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Feminist-Pragmatist Revisionings of Reason, Knowledge, and Philosophy

PHYLLIS ROONEY

By tracing a specific development through the approaches of Peirce, James, and Dewey I present a view of (classical) pragmatist epistemology that invites comparison with recent work in feminist epistemology. Important dimensions of pragmatism and feminism emerge from this critical dialectical relationship between them. Pragmatist reflections on the role of reason and philosophy in a changing world encourage us to see that philosophy's most creative and most responsible future must also be a feminist one.

The classical-pragmatist and feminist projects in philosophy have developed out of similar frustrations with what are seen as limiting aspects of "traditional" philosophy. Both feminists and pragmatists are wary of certain forms of idealization, abstraction, and universalization in that tradition, though they might construe that wariness differently. In addition, there is the concomitant stress on reexamining philosophical concepts, distinctions, and ideals in terms of their usefulness in enhancing our understanding of our placement in our worlds of practice and action. The emphasis on increasing political awareness through philosophical analysis—an important dimension in feminist work—is also there in the pragmatist tradition, more prominently, however, in John Dewey's work than in the work of Charles Sanders Peirce.

We do well to avoid stressing these commonalities to the point of overriding important differences. I will argue that important dimensions of both pragmatism and feminism can emerge only in a kind of critical dialectical relationship between them. Let us take, for example, the emphasis by many pragmatists and feminists on grounding our epistemological concepts in an understanding of ourselves as engaged inquiring actors in the world. The juxtaposition of feminist insights with pragmatist projects shows that this focus on experience, action, and practice provides the barest of philosophical starting points. The following questions soon arise: What/whose actions and practice do we take

as paradigmatic for epistemological projection? How are those practices and actions theorized or framed in philosophical discussion? Where or how do we locate *meaning* in our action and experience? What aspects of our varied and changing experience do we take as constitutive of *experience*?

I. PRAGMATISM AND FEMINISM IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Pragmatist philosophers at the turn of the century have much in common with feminist philosophers approaching the turn of another century.[1] Both are aware of the need to engage philosophy in historical context: this is seen to require not simply revision of particular theses or positions in philosophy but a critical reevaluation of the role of philosophy in a complex, changing world. Pragmatist philosophy emerged in significant part in response to the development of scientific knowledge (and evolutionary biology in particular) and the resultant shifts in intellectual and religious thought in America toward the end of the last century (Wilson 1990; White 1972). These shifts converged—particularly for William James and for Dewey—in the need to account philosophically for human meaning and value in a scientific worldview. The result was less a body of doctrine than a methodology or an attitude with which philosophers sought to map out a realm of meaningful human thought and action within an appreciation of the changing worlds of science. I will focus on three key figures in this development, Peirce, James, and Dewey; while their views do not exhaust the full development of classical pragmatism, I will argue that the particular insights that emerge from the differences and tensions among them provide opportunities for fruitful feminist critique and appropriation.[2]

The significant changes in social life that have resulted from the development of second-wave feminism have also resulted in calls for philosophical critique and revision. In particular, feminist philosophy has emerged out of the expressed need to take philosophical account of the genuine insights and practical changes that have resulted from social and political action designed to improve the lives of women. Many feminist philosophers have felt frustrated with limited structures and discourses in philosophy that foreclose the full philosophical impact of those same shifts. Thus feminist philosophy should also be viewed less as a single doctrine than as a set of interacting methodologies and attitudes that take as a primary concern the need to rethink human meaning and value in light of emerging insights about the way in which gender structures in society circumscribe meaning and value, with specific attention given to the way in which such gender structures are constructed differently in different cultural contexts. (The need to rethink the connection between science and human value is now emerging as an important concern in feminist epistemology and philosophy of science, and in this particular arena feminist concerns link back quite directly to motivating pragmatist concerns.) It is thus important to take full account of the living tensions in feminist philosophy as

a site for creative philosophical insight and productive linkups with pragmatism.

