found inspiration from other contemporary pragmatists, including Shannon Sullivan, Marilyn Fischer, Erin McKenna, Lisa Heldke and Maurice Hamington. She concludes that “my passion for pragmatism developed out of feminist theoretical concerns and the need, as I still see it, to develop theory that can speak to and is informed by contemporary social and political problems. I’ve personally admired the activism of Dewey and Addams, in particular, and have thus felt drawn to pragmatism as a philosophy that can marry feminist action with critical thought.”

This issue concludes with three book reviews. In the first, Edward Hackett reviews James Campbell’s *Experiencing William James: Belief in a Pluralistic World*. Then Robin Friedman reviews Anthony Sean Neal’s *Howard Thurman’s Philosophical Mysticism: Love Against Fragmentation*. Finally, Michael Festl surveys all of the contributions included in the *Pragmatism in Transition: Perspectives on C.I. Lewis*, edited by Peter Olen and Carl Sachs.

Festl questions the thesis presented by Olen and Sachs that Lewis should be considered a pragmatist rather than a logical empiricist, insisting that Lewis approached the same questions, and operated within the same conceptual field, as the latter group. He notes, however, that Lewis made distinctly pragmatist moves within that field, and this justifies including him in a broader consideration of 20th century pragmatism though it does not make him a pragmatist.

The Olen/Sachs volume, and Festl’s review, add to the growing body of work on the history of twentieth century

philosophy. It is worthy of note that Lewis did not merely make pragmatist moves within an empiricist field, but that these had significant impact on Carnap, Reichenbach, and other members of the Vienna Circle, nudging them in a broadly pragmatist direction. Murray Murphey, in his authoritative study of Lewis,, concluded that: “It is clear that Lewis found logical positivism both very attractive and unacceptable.”<sup>2</sup> Festl teases out various strands in Lewis’s system of ideas to question that assertion. His argument re-opens perennial questions about the defining features of pragmatism and of the assignment of individual philosophers to general categories or schools.

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This issue of *Dewey Studies* demonstrates the on-going diverse interest in, and influence of, John Dewey throughout the world. The editors ask readers to submit articles to Associate Editor Jared Kemling ([jaredkemling@gmail.com](mailto:jaredkemling@gmail.com)), ideas for panels and special issues, interviews, research notes to Leonard Waks ([ljwaks@yahoo.com](mailto:ljwaks@yahoo.com)), and book reviews and composite review articles to Reviews Editor: Daniel Brunson ([daniel.brunson@morgan.edu](mailto:daniel.brunson@morgan.edu)).

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<sup>2</sup> Murray Murphey, *C.I. Lewis: The Last Great Pragmatist*, SUNY Press, 2005, p. 233.