

2 Peirce's Place in the Pragmatist Tradition

Your intensely mathematical mind keeps my non-mathematical one at a distance. But so many of our categories are the same that your existence and philosophizing give me the greatest comfort.

Perry 1935/1936: I, 224; James's letter to Peirce, March 27, 1897

Your mind and mine are as little adapted to understanding one another as two minds could be, and therefore I always feel that I have more to learn from you than from anybody.

CP 8.296; Perry 1935/1936: II, 431; Peirce's letter to James, October 3, 1904

I. INTRODUCTION

"Who originated the term *pragmatism*, I or you? Where did it first appear in print? What do you understand by it?" Charles Peirce asked his friend William James in a letter on November 10, 1900 (CP 8.253; Perry 1935/1936: II, 407 n5). On November 26, 1900, James replied: "You invented 'pragmatism' for which I gave you full credit in a lecture entitled 'Philosophical conceptions and practical results.'"¹ The published version of that lecture (1898) is very likely to have been the first place where the term "pragmatism" was used in print, and James was the first philosopher known as a pragmatist. The pragmatist movement was largely developed by James, although Dewey, Royce, and even Schiller may have had an original and independent role to play in its formation. Nonetheless, James referred to Peirce's earlier unpublished usage of the term and acknowledged Peirce as

the first to formulate a pragmatistic doctrine in the discussions of the Cambridge "Metaphysical Club" in the early 1870s.

The purpose of this essay is not to determine the origin of pragmatism.² It is, rather, my aim to situate Peirce's version(s) of pragmatism³ in their context; that is, to investigate Peirce's place in the tradition of pragmatist thought that extends from the 1870s to the recent neopragmatisms of the 1980s and 1990s. We should remember that Peirce influenced twentieth century philosophers mainly posthumously. The collection *Chance, Love, and Logic* was published in 1923, nine years after his death, and the *Collected Papers* were published in eight volumes in 1931–1958. In any case, Peirce's works did eventually have an influence in the philosophical community, an enormous influence without which there would be nothing like pragmatism as we know it.

Peirce began to call his view "pragmaticism" after having perceived how the notion of pragmatism had been used after his original coinage of the term. The key passage from his 1905 *Monist* paper, "What Pragmatism Is," is worth quoting:

[James] first took [the word "pragmatism"] up, seeing that his "radical empiricism" substantially answered to the writer's definition of pragmatism. . . . Next, the admirably clear and brilliant thinker, Mr. Ferdinand C. S. Schiller . . . lit . . . upon the same designation "pragmatism," which in its original sense was in generic agreement with his own doctrine. . . . So far all went happily. But at present, the word begins to be met with occasionally in the literary journals, where it gets abused in the merciless way that words have to expect when they fall into literary clutches. . . . So then, the writer, finding his bantling "pragmatism" so promoted, feels that it is time to kiss his child good-by and relinquish it to its higher destiny; while to serve the precise purpose of expressing the original definition, he begs to announce the birth of the word "pragmaticism," which is ugly enough to be safe from kidnappers. (CP 5.414/EP 2:334–35)⁴

Peirce did *not* claim James or Schiller to have "kidnapped" his "pragmatism." It is the use of the notion "in the literary journals" that was the cause of his anger; he did not want to replace "pragmatism" as such with "pragmaticism," but apparently intended his new coinage to refer to a subdivision of pragmatism. (See Haack 1998: 55; Kilpinen 2000: 35.) This is not to say that Peirce would have agreed with James and Schiller, but it perhaps shows that there *is* such

a thing as the pragmatist tradition, originated by Peirce and continued by James, Dewey, Schiller, Mead, and their followers. There is no need to insist, as some scholars do, that the broader movement known as pragmatism is something essentially different from Peirce's own pragmatism. Aggressively orthodox Peirceans who think only Peirce's views deserve philosophical attention tend to overlook the remarkable integrity we find among the pragmatists, despite their occasional profound disagreements. There are both unity and differences-in-unity in the pragmatist tradition. We should be skeptical about all attempts to find just two forms of pragmatism (e.g., Peirce's and all others') opposed to each other.⁵

Both the integrity and the disagreements among pragmatists are worth discussing. Since it is impossible to make any detailed comparisons between Peirce and other pragmatists in a single article, I shall focus on James (Sections 2–4), offering only general remarks on Peirce's relations to Dewey and Schiller (Sections 5–6), while Royce, Mead, and other classical thinkers can hardly be more than mentioned.⁶ Finally, I shall compare Peirce to neopragmatists such as Putnam and Rorty (Section 7), before concluding with reflections on Peirce's and other pragmatists' relation to the realism vs. idealism dispute (Section 8). These comparisons, brief as they must remain, are intended to place Peirce in his position in the extremely rich tradition he founded.

2. PEIRCE AND JAMES: REALISM AND TRUTH

It has been suggested, plausibly, that the basic difference between Peirce and James in their partly conflicting characterizations of pragmatism was that the former developed a strictly logical method that would help us understand the meaning of scientific concepts, whereas the latter was interested in a wider application of the practice-oriented method of pragmatism in human concerns (Hookway 1997). This difference in their "philosophical temperaments" – to use James's term – and in their overall philosophical projects is reflected in a number of more detailed differences,⁷ which, however, should not conceal their similarities. It is a mistake to interpret James's pragmatism as a mere misunderstanding or misapplication of Peirce's. James was an independent thinker. He did not simply misunderstand Peirce but employed pragmatism more broadly, partly

because he had a different conception of science and the practical uses of inquiry (cf. Hookway 2000).

The opposition between *realism* and *nominalism* has been recognized as one of the issues dividing Peirce and James. Peirce always resisted nominalism, thinking that it committed the worst of philosophical sins, viz., blocking the road of inquiry (cf. CP 1.170, c. 1897). Peirce even came to resist some of his own early formulations of pragmatism as too nominalistic, and described himself as “a scholastic realist of a somewhat extreme stripe” (CP 5.470, c. 1906). Scholastic realism is essentially the doctrine that there are “real generals” (universals, dispositions, laws, habits). This view, Peirce thought, is required in any adequate formulation of scientific philosophy and metaphysics, including pragmatism itself. If universality and generality were “dependent upon what we happened to be thinking,” science “would not relate to anything real” (CP 8.18, 1871).⁸ James’s pragmatism is more nominalistically inclined. Although it would be an exaggeration to call James a “nominalist,” it is true that he focused on particular experiences and practical consequences of actions, whereas the consequences Peirce was interested in were general patterns and habits (Hookway 1997: 152). Another difference, related to scholastic realism, is this: while in some sense James went (or wanted to go) “round Kant” whereas Peirce’s views were developed “through Kant” (Fisch 1986: 288), it turns out that James, contrary to his own self-image, was the more thoroughgoing Kantian. James’s constructivistic pragmatism can be interpreted as a form of transcendental idealism, whereas in Peirce’s case such a Kantian (re)interpretation is more difficult, because of his extreme realism (cf. Pihlström 1998a).

One of the points where James has been taken to have distorted Peirce’s pragmatism is the *theory of truth*. But rather than interpreting James’s pragmatist theory of truth as a misunderstanding of Peirce, we may see it as a “substantial extension” of Peirce’s view, according to which truth is something that is satisfactory, useful, expedient, or good for us to believe, something that is “safe from overthrow by subsequent experience” (Haack 1976: 233–4). Because of his more nominalist bias, James focused on individual, concrete truths that were to be practically used in the course of experience, rather than on anything like the “Truth,” or the final opinion of the scientific community (Haack 1976: 234). Peirce mentions James’s

doctrine of the "mutability of truth" as one of the "seeds of death" with which his original pragmatism became infected in the hands of later pragmatists (CP 6.485, 1908). Yet the pragmatist theory of truth is, according to Haack (1976: 236, 247), a "cosmopolitan" theory, containing both correspondence and coherence elements and receiving different emphases in different authors. It need not be a rival of the correspondence theory, but it is meaningful to say that there is one single pragmatist theory, differently developed by Peirce, James, Dewey, and others. Hookway (2000: 82, 89) also notes that James's theory of truth, instead of competing with the correspondence theory, was designed to elucidate what agreement with reality means – and so, though differently, was Peirce's.⁹

James, as well as Dewey, endorsed rather than rejected or misunderstood Peirce's formulation that truth is to be equated with the eventual outcome of inquiry, or with the convergence of belief. As Hookway (2000: 44) puts it, James accepted the connection between convergence of opinion and truth "as an account of 'absolute truth,'" whereas Dewey "agreed with it as an analysis of *truth* before concluding that logic and epistemology would do well to abandon this notion in favour of 'warranted assertibility.'" James (1907 [1975]: 107) treats "absolute truth" as a regulative notion, and Dewey (1938: 345) refers to Peirce's definition as "the best definition of truth," from the logical point of view.¹⁰ It is Dewey's conclusion that the notion of truth has no significant role to play in logic or inquiry that Peirce did not draw.