Feminists and pragmatists both hold philosophy to account in the development of new discourses and new possibilities of action and power, and they share suspicion of traditional modes of philosophical theorizing that resist such possibilities. James's description of the pragmatist is one that many feminists might also find especially descriptive of their placement in philosophy: "A pragmatist turns his back resolutely and once for all upon a lot of inveterate habits dear to professional philosophers. He turns away from abstraction and insufficiency, from verbal solutions, from bad *a priori* reasons, from fixed principles, closed systems, and pretended absolutes and origins. He turns towards concreteness and adequacy, towards facts, towards action and towards power" (James 1981, 28). The "insufficiency" of past moral, social, and political theorizing to adequately articulate feminist expansions of personal integrity and social justice is by now well documented. Realizing the extent to which standard first principles, distinctions, and dichotomies in philosophy have set the focus of the discussion and have constrained the possibilities within which philosophical theorizing can take place, a significant part of both feminist and pragmatist projects involves reworking concepts and distinctions and understanding the genealogy of ideas and themes thought to be universal and fundamental.

Yet the emphasis on facts, on individual and particular experience, and on concreteness of action is not unproblematically endorsed by feminists, or for that matter by pragmatists. As we will explore below, many feminists fear that such endorsements risk reinforcing the very divisions that fueled justifications of women's displacement from philosophy. James is also being somewhat disingenuous in his assertion that the pragmatist turns his back resolutely on rationalist and idealist systems in philosophy. In the same essay he outlines two main traditions into which philosophers have been temperamentally inclined, the "tender-minded" (idealistic, intellectualist, rationalistic, dogmatic) and the "tough-minded" (empiricist, materialistic, pluralistic, fatalistic), and he claims that pragmatism can satisfy many of the demands of these two traditions, which, taken in their crude extremes, are a "barbaric disjunction" (James 1981, 18).

This effort to deal with various inherited dichotomies, dualisms, and disjunctions emerges as another recurring theme in both feminist and (classical) pragmatist philosophy. Dewey develops a significant part of his "reconstruction in philosophy" around the undoing of sharp divisions between theory and praxis, between knowing and doing, between reason and experience, divisions that he traces to their origins in classical Greek philosophy and in class stratification in Athenian society. The philosophical disesteem for practical or craft knowledge was linked to the "social disesteem entertained for the manual worker who engages in activities useful to the body" (Dewey 1948,

13). In such contexts Dewey does not examine the gender dimensions of the genealogy of the "naturalness" of these theoretical divisions, and here a feminist analysis provides an important additional critique. Going beyond pragmatist or Marxist analyses, feminism adds important insights about the interconnections among race, class, and gender divisions and their theoretical consequences. New avenues of analysis emerge that involve more than the sum of the individual analyses by race, class, and gender (Spelman 1988).

Feminists and pragmatists are thus curiously perched between the past and the future. Both are essentially futurists in philosophy. Both believe that humanly motivated change is possible, that such change matters, and that philosophy has an important role to play in effecting such change. (Some nonphilosopher feminists might disagree with the latter claim.) Theories must be held to account for our historical and political locations in the world and must answer to the demands for constructive change; in particular, theories of knowledge have a role to play in the development of new forms of intelligent action in a changing world. Dewey sees this futuristic dimension of pragmatism as something that clearly distinguishes it from historical empiricism. He expands upon this in a way that links his specific epistemological focus with his more general view of pragmatism:

> Pragmatism, thus, presents itself as an extension of historical empiricism, but with this fundamental difference, that it does not insist upon antecedent phenomena but upon consequent phenomena; not upon the precedents but upon the possibilities of action. And this change in point of view is almost revolutionary in its consequences. An empiricism which is content with repeating facts already past has no place for possibility and for liberty . . . in a world where the future is not a mere word, where theories, general notions, rational ideas have consequences for action, reason necessarily has a constructive function. (Dewey 1931, 24-25)

Feminist and pragmatist revisionings of epistemological concepts cannot be separated from revisionings of philosophy itself. The attempt to reengage philosophy from the point of view of social relevance and responsibility places an emphasis on developing epistemological theses that show how our knowing well cannot be separated from our acting responsibly, both individually and communally. Echoing in part Dewey's stress on the futuristic constructive function of reason, I will show that we can gainfully explore many of these interrelated epistemological concepts with a special focus on the concept of rationality. I will explore specific feminist and pragmatist insights from the standpoint of seeking to develop a critical and constructive dialogue between them. My main focus will involve explicating pragmatist positions and tracing a particular development of thought from Peirce to James to Dewey that

connects in important ways with emerging developments in feminist episte-
mology.