The problems of (Scholastic) realism and truth only give us preliminary answers to the question of what distinguishes James's pragmatism from Peirce's. We have noticed differences of emphasis rather than of principle – but important differences nevertheless. Further elucidation is needed.

3. THEORY AND PRACTICE

Turning more closely to the opinions Peirce expressed about James's views, we can easily see that Peirce was critical of James's ways of developing the pragmatist ideas he had himself presented, while also admitting that his early formulations were relatively close to the pragmatism James developed.¹¹ Peirce also explored James's views in contexts not directly related to pragmatism. For example, he

reviewed James's *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) in *The Nation* in 1891 (CP 8.55ff.).

Peirce respected James as a thinker. He admitted that James was a "perfect lover of truth" (CP 6.183, c. 1911; Perry 1935/1936: I, 540) and a great pragmatist: "You are of all my friends the one who illustrates *pragmatism* in its most needful forms. You are a jewel of pragmatism" (Perry 1935/1936: II, 427; Peirce's letter to James, March 16, 1903). There were, however, significant temperamental differences between the two, which Peirce recognized: "His comprehension of men to the very core was most wonderful. Who, for example, could be of a nature so different from his as I? He so concrete, so living; I a mere table of contents, so abstract, a very snarl of twine. Yet in all my life I found scarce any soul that seemed to comprehend, naturally, [not] my concepts, but the mainspring of my life better than he did. He was even greater [in the] practice than in the theory of psychology" (CP 6.184, c. 1911).

These differences can be highlighted by taking a look at what Peirce says about James's (1897 [1979]) doctrine of the "will to believe." In Peirce's view, this doctrine, assuming that "the end of man is action," pushes the pragmatic method "to such extremes as must tend to give us pause" (CP 5.3, 1902). James's pragmatism is "extreme," implying that "Doing is the ultimate purpose of life" (CP 8.115, c. 1900). Earlier, Peirce had remarked that "faith," though "highly necessary in affairs," is "ruinous in practice," if it means that "you are not going to be alert for indications that the moment has come to change your tactics" (CP 8.251, 1897; Perry 1935/1936: II, 222; see also CP 6.485, 1908).¹² Later, commenting on the Bergsonian conception of philosophy manifested in James's *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909b [1977]), Peirce was even more critical: "I thought your *Will to Believe* was a very exaggerated utterance, such as injures a serious man very much, but to say what you now do is far more suicidal....[P]hilosophy is either a science or is balderdash..." (Perry 1935/1936: II, 438; letter to James, March 9, 1909).¹³ Peirce insisted that pragmatism is not a *Weltanschauung* but "a method of reflexion having for its purpose to render ideas clear" (CP 5.13 n1, c. 1902). In a letter to the Italian pragmatist Mario Calderoni, Peirce, having made the distinction between pragmatism (among whose representatives he mentioned Schiller, James, Dewey, and Royce) and pragmaticism, noted that pragmaticism is "not a system of philosophy" but "only a method of thinking" (CP 8.205–6, c. 1905).

It was already in 1897, after having received James's *The Will to Believe*, dedicated to him, that Peirce reflected on the relation between his old and more recent conception of pragmatism in a letter to James (March 13, 1897; cf. also CP 8.255–6, 1902):

That everything is to be tested by its practical results was the great text of my early papers; so, as far as I get your general aim . . . I am quite with you in the main. In my later papers, I have seen more thoroughly than I used to do that it is not mere action as brute exercise of strength that is the purpose of all, but say generalization, such action as tends toward regularization, and the actualization of the thought which without action remains unthought. (CP 8.250)

This contains, *in nuce*, the difference between James's and Peirce's pragmatisms, as Peirce saw it. While it is not clear that James should be interpreted as having favored mere "brute exercise of strength," it is fairly accurate to say that he considered action or "doing" the main purpose of life. This is something that Peirce, impressed more by self-reflective habits and regularized action than individual actions, could not accept. "[T]he end of thought," he wrote, "is action only in so far as the end of action is another thought" (CP 8.272, 1902). Thus, Peirce thought that his fellow pragmatists, overemphasizing what he called "secondness," did not really understand what his categories were all about (CP 8.263, 1905). He also considered James's terminology unclear: in addition to accusing James of having misdescribed "pragmatism," he remarked that James's "pure experience" (James 1912 [1976]) "is not experience at all and certainly ought to have a name," because it is "downright bad morals so to misuse words, for it prevents philosophy from becoming a science" (CP 8.301, 1904). But then again, James hardly wanted philosophy to become a science.

A metaphilosophical opposition between Peirce and James can be observed in their conceptions of the role of philosophy in human life. While some Peirceans – e.g., Misak (1994, 2000) – have found support from Peirce's notions of truth and inquiry in defending moral realism, there is some evidence for the contention that Peirce did not consider our "practical affairs" or matters related to "the conduct of life" philosophically important.¹⁴ He condemned, in his Cambridge Conferences Lectures (1898), "with the whole strength of conviction the Hellenic tendency to mingle Philosophy and Practice," and remarked that in philosophy, "the investigator who does not stand

aloof from all intent to make practical applications, will not only obstruct the advance of the pure science, but[...]will endanger his own moral integrity and that of his readers" (RLT: 107). He claimed that pure science has nothing to do with action, that nothing is "vital" for science, that "pure theoretical knowledge, or science, has nothing directly to say concerning practical matters," and that we cannot serve "the two masters, *theory* and *practice*" (RLT: 112–13; cf. CP 1.642).¹⁵ Yet, a simple theory/practice distinction is too crude to have been Peirce's considered view. We must remember the context of Peirce's claims: He protested against James's suggestion that he should give lectures about "vitally important topics" rather than technical logical questions.¹⁶

While pointing out that there "appears to be no slight theoretical divergence" between James's definition of pragmatism and his own, Peirce said that that divergence, "for the most part, becomes evanescent in practice," and that "the discrepancies [between James and him] reside in other than the pragmatistic ingredients of our thought" (CP 5.466, c. 1906). He remarked that James does not restrict "meaning," or "the ultimate logical interpretant," to a habit, as he does, but allows percepts to play this role; and that, if he (James) is willing to do this, he need not give any room to habit. "But practically, his view and mine must[...]coincide, except where he allows considerations not at all pragmatic to have weight" (CP 5.494, c. 1906; see also EP 2:421, 1907). Now, in a sense, practice is what pragmatism is all about. If there is no "practical" difference between Peircean and Jamesian pragmatisms, then there is all the more reason to see pragmatism as one single tradition with somewhat different overtones.

It is, then, overhasty to regard Peirce's and James's pragmatisms as fundamentally opposed to each other. Even the standard division between James's "nominalistic" and Peirce's "realistic" pragmatism turns out to be problematic, as Haack (1977: 392–393) shows: the difference is not that Peirce accepted and James denied the reality of universals but that Peirce denied that real universals can be reduced to particulars, while James thought that they can. Perry (1935/1936: I, 547) observes that James, recognizing the significance of "general ideas," "was never (in spite of Peirce's strictures) a thoroughgoing nominalist" and even "approached the 'realistic' position" in his mature writings, especially in *A Pluralistic Universe*. James "never became a nominalist," for he always found some way "to provide for universals, generals and concepts, however much he might disparage

them" (Perry 1935/1936: II, 407). This is an important point, still insufficiently discussed. As Seigfried (1990: 267) also notes, James did not exclude "the modality of possibility," for he affirmed the need for "general rules," even though the emphasis was on the particular consequences experienced in the future. "Peirce's well-known criticism of James as a nominalist rather than a realist could not be further from the textual record," she concludes, "and yet it is uncritically repeated to this day" (399n5).¹⁷ As Rosenthal (2000: 94) puts it, Peirce opposed a nominalistic pluralism of "discrete units," while James's pluralism was closer to Peirce's own synechism, the doctrine of continuity.

James argued that philosophical abstractions must do some real work: pragmatism "has no objection whatever to the realizing of abstractions, so long as you get about among particulars with their aid and they actually carry you somewhere" (James 1907 [1975]: 40). "We are like fishes swimming in the sea of sense [sensible facts], bounded above by the superior element [abstract ideas], but unable to breathe it pure or penetrate it" (64). It is questionable whether this even amounts to a reductionist conception of abstractions and generalities in relation to concrete facts. James seems to have maintained that we need abstractions in order to act in the world of particular experiential facts and that this is all we need them for, but he did not say, at least not explicitly, that the former are nothing but complexes of the latter. Perhaps the more important conflict is between Peirce's strict antipsychologism and James's more psychologically oriented admission of general ideas. For James, general ideas were human beings' classifications of reality through their practices, and thus dependent on or emerging from human purposive action, not anything ready-made in reality itself. For Peirce, undoubtedly, this was little more than nominalism, because the independent, nonpsychological reality of generals was not accepted by James. In any case, the differences Peirce found between his views and James's, though genuine and important, should not be overemphasized.¹⁸

Moreover, Peirce and James both held an extremely rich, inclusive conception of experience, according to which we experience "external things as external," interactions between them, their sensory impacts upon us, and "law-governed interactions – mediated transitions – between things we experience, and real continuity in the ways that processes develop" (Hookway 2000: 292; see Pape 2000). While both were empiricists, urging that our knowledge is

based on experience, they rejected the passive, atomistic conception of experience consisting of scattered individual sensations assumed in much of the empiricist tradition.

4. INTERPRETATIONS OF THE PRAGMATIC MAXIM

While Peirce distanced his pragmatism from James's, James tended to diminish the differences. Specific references to Peirce by James can be found in *The Will to Believe* (1897b [1979]), the *Varieties* (1902 [1985]), *Pragmatism* (1907 [1975]), and *The Meaning of Truth* (1909a [1978]), as well as in manuscripts and lecture notes. These are in most cases to the pragmatic maxim, though James did teach Peirce's evolutionary metaphysics in his courses at Harvard, as his *Manuscript Lectures* (1988) show. In the *Varieties*, James (1902 [1985]: 351) mentioned "the principle of Peirce, the principle of pragmatism," referring to "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" (1878) and applying the principle to a discussion of God's metaphysical attributes. The same article by Peirce was already quoted in James's "The Function of Cognition," read before the Aristotelian Society in 1884 and published in *Mind* (vol. 10, 1885). That paper later formed the first chapter of *The Meaning of Truth*.¹⁹ Later James reports:

The term ["pragmatism"] is derived from the same Greek word [$\pi\rho\alpha\gamma\mu\alpha$], meaning action, from which our words 'practice' and 'practical' come. It was introduced into philosophy by Mr. Charles Peirce in 1878. . . . Mr. Peirce, after pointing out that our beliefs are really rules for action, said that, to develop a thought's meaning, we need only determine what conduct it is fitted to produce: that conduct is for us its sole significance. . . . To attain perfect clearness in our thoughts of an object, then, we need only consider what conceivable effects of a practical kind the object may involve – what sensations we are to expect from it, and what reactions we must prepare. Our conception of these effects, whether immediate or remote, is then for us the whole of our conception of the object, so far as that conception has positive significance at all. . . .

To take in the importance of Peirce's principle, one must get accustomed to applying it to concrete cases. (James 1907 [1975]: 28–9)

Peirce's original text reads as follows: "Consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these

effects is the whole of our conception of the object" (CP 5.402/W 3, 266, 1878).²⁰ When presenting Peirce's principle in his California address in 1898, James said "it should be expressed more broadly than Mr. Peirce expresses it" (James 1898: 124). Attempting to do this, he appears to slide from acknowledging Peirce's notions of *possible* differences and *conceivable* effects to the stronger requirement that those differences or effects should be actualized in our concrete experiences or practices.

James demanded the practical consequences of our conceptions to be, above all, *particular* (James 1909a [1978]: 124; Perry 1935/1936: I, 458; II, 410–11). This, though little more than a corollary of his insistence that abstract ideas ought to be put to work among the actual facts of our world, conflicts with Peirce's focus on generality and habits, as Peirce consistently emphasized – instead of any particular, actualized bearings – the "*conceivably* practical bearings" in which "the entire meaning and significance of any conception" lies (EP 2:145, 1903). The Peircean formulation allows that conceptions, though always conceptions of "conceivable practical effects," "reach far beyond the practical"; it is only required that we maintain a connection with some possible practical effect (CP 5.196/EP 2:235, 1903). Thus, Scholastic realism, the principle that generality is operative in nature (and that modalities are thus interpreted realistically), is a central background assumption of pragmatism. It is not required that certain specific, particular consequences be actualized; it is enough that some general habitual patterns can be connected with all of our meaningful ideas.

Peirce remarked in a letter in December, 1904, that James's "Humanism and Truth" (reprinted in *The Meaning of Truth*) had distorted his views:

You have a quotation from me which greatly astonishes me . . . : "The serious meaning of a concept lies in the concrete difference to some one which its being true will make."²¹ . . . I do not think I have often spoken of the "meaning of a concept" whether "serious" or not. I have said that the concept itself "is" *nothing more* than the concept, not of any concrete difference that *will* be made to someone, but is nothing more than the concept of the *conceivable* practical applications of it. (Perry 1935/1936: II, 432–3)

Peirce was somewhat happier with the way James interpreted him in *Pragmatism*, though he wished that James had learned to think

"with more exactitude" (Perry 1935/1936: II, 436–7). It is, clearly, in the "applications" that James's pragmatism takes a turn away from Peirce's. James did not pay much attention to Peirce's later developments of pragmatism; the logical spirit of Peirce's thought remained alien to him. This is something that James admitted, referring to his "non-mathematical" mind and "slight interest in logic" (Perry 1935/1936: II, 427; letter to Peirce, June 5, 1903). He wrote: "Your mind inhabits a technical logical thicket of its own into which no other mind has as yet penetrated" (Perry 1935/1936: II, 427n7; letter to Peirce, July 10, 1903; see also Perry 1935/1936: II, 680). Peirce agreed that James's failure to appreciate his (Peirce's) pragmatism resulted from his (James's) weak mathematical and logical capacities: James "had no head for logic at all" and thus "made the man in [the] street get some notions of what pragmatism was" (NE 3/1: 192, 1911).²²

The oppositions between Peirce and James can be seen as emerging from their different formulations and applications of the pragmatic maxim. Peirce's Scholastic realism, emphasis on community, antipsychologistic view of logic, and emphasis on pragmatism as a logical principle conflicted with James's nominalism, individualism, psychological orientation, and psychologistic interpretation of pragmatism.²³ These conflicts are not unrelated to how they viewed the notion of practical consequences: for instance, in a note added in 1893 to the 1878 paper (CP 5.402n2), Peirce remarked that the maxim, understood as an application of the Biblical rule, "Ye may know them by their fruits," ought to be interpreted collectively, not individualistically. The emphasis on the collective nature of science, and of the habitually evolving rationality that human action manifests, extends through virtually everything that Peirce wrote. The individualistic overtones of James's pragmatism were as alien to him as James's psychologism. These differences are especially clear in Peirce's 1903 Harvard Lectures, one of the most significant documents of how Peirce resisted the psychologization of pragmatism.²⁴ He said that his own formulations of the 1870s were too psychological and that he no longer considers it satisfactory "to reduce such fundamental things [as the pragmatic maxim] to facts of psychology," because "man could alter his nature" (EP 2: 140; see also CP 5.28).

In these lectures, Peirce was concerned with demonstrating the truth of pragmatism as a method of thought and inquiry, connecting the maxim with almost all other branches of his philosophy (i.e., phenomenology, the categories, logic of relatives, theory of probability, the normative sciences – logic, ethics, and aesthetics, theory of inference, semiotics, and scholastic realism).²⁵ Regarding the “truth” of pragmatism, James’s view may, however, have been more consistently pragmatic than Peirce’s. Arguably, James applied pragmatism *to itself*, treating the pragmatist principle as pragmatically true (cf. Conant 1997, Pihlström 1998a). No logical demonstration of its truth, independently of pragmatism, was needed or even possible for him; the pragmatic efficacy and the truth of pragmatism were (*pace* Turrissi 1997b: 28) pretty much the same thing for James, though not for Peirce. The maxim that ideas ought to be tested practically in the course of experience covers this pragmatist idea itself.

This metaphilosophical difference over the status and provability of the pragmatic maxim was a corollary of the opposition between the logical and psychological orientations of Peirce and James, respectively. We may say that for James the evaluation of the philosophical role of generalities or abstract ideas was among the applications of the pragmatic maxim, whereas for Peirce the reality of generals was a presupposition making pragmatism possible. James could have argued that any such presupposition must again be pragmatically assessed. Peirce also thought that the pragmatic maxim had pragmatic consequences; he, too, in his own way applied pragmatism to itself. But the point is that James was willing to let practical consequences – which for him constituted a more open and inclusive class than the scientifically focused consequences Peirce emphasized – determine the philosophical value of pragmatism in a pragmatic manner, independently of any *prior* logical demonstration. Peirce’s pragmatism was subordinated to logic; according to James, whatever philosophical value logic had it was to be explained on a pragmatic basis.

Some of these differences may hide a more basic similarity. The fact that, in Peirce’s view, theory must be distinguished from practice and philosophy cannot help us in “matters of vital importance,” might be considered a key difference to James, but it might also express a partial agreement. Peirce thought, with James rather than against him, that vitally important issues should be resolved by

instinct and sentiment rather than mere intellectual reflection or theorizing. Even so, the distance from James is considerable here. For James (as well as for Dewey), matters of vital importance do require something like “inquiry,” because “inquiry” is defined in highly general terms, more broadly than “scientific inquiry.” On the other hand, even Peirce may be interpreted as having held the view that “the method of science” can be applied to “all respectable subject-matters” (Hookway 2000: 76–7). There is perhaps a tension in Peirce’s position in this respect.²⁶

Another interesting comparison, not unrelated to the pragmatic maxim, results from the question of whether Peirce’s presuppositions of inquiry – e.g., that there are real things independent of what we think about them – should be interpreted as transcendently established truths or mere *hopes* (cf. Hookway 1998: § 10; 2000: 6–7, 39, 109–10, 185–6, 190, 296). Hookway observes that, from Peirce’s point of view, the fact that something is a presupposition of inquiry, experience, or thought only provides a reason for hoping, not for believing, that it is true. Now, James’s pragmatism might lead us to reject the distinction between these two attitudes as practically idle. What we *have to* adopt as a sincere hope on the basis of what our inquiries or experiences presuppose is, James would have urged, for us *ipso facto* pragmatically true. There is, in James’s pragmatism, no pragmatically solid distinction to be drawn between hopes and beliefs in the Peircean way. This is especially clear in the “will to believe” doctrine and in James’s “faith ladder” (as formulated in *A Pluralistic Universe*): the status of sincere hopes is pragmatically indistinguishable from their status as convictions we need in our lives, convictions that are, for this reason, pragmatically true *for us*.

Here James was a more radical pragmatist with respect to truth than Peirce. One might argue against him by saying that hopes or regulative assumptions are not true or false and should be distinguished from beliefs. Calling something a regulative assumption is “to make a statement about a practice,” about some practice (e.g., inquiry) requiring “for its sensible continuation” certain assumption(s) by those who engage in it (e.g., inquirers); this is not to claim that such assumptions are true (Misak 1991: 140). But one of the arguments characterizing James’s pragmatism as a whole is that the

boundary between the concepts of belief and hope is vague. It is part of James's "humanizing" of the concept of truth to insist that what we need to hope in our lives is true in the pragmatic sense. What we, *qua* agents engaging in a practice, cannot help assuming is, for us, true. As our needs and hopes may change, an element of mutability is introduced into the pragmatist conception of truth – something that horrified Peirce.

This disagreement can perhaps be expressed by saying that Peirce endorsed, while James denied, Kant's distinction between *praktisch* and *pragmatisch*.²⁷ The former, Kant thought, is concerned with a priori moral laws established through the practical use of reason; the latter, instead of being associated with morality, relates to the purposive nature of cognition in relation to sensibility and is closer to what Peirce had in mind in discussing the experimental procedures of inquiry. James saw no pragmatically meaningful difference here. He applied the same pragmatic method that he used in various philosophical problems more metaphilosophically to the dissolution of the contrast between *pragmatische* scientific experimental operations and *praktische* morally motivated considerations. From the Jamesian (but surely not from the Peircean) point of view, moral (practical) issues are always already at work in our pragmatic assessments of the conceptions of reality we operate with in our practices, scientific conceptions included. It is precisely those ethical consequences of our actions or habits of action that must be taken seriously in pragmatic evaluations. We should not, according to James, rely on any science vs. ethics dichotomy if we attempt to understand what pragmatism is all about.

For anyone willing to defend the role of philosophy in a rational consideration of ethical and political issues, the Jamesian route – inherited by Dewey and his followers – is a maturation rather than a distortion of pragmatism. The pragmatic maxim remains too narrow if confined to scientific methodology. This is the relevant *practical* difference between Peirce's and James's applications of their method. We can use the pragmatic method itself reflexively and metaphilosophically in order to determine what the difference is. It may be suggested that by thus applying pragmatism to itself we adopt a more Jamesian than Peircean approach. Since this proposal is vulnerable to a Peircean counterargument emphasizing the scientific need to

state pragmatism more sharply as a logico-semiotic principle based on scholastic realism, no bottom line of the debate can easily be reached.

5. PEIRCE AND DEWEY

Our conception of the relation between Peirce and James can be enriched by studying the views of some other pragmatists. The obvious place to begin is Dewey's philosophy, variously labeled not only as "pragmatism" but, more often, as "instrumentalism" or "experimentalism." As in James's case, I shall focus not on the bulk of Dewey's writings but on what Dewey said about Peirce and on what Peirce said about him.

Dewey's (1923) essay "The Pragmatism of Peirce," supplementing Peirce's *Chance, Love, and Logic*, is still one of the best brief characterizations of Peirce's pragmatism.²⁸ Dewey compares James and Peirce, noting the standard differences (nominalism vs. realism about generals, individuality vs. emphasis on the social). Peirce, according to Dewey, emphasized "the method of procedure" more than James (307) and rejected the Jamesian "appeal to the Will to Believe – under . . . the method of tenacity" (308). In another paper discussing Peirce and James, Dewey (1922) pointed out that James, being a "humanist" rather than a logician, both expanded the pragmatic method by applying it to the theory of truth and restricted it by emphasizing particular instead of general consequences. Later, Dewey (1946: 156–7) referred favorably to Peirce's way of linking truth with the dynamics of scientific belief – against the idea of truth as a "fixed structure" – and called Peirce "the man who more than any other single person is the begetter in philosophy of an attitude and outlook distinctively American."

There are issues on which Peirce and Dewey were closer to each other than either of them was to James – in particular, the social orientation of pragmatism and the advancement of scientific knowledge.²⁹ However, regarding the issue of realism, Dewey was closer to James than to Peirce. Neither James nor Dewey could accept scholastic realism; nor did they accept Peirce's logical, nonpsychological interpretation of pragmatism.³⁰ As in James, Peirce found in Dewey the unfortunate tendency to psychologize what he had presented as logical and normative principles of scientific inference. On June 9,

1904, he wrote to Dewey: "You propose to substitute for the Normative Science which in my judgment is the greatest need of our age a 'Natural History' of thought or of experience. . . . I do not think anything like a natural history can answer the terrible need . . ." (CP 8.239). Since pragmatism was, for Peirce, a method for clarifying ideas and, because of its relation to the theory of inference, a maxim of logic, and since logic was a normative science, James and Dewey were from Peirce's perspective guilty of a conflation of logical and (socio) psychological issues.

Still, pragmatists like Dewey and Mead can be seen as developing further some basically Peircean themes, particularly the reflexivity of habits of action and of rationality (Kilpinen 2000: ch. 3). Dewey did not entirely reject Peirce's realism of generality: "... Peirce has laid the basis for a valid logical theory of universals. It is the business of leading principles, as formulae of operations, to guide us in the drawing of inferences. They accomplish this task by indicating what qualities of things are characteristic of the presence of a specified kind of object or event" (Dewey 1936: 532). But he insisted that the problem of the relation between universals and individuals is logical rather than ontological (533), resisting the metaphysics of real generality. Dewey (1946: 228) also approvingly remarked that Peirce was the first to draw attention to the importance of the principle that "[t]he generic propositions or universals of science can take effect . . . only through the medium of the habits and impulsive tendencies of the one who judges" and that they have "no *modus operandi* of their own."

One of the major differences between Peirce's and Dewey's conceptions of inquiry is related to their accounts of truth. As was observed, Dewey (like James) approved of Peirce's 1878 definition of truth as the ultimate opinion of inquiry; yet Dewey did not rely on the idea that there must be a *unique* limit to inquiry (Tiles 1988: 107). He conceived of the tasks of inquiry more pluralistically than Peirce did, remaining closer to James. Instead of Peircean "pure science," Dewey favored "socially responsible science" (Tiles 1988: 160). This basic position regarding the social and, more generally, human relevance of inquiry can be found in virtually all of his writings. Furthermore, Dewey (like James) was more idealistically or constructivistly oriented than Peirce in his quite explicit view that the actions of inquirers constitute the objects of knowledge instead of

being answerable to pre-existing real things (cf. Dewey 1929; see Shook 2000).

It is undeniable that Peirce's community-driven conception of inquiry was a crucial background of Dewey's "instrumentalism" (cf. Dewey 1922); moreover, even within a Deweyan, more pluralistic conception of what our inquiries aim at one may retain the Peircean view that there is one definite answer to be arrived at regarding any particular question, provided that inquiry could be carried out long enough. The pluralism associated with James's pragmatism and his doctrine of the mutability of truth seems to be more extreme than the pluralism we can read into Dewey's account of inquiry.

6. PEIRCE AND OTHER EARLY PRAGMATISTS

Among the initial pragmatists, Josiah Royce was an important critic of James and developed a mixture of pragmatism and Hegelian idealism ("absolute pragmatism") that was closer to Peirce's views than were most other classical formulations of pragmatism. G. H. Mead was perhaps the one closest to Peirce among the early figures of the tradition, especially because of his interest in semiotics. C. I. Lewis, sometimes described as the last classical pragmatist, was also closer to Peirce than to James or Dewey. Lewis's "conceptualistic pragmatism," developed in *Mind and the World-Order* in 1929, perhaps lies between Peirce's and Royce's views (Fisch 1986: 300–1). These pragmatists remain outside the scope of the present inquiry.³¹ I shall, in this section, focus on F. C. S. Schiller, the most radical subjectivist among the classical pragmatists.

Peirce did not approve of Schiller's manner of transforming pragmatism any more than he approved of James's: "...I, by no means, follow Mr. Schiller's brilliant and seductive humanistic logic, according to which it is proper to take account of the whole personal situation in logical inquiries." His reason for dismissing Schiller resembles his critiques of James and Dewey: "...I hold it to be very evil and harmful procedure to introduce into scientific investigation an unfounded hypothesis, without any definite prospect of its hastening our discovery of the truth" (CP 5.489, c. 1906; cf. also 5.494, c. 1906). Schiller was irresponsibly unclear about what he meant by "the *real*" (CP 5.533, c. 1905; cf. also CP 8.319, undated), as well as about his definition (influenced by James) of truth as something that is "satisfactory" (CP 5.552, 1906). In his review of the book

Personal Idealism (Sturt 1902), to which Schiller had contributed, Peirce noted that Schiller "does not believe that there are any hard facts which remain true independently of what we may think about them" (CN 3, 127). Although he did not criticize this position in any detail in the review, most of his writings on pragmatism and the scientific method defend such "hard facts." "Humanism," in particular, remained unclear and unscientific in Peirce's eyes:

[Schiller] does not wish us to devote any attention to the effects of conditions that do not occur, or at any rate not to substitute the solution of such a problem for the true problems of nature. . . . I think such talk shows great ignorance of the conditions of science. [As] I understand it, this Humanism is to be a philosophy not purely intellectual because every department of man's nature must be voiced in it. . . . I beg to be excused from having any dealings with such a philosophy. I wish philosophy to be a strict science, passionless and severely fair. (CP 5.537, c. 1905)

To ignore the conditions of science – especially scholastic realism, which draws attention to unactualized generalities – was, for Peirce, to ignore the central teachings of his pragmat(i)sm. As he wrote to James: "The humanistic element of pragmatism is very true and important and impressive; but I do not think that the doctrine can be *proved* in that way. The present generation likes to skip proofs. . . . You and Schiller carry pragmatism too far for me. The most important consequence of it, by far, . . . is that under that conception of reality we must abandon nominalism" (CP 8.258, 1904; Perry 1935/1936: II, 430).³² Apparently, Schiller, like James, applied pragmatism (or humanism) to itself, finding it a pragmatically valuable philosophy in human affairs, instead of seeking a proof available for nonpragmatists and pragmatists alike.

Apart from this metaphilosophical difference, Peirce's disagreements with James and Schiller were partly terminological. In another letter to James, Peirce noted that he would prefer the term "anthropomorphism" to Schiller's "humanism," especially if it implies theism (though he rejected the idea that the theistic God might be finite).³³ Furthermore, "[p]luralism," he said, "does not satisfy either my head or my heart" (CP 8.262, 1905; Perry 1935/1936: II, 434). Later, he mentioned "pluralism generally," along with the "will to believe" and the "mutability of truth," as an implication of James's and Schiller's pragmatism he did not accept (EP2: 457, 1911). As in the case of James and Dewey, Peirce felt that Schiller's

psychologism and nominalism were the opposite of the true spirit of pragmatism: "When you say that Logical consequences cannot be separated from psychological effects, . . . you are merely adopting a mode of expression highly inconvenient which . . . can only confuse, any sound argumentation. It is a part of nominalism which is utterly antipragmatistic . . ." (CP 8.326; letter to Schiller, September 10, 1906).

Given Peirce's remarks on the indistinguishability of his views from James's, it seems that Peirce was more critical of Schiller than of James. Why? Is there a difference between James's pluralistic pragmatism and Schiller's personalistic humanism, although James often appeared to endorse Schiller's views on truth and on the constitution of reality through human practices?

This issue must be left for James and Schiller scholars to solve on another occasion. We can say that Schiller, even more radically than James, distanced himself from Peirce's logical, scientific pragmatism. He admitted that Peirce was the one who invented pragmatism, but added that "it would seem to follow from pragmatist principles that a doctrine belongs to him who makes an effective use of it" (Schiller 1903: 27 n1). Schiller (1907: ix–x) ignored Peirce's criticism of James's and his own views simply by remarking that Peirce's 1905 *Monist* papers "have shown that he had not disavowed the great Pragmatic principle which he launched into the world so unobtrusively nearly thirty years ago." Schiller (1907: 5) thought this principle was "the greatest truism": it is clear that the consequences of a claim are used to test the truth of the claim. "Humanism" is a broader doctrine than pragmatism (1907: 5 n1). Schiller added, though, that Peirce had privately assured him that "from the first he had perceived the full consequences of his dictum."

Neither James nor Schiller was responsive to the critique Peirce launched against them, although they, as leading figures of the movement founded by Peirce, perhaps ought to have been. This, one might speculate, may have been one of the reasons Peirce's pragmatism was only slowly received in the philosophical community.

7. PEIRCE AND LATER PRAGMATISM

Peirce and other classical pragmatists influenced later thinkers in many ways. Among central twentieth century philosophers, Ludwig

Wittgenstein is one of the most interesting in relation to the pragmatist tradition, although he was influenced more by James than by Peirce. Peirce's influence on Wittgenstein has been shown to go primarily through Frank Ramsey.³⁴ Unlike Wittgenstein, postpositivist philosophers of science, especially scientific realists, have been less affected by James and Dewey and more attached to a Peircean doctrine of the final opinion of the scientific community as the measure of truth (cf. Niiniluoto 1999). There are, furthermore, contemporary pragmatists (e.g., Haack 1998; Rescher 2000) whose views can be regarded as "Peircean," but despite the growing industry of Peirce scholarship, it seems that the most original thinkers to be classified as pragmatists today have been more strongly influenced by James and Dewey than by Peirce (e.g., Putnam, Rorty, and others). Yet we can find conflicting attitudes to Peirce even among these Jamesian–Deweyan neopragmatists: there is a great gulf separating Putnam's (1990: ch. 18) appreciation of Peirce's role as one of the founders of modern logic from Rorty's infamous way of restricting his contribution to the pragmatist tradition to his having given it the name and having stimulated James (see Rorty 1982: 160–161).

Putnam (1994, 1995a), like Rorty, sees James and Dewey as the two great pragmatists he wishes to follow. He refers to himself as one who attempts to revive the idea that truth is, "in some way (not in Peirce's way, but in a more humanly accessible, modest way), an idealization of the notion of warranted assertibility" (Putnam 1990: 223), and points out that "Peirce was certainly wrong in thinking that truth can be defined as what inquiry would converge to in the long run" (Putnam 1994: 152). Still, there are Peircean elements in Putnam's pragmatism: his attempt to define truth in epistemic terms (Putnam 1981, 1990) is not unlike Peirce's notion of the ideal limit of scientific opinion.³⁵ In Rorty's neopragmatism, such Peircean elements have disappeared, since in Rorty we can hardly find any sincere concern with truth or inquiry. Rorty also misuses Peircean ideas by regarding the pragmatist tradition as based on what he calls "antirepresentationalism." It is odd to claim that the founder of semiotics also founded an antirepresentationalist philosophy. Yet Rorty (1998) maintains something from the Peircean account of truth: insisting on the "cautionary" use of "true," he comes close to the kind of regulative "absolute" truth that James and Dewey considered valuable in Peirce's philosophy, viz., a notion of truth whose point is that "it

is always possible (and frequently likely) that further inquiries will exercise their powers of 'retroactive legislation' and thus require us to abandon our current conclusions" (Hookway 2000: 69). We use the notion of truth partly in order to remind ourselves of our fallibility, since the notion of error seems to presuppose the notion of truth (see Misak 2000). We may always be mistaken in our opinions, and since (as Putnam, Rorty, and many others have argued) we cannot directly compare our beliefs and theories to an unconceptualized practice-, perspective-, and discourse-independent reality (to the world in itself), there is no higher authority than "our future selves" (to use one of Rorty's favorite expressions) to determine whether we have been mistaken or not.

The difference between Peirce's and Rorty's pragmatism is clear, however, when the Peircean inquirer points out that our fallible beliefs should address an *unlimited* community of inquirers (Hookway 2000: 70). Rorty has no use for such a notion, as he insists on the limited and contextual nature of human projects, including inquiries. Here Rorty is much closer to James and Dewey. Science was, for James, essentially instrumental, and the practical use to which scientific theories are to be put does not require that those theories be interpreted in terms of "absolute truth" (Hookway 2000: 73–74). Rorty appears to hold an equally instrumentalist conception.

Among contemporary Peirceans, Haack (1993, 1998) has most vigorously attacked Rorty's version of pragmatism. She argues that Rorty's neopragmatism amounts, in Peirce's terms, to a pseudo-inquiry carried on in a "literary spirit," or a "fake reasoning" rather than genuine truth-seeking. Thus, Rorty fails to follow Peirce's "first rule of reason," the rule that "in order to learn you must desire to learn" (see CP 1.135/EP 2:48, 1898). From Haack's perspective, Rorty's pragmatism is a vulgarization of Peirce's.³⁶ Peirce would hardly have any difficulties in judging Rorty as one of the abusers of the word "pragmatism," as one of those who misapply the term – and the doctrine – in "literary journals." Haack's and other Peirceans' critiques of Rorty are among the most important recent twists in the pragmatist tradition. Yet, had Peirce's original views never been extended, reinterpreted, and perhaps in some cases even misapplied, had pragmatist ideas concerning truth and reality never been carried into the Rortyan antirealist and ethnocentrist extremes, the

pragmatist tradition might be poorer than it is – although we cannot know for sure.

8. CONCLUSION: REALISM AND IDEALISM

Only the future can show how much the Peircean conception of philosophy as inquiry will be respected in the pragmatist tradition. Peirce's pragmatism is of lasting value, but James and Dewey developed independent, though controversial, versions of pragmatism that are less realistically biased. Their constructivistic and humanistic views can – contrary to what they themselves claimed – be interpreted as variations of Kantian idealism, which perhaps cannot be consistently done in Peirce's case. The idea that the objects of knowledge are in a sense constructions by the knowing subject, or by the subject's actions in the course of inquiry, an idea that Peirce rejected but James, Dewey, and Schiller in some sense endorsed, is a fundamentally Kantian idea.

In neopragmatism, it is the Jamesian–Deweyan standpoint that dominates over the Peircean one, although Peirce's thought is more influential in the philosophy of science, especially in the tradition of scientific realism, as well as in semiotics and communication studies.³⁷ Insofar as pragmatism is considered an important tradition today, it is largely because of its promise to take seriously the vital questions of human life, rather than making the distinction between theory and practice that Peirce made. For example, James's pragmatism offers a more promising agenda for philosophers of religion seeking to understand religious experiences and the possible "pragmatic truth" (or warrant) of religious beliefs than Peirce's evolutionary metaphysics. And although the relevance of Peirce's pragmatism, especially its habitual conception of rationality, to social theory has been emphasized (Kilpinen 2000), it is easier to find directly relevant social-theoretical views in Dewey than in Peirce.

Peirce's and his followers' interpretations of pragmatism are united by certain questions their views seem to leave unsettled. In particular, the problem of *realism vs. idealism* is unavoidable in the pragmatist tradition. It is legitimate to object that this contrast is not appropriate in a discussion of pragmatism, as pragmatists have attempted to transcend the oscillation between realism and idealism

instead of defining their views in terms of it. But it is equally legitimate to use this traditional opposition to uncover the tensions that remain in pragmatists' peculiar combinations of realism and idealism (even if we may in the end agree that the contrast has been transcended). What makes pragmatism philosophically interesting is its tendency to result in fruitful albeit not easily resolvable struggles between realism and idealism.³⁸ Neither Peirce's, James's, nor Dewey's (nor their more recent followers') views can be simply described as realistic or idealistic. They are as complex doctrines as Kant's, who combined transcendental idealism with empirical realism.

In his essay on Peirce, Dewey concluded: "Do not a large part of our epistemological difficulties arise from an attempt to define the 'real' as something given prior to reflective inquiry instead of as that which reflective inquiry is forced to reach and to which when it is reached belief can stably cling?" (1923: 308) This suggestion – that the "real" should *not* be defined as "something given prior to reflective inquiry" – leads to the elusiveness of the contrast between realism and idealism that can be found throughout the pragmatist tradition. Does inquiry produce the real by being forced to reach for it? How independently does the real exist before inquiry, if it is not "given" prior to it? And how meaningful is this worry itself? Although we should not confuse the problems we encounter in formulating the realism question with the openness of the question itself, the fact that a certain issue is hard to formulate is an indicator of its genuine openness. Through pragmatists' writings, the problem of realism is continuously transformed, but never fully settled. For example, Putnam (1992a: 73) classifies Peirce's scholastic realism as a species of metaphysical realism, the unpragmatic view that we can discover Nature's own "joints" – a view whose rejection he regards as a virtue rather than a vice in James and Dewey.

Peirce and other pragmatists were presumably aware of their difficulties in reconciling the *prima facie* conflicting demands of realism and idealism. Peirce characterized truth as "[t]he opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate" and reality, or "the real," as "the object represented in this opinion" (CP 5.407/W 3, 273, 1878). But the real, he always emphasized, must be thought of as something that is "independent of the vagaries of me and you" (CP 5.311/W 2, 239, 1868; see also CP 5.405/W 3, 271, 1878; CP 5.430,

1905). Traditional realists require that the nature of reality be absolutely independent of our – even our most considered, collective, or “final” – opinions. Peirce thought that reality “depends on the ultimate decision of the community” (CP 5.316/W 2, 241, 1868). Claims like this seem to make his pragmatism ambiguous between realism (connected with a correspondence analysis of truth, according to which the final opinion of inquiry corresponds to the way things are) and idealism (connected with a coherence or consensus account of truth). Peirce also said that reality, while being independent of “what you or I or any finite number of men may think about it,” may not be independent “of thought in general” (CP 5.408/W 3, 274, 1878; cf. also CP 7.336, 1873).³⁹ This reference to “thought in general” in the constitution of reality in some sense makes him an idealist. Realizing the instability of his position, Peirce remarked that the claim that “[t]he object of final belief which exists only in consequence of the belief, should itself produce the belief” sounds paradoxical, but that this is not to say that the object of the belief “begins to exist first when the belief begins to exist” (CP 7.340, 1873). Even though the Peircean pragmatist characterizes inquiry nonpsychologically in illuminating the notions of reality and truth in terms of the final outcome of inquiry, it is not easy to make sense of the idea of inquiry as a genuine discovery, if inquiry, fated to lead to a consensus of opinion in the long run, constitutes the way the world is (Hookway 1985: 37–9).

The secondary literature is full of attempts to reconcile the tension between realism and idealism. For example, Carl Hausman (1993) endorses the idea that Peirce was a “metaphysical realist” (although preferably to be called an “evolutionary realist”), and defends this view against philosophers like Putnam. While Peirce rejected the “spectator theory of knowledge” (as all pragmatists did), he insisted that there are conditions of inquiry that were never made by us, that there is “resistance” in our experience (224–5). But is it possible to reject the spectator theory, denying that the object of knowledge is “given” to us, and yet claim that there is an external, independent world that is the object of knowledge? If the object of knowledge is constituted as the final outcome of inquiry, if truth is to be equated with belief that cannot be improved on through further inquiry, it is hard to see how the world can be totally independent of us in the sense in which realists claim it to be.

It would be too simple to say that the progressive dynamics of science – scientific inquirers' collective belief-fixation – decides, determines, or constructs the world. It would certainly be too simple to ascribe this view to any of the pragmatists. But it would also be too simple to say that reality exists in a ready-made form, as a "thing in itself," independent of the inquirers' habits of action. Peirce's pragmatism, and the countless post-Peircean versions of pragmatism, all the way up to and including controversial contemporary figures like Putnam and Rorty, deal with or try to undermine this opposition between realism and idealism. Perhaps the question, "Is Peirce assuming an external, objective world independent of inquiry, or is the world constituted through the process of inquiry?" is a bad question, but it remains to be determined exactly in what sense it is a bad question and with which questions it should be replaced. For instance, one may ask whether Peirce held a nonepistemic or an epistemic concept of truth.⁴⁰ Truth is epistemic in the sense of being necessarily tied to our inquiries but nonepistemic in the sense of being about a reality we did not build up. According to philosophers operating with traditional nonpragmatic dichotomies, this is hopelessly ambiguous; according to pragmatists, we do not have ambiguities here but complexity that cannot be avoided, if we wish to obtain an adequate conception of truth and realism.

Royce made an important point in 1881, when in a letter to James he asked, "Do you or do you not recognize this reality of which you speak as . . . independent of the knowing consciousness?" observing the same hesitation and ambiguity in Peirce's 1877 and 1878 papers: "[He] seems to regard reality as for us merely the representative of our determinations to act so or so, and of our expectations that we shall succeed if we do so. . . . Yet [he] is not content with this, but continually appeals to the transcendent reality as justifying our determination and our expectation" (Perry 1935/1936: I, 792). The issue Royce identified is, essentially, a Kantian one, reflecting the Kantian background of the pragmatist tradition. In a way Peirce, like most other pragmatists, was an empirical realist about the "real things" that are the object of the final scientific opinion, while remaining a transcendental idealist about the constitution of these things, and of their objectivity, grounded in the intersubjective action of the scientific community.⁴¹

Although (or because) no “solution” to our Kantian issue has been reached, I hope I have been able to produce a modest contribution to the pragmatist tradition characterized by the irreducible complexity of the realism vs. idealism opposition.⁴²

NOTES

1. See CP 8.253, editors' note. James's lecture, often considered the beginning of the pragmatist movement, was published in the *University of California Chronicle* 1 (1898) and is most easily found as “The Pragmatic Method,” in *Essays in Philosophy* (1978: 123–39) or as an appendix to *Pragmatism* (James 1907 [1975]: 257–70).
2. Nor am I concerned with the Metaphysical Club or with the broader historical background of pragmatism; cf. Menand (2001).
3. This is not, however, a historical study on the changes that took place in Peirce's philosophy. Such developmental questions are dealt with elsewhere in this *Companion*.
4. Another interesting, somewhat bitter passage is this: “To speak plainly, a considerable number of philosophers have lately written as they might have written in case they had been reading either what I wrote but were ashamed to confess it, or had been reading something that some reader of mine had read. For they seem quite disposed to adopt my term *pragmatism*. . . I cannot find any direr fault with the new pragmatists than that they are *lively*. In order to be deep it is requisite to be dull. //On their side, one of the faults that I think they might find with me is that I make pragmatism to be a mere maxim of logic instead of a sublime principle of speculative philosophy.” (EP 2: 134, 1903; cf. CP 5.17–18.) See also CP 6.482, 6.490, 1908.
5. For the “two pragmatisms” image, see Apel (1981), Mounce (1997), Haack (1998), Rescher (2000), and Misak (2000). According to these commentators, Peirce's pragmatism was gradually, through misapplications and distortions, transformed into Rorty's completely un-Peircean neo-pragmatism.
6. In order to obtain a good overall picture of pragmatism, it is advisable to focus on those pragmatists (James, Dewey, Schiller) whose views were different from Peirce's rather than on those (Royce, Mead, Lewis) who more or less agreed with him.
7. On these differences – realism vs. nominalism, truth, formulations of the pragmatic maxim, etc. – see Perry (1935/1936: II, ch. 75), Thayer (1968), and Hookway (2000).

8. For Peirce's formulations of Scholastic realism, see CP 5.430–3, 1905; 5.453 ff., 1905; 5.470, c. 1906; 5.528, c. 1905; 8.7–38, 1871, as well as the 1898 lectures, *Reasoning and the Logic of Things* (RLT). Only a part of Peirce's important 1905–1907 writings on pragmatism (in which Scholastic realism is a major topic) can be found in the *Collected Papers*; a more comprehensive selection is included in EP 2: chs. 24–8. The equally important early Berkeley review (1871) can also be found in W 2, 462–87, and in EP 1: ch. 5. On the role of Scholastic realism in Peirce's thought, see Apel (1981), Skagestad (1981), Margolis (1993), Haack (1998), and Pihlström (1998b).
9. For discussions of Peirce's theory of truth, see Misak (1991) and Hookway (2000).
10. See Hookway (2000: 68–69); on the "Peircean strain" in James's theory of truth, see Putnam (1997: 167–71); on Dewey's approval of Peirce's definition, see Tiles (1988: 106) and Shook (2000: 130).
11. Cf., e.g., CP 5.504n1, c. 1905. Peirce refers to his 1868 writings in the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* (cf. CP 5.213 ff.; these can also be found in W 2, chs. 21–3, and in EP 1: chs. 2–4; see also Fisch 1986: 118).
12. Such alertness was, however, hardly denied by James (cf. Pihlström 1998a: ch. 6).
13. James (1909b [1977]: 153–4) referred favorably to what he regarded as affinities between Peirce and Bergson. This must have annoyed Peirce (see also NE 3/2: 836, 1909).
14. See, however, Misak's contribution to this *Companion*, "C. S. Peirce on Vital Matters." A less Peircean version of pragmatic moral realism is defended in Pihlström (2003).
15. A similar – rather unpragmatic – theory/practice distinction is at work in Peirce's 1903 lectures. Cf. also Putnam (1992a: 55–8).
16. For relevant correspondence, see Perry (1935/1936: II, 418–21). Peirce noted on January 4, 1898, that his first lecture would be about "vitally important topics," "showing that where they are 'vital' there is little chance for philosophy in them" (421). Peirce's lectures were stimulated by James's will to believe theory (Houser 1998: xxi).
17. Seigfried's reference is to James (1907 [1975]: 18) and (1909a [1978]: 28).
18. This extends to their views on religion. Peirce may have thought, with James, that we have a humanly natural tendency to believe in God (see CP 6.487, 1908; Roth 1965). In a letter to James's son Henry after William's death in 1910, Peirce said that *The Varieties of Religious Experience* was the best of James's books (Perry 1935/1936: II, 286). There may even be a version of the "will to believe" doctrine in Peirce (see CP 5.60/EP 2: 156, 1903; cf. Gavin 1980; Hookway 2000: 19; Kilpinen 2000: 117). Gavin (1980) argues that Peirce employed such a doctrine in

his identification of the real and the knowable – in his rejection of an incognizable *Ding an sich* (CP 5.257/W 2, 208ff., 1868).

19. See James (1909a [1978]: 31).
20. See also CP 5.422, 1905; 5.438, 1905; 5.468, c. 1906; 6.481, 1908; 8.191, c. 1904. A longer formulation is the following: "Pragmatism is the principle that every theoretical judgment expressible in a sentence in the indicative mood is a confused form of thought whose only meaning, if it has any, lies in its tendency to enforce a corresponding practical maxim expressible as a conditional sentence with its apodosis in the imperative mood" (CP 5.18/EP2: 134–5, 1903). For discussions of Peirce's maxim, see Apel (1981: ch. 4), Skagestad (1981: ch. 3), and Hookway (1985: ch. 8); on James's interpretation, see Hingst (2000). Recent scholarship appears to show that Peirce had enunciated the pragmatic principle at the Metaphysical Club not later than November 1872 (see the editors' introduction to W 3, xxixff.).
21. As Perry (1935/1936: II, 432n11) notes, James does not in fact *quote* this passage. It is a paraphrase, though inaccurate by Peirce's lights.
22. Some of Peirce's long letters to James were full of logical and mathematical formalisms – apparently Peirce tried to teach his friend some mathematics (see NE 3/2: 788–878). The selection of Peirce's letters to James in EP 2:492–502 is focused on semiotics.
23. On pragmatism as a logical method, cf. further Turrissi (1997a, 1997b) and Hookway (2000: 286 ff.).
24. Turrissi (1997a: 9) remarks that the title of the lectures, *Pragmatism as a Principle and Method of Right Thinking* (see CP 5.14–212/EP 2: chs. 10–16), was given by James. James probably authored the *Harvard Crimson* announcement on Peirce's lecture on March 26, 1903, which defined pragmatism as a philosophical system viewing philosophical questions "primarily from the standpoint of their practical bearing upon life" (Turrissi 1997a: 10; 1997b: 23).
25. On the question of whether Peirce was able to "prove" pragmatism, see Houser (1998) and Hookway (2000: ch. 12).
26. See, again, Misak's contribution to this volume, which seeks to show how Peirce "builds instinct into the scientific method." Peirce argued not only that we should not trust science in vitally important matters but also that *believing* has no place in science (CP 5.60/EP 2:156, 1903). It is problematic to fit such a view with his own belief/doubt theory of inquiry. Cf. Hookway (1998: § 5; 2000: ch. 1).
27. See Kant (1781/1787: A800/B828, A823–4/B851–2); for Peirce's way of making the distinction, see Thayer (1968: 138–139).
28. Dewey also occasionally reviewed Peirce's writings, for example, the first volume of Peirce's *Collected Papers* in *New Republic* 68 (1932).

29. Dewey's and Peirce's affinities were noted early. The psychologist James Rowland Angell wrote to James in 1898 that Peirce's pragmatism is "surprisingly like what Dewey is driving at." (See the editors' notes to James 1907 [1975]: 146.)
30. Dewey also criticized (in a letter to James in 1903) Peirce's metaphysical "hypostatizing of chance" (Perry 1935/1936: II, 523).
31. Cf. the discussions of Peirce's relation to later pragmatists by Thayer (1968), Kilpinen (2000), and Rescher (2000). The influence of pragmatism became, after its major early classics, also geographically so dispersed that it would be impossible to give any even nearly exhaustive survey here. For example, in Italy, there were both Jamesian pragmatists (e.g., Papini) and Peircean ones (Vailati and Calderoni) (Fisch 1986: 295–6; see Perry 1935/1936: II, ch. 84; Shook 1998; and Peirce's own note, N 3: 233–4, 1905).
32. Here Peirce implies that pragmatism is a "conception of reality" (and not a mere method of thought). From James's or Schiller's perspective, these may be practically indistinguishable.
33. "William James and F. C. S. Schiller maintain that God and everything else is finite – a doctrine some people call *pragmatism*. To me it is as abhorrent as it is incredible." (NE 3/2: 786, 1906.) Peirce remarked to James that pragmatism does not require renouncing ideas about the Absolute (NE 3/2: 871, 1909). One of James's applications of pragmatism was his criticism of the notion of the Absolute.
34. On the relation between Peirce and Wittgenstein, including Ramsey's influence, see Thayer (1968: 304–5), Bambrough (1981), Gullvåg (1981), Nubiola (1996), and Crocker (1998). In addition to his conversations with Ramsey, Wittgenstein must have been acquainted with Peirce through his reading of James's *Varieties*.
35. For a comparison between Peirce and Putnam, see Hookway (2001). Hookway points out (1) that it is not necessary to interpret Peirce as subscribing to the idea of an "absolute conception of the world"; (2) that Peirce may be seen as sharing James's (and Putnam's) view that reality can be relative to human thought, interests, or desires, since the concepts by means of which we classify things are "sensitive to a distinctive human perspective"; and (3) that Putnam's (1994) "natural realism" is comparable to Peirce's "critical commonsensism." It is an open question whether Putnam's defense of common sense would be sufficiently "critical" by Peirce's lights.
36. Thayer (1996) suggests that a neopragmatism which sees objects as "social constructs" might have been regarded as an example of the "a priori method" of belief-fixation by Peirce – as one of the methods Peirce found inferior to the scientific method (CP 5.382 ff./W 3, 252ff., 1877).

37. Among major philosophers of science, Isaac Levi (1991), in his studies on the dynamics of scientific belief, has been one of the most important followers of Peirce. On Peirce's relevance for communication studies, see Bergman (2000).
38. Tensions like the one between realism and idealism may be considered *unfruitful*. I believe, however, that such tensions, dilemmas, and open issues are extremely important in philosophy. They keep our philosophical wonder alive. This attitude to philosophical questions requires that one values the questions themselves, their openness and even their unclarity, more than the "results" that may be achieved, in a way resembling scientific inquiry, in the course of philosophizing. See Pihlström (1998a).
39. See the drafts on the notion of reality in Peirce's 1872–1873 investigations of logic (W 3, 28–61). On Peirce's attempt to combine "semeiotic" or "discursive" realism with idealism, see Houser (1992).
40. Cf. Putnam (1981: ch. 3) and (1990).
41. While Peirce moved from a view resembling transcendental idealism to a more realistic position, he may have come closer to transcendental idealism in his latest thought (Hookway 1985: 117). I have discussed the Kantian nature of the pragmatist tradition elsewhere (Pihlström 1996, 1998a, 1998b, 2003). The common Kantian tension shared by the pragmatisms of Peirce, James, Dewey, Putnam, Rorty, and others is a good reason to reject the popular dualisms between "two pragmatisms." Some scholars who recognize the Kantian background of Peirce's thought – e.g., Christensen (1994), influenced by Apel – are committed to this simplistic picture, assuming that Peirce's pragmatism is fundamentally different from the James–Rorty lineage.
42. I am grateful to Cheryl Misak for having invited me to contribute to this *Companion* and for her enormously useful comments on earlier drafts. I also wish to thank Mats Bergman, Susan Haack, Leila Haaparanta, Peter H. Hare, Erkki Kilpinen, Ilkka Niiniluoto, Jaime Nubiola, Sami Paavola, Richard S. Robin, and Kenneth R. Westphal, all of whom have taught me a lot about Peirce and pragmatism.