II. REASON AND KNOWLEDGE IN ACTION

Among the issues that have taken center stage in feminist epistemology are
concerns about fixed and limiting epistemological categories along with calls
to remap the epistemic terrain. A dominant theme in traditional conceptions
of objectivity connects what Lorraine Code (1991) calls the "autonomy
obsession" of ideal knowers with the separation of subject from object, of the
knower from the known. In mapping out the terrain of epistemology pride of
place has regularly been given to an analysis of what it means to say that "S
knows that p." The knower who occupies the S position is anonymous and
interchangeable with any other S who is rational, self-conscious, and autono-
mous. Attention is usually directed toward mapping out the semantic and
referential dimensions of "knowing that p" with the implicit assumption that
this will be the same for any knower S. It is also assumed that such knowers
can have the same cognitive access to p. The titles of three recent important
works in feminist epistemology draw the focus of attention back to the
anonymous S's of such standard formulations. Sandra Harding (1991) asks in
her title simply, "Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?" She is not expecting
simple answers of identity or subjectivity, but is interested in exploring the
complex relations through which knowers and knowledge come into exis-
tence, relations that also become constitutive of those knowers and of that
knowledge. With some similar emphases on "Who Knows," Lynn Hankinson
Nelson argues that feminist analyses of political positions and relations in the
development of knowledge (including science), especially as they concern
sex/gender systems, lead us to entertain seriously the view that knowers might
be more accurately identified as communities in that "communities, not
individuals, 'acquire' and possess knowledge" (Nelson 1990, 14). In *What Can
She Know?* Lorraine Code argues that simply inquiring about the *epistemological*
significance of the sex of the knower brings to epistemological significance
questions about "how credibility is established, about connections between
knowledge and power, about the place of knowledge in ethical and aesthetic
judgments, and about political agendas and the responsibilities of knowers"
(Code 1991, 7-8). Such questions, she argues, can no longer be eschewed or
neatly separated from questions about evidence, justification, and warrantabil-
ity in mapping out the terrain of epistemology. Jane Duran (1991) argues that
the focus on the contextual development of knowledge in naturalized episte-
mology is one that is shared by many feminist epistemological perspectives,
and that such an emphasis encourages, in particular, the development of
feminist sociology of knowledge.

A particularly interesting dimension of feminist epistemology involves asking how these concerns with the material, contextual, dynamic, communal, and political placement of knowers and knowing have emerged as explicitly *feminist* concerns. A possible answer might be suggested initially: "Well, of course, as philosophers always claimed, women are simply more contextually and communally grounded; they are naturally more embodied in their roles as primary caretakers of the bodily and emotional needs of others." Such an answer does not sit well with most feminist epistemologists. However, the complex issues raised by its not sitting well do help us locate more accurate answers about the nature of feminist concerns in epistemology. It was, in effect, underlying epistemological divisions between mind and body, between the abstract and the particular, between reason and emotion, that sustained and reinforced limitations on women's cognitive and political agency in the public world and simultaneously helped reinforce ideals of proper knowing as primarily involving mind and reason, the universal and the abstract. In other words, the privileging of particular kinds of understandings of reason, mind, and knowledge has been inextricably linked with the simultaneous dismissal or denigration of body, emotion, and the particular as "feminine."

Genevieve Lloyd (1984) has brought to our attention the extent and significance of the persistent associations of reason and maleness in the history of Western philosophy. Yet the various arguments and insights developed around a feminist analysis of this "maleness" of reason and of the traditional ideal knower form one of the most interesting core issues in feminist episte-mology.[3] Susan Bordo has developed a psychocultural reading of "Cartesian anxiety" that, she argues, helps us to better understand the particular forms of dispassion, detachment, and distance embedded in Cartesian notions of ratio-nality and objectivity (Bordo 1986, 1987). On the other hand, if we focus on the persistent metaphorical gendering of reason as male and unreason as female in our philosophical history, our attention is drawn to the emotional and imaginative substructure motivating such gendering—we find an emotional substructure characterized largely by fear of, or aversion to, "the feminine" (Rooney 1991b). Many recent developments in feminist epistemology that include reflection on our tradition can be seen to revolve around these two moves: resisting certain kinds of essentialist claims characteristic of our tradi-tion (in the differential "natural" attribution of epistemological modes to different genders), and turning the searchlight of particularist, contextual subjectivity back on the ideal, objective "knower" emulated in that tradition, asking as Code does: "[O]ut of *whose* subjectivity has this ideal [of objectivity] grown?" (Code 1991, 70). Important dimensions of traditional ideals of objec-tivity and knowledge are then revealed. Particular historical and cultural interests are seen to motivate claims to disinterest; specific affects and pas-sions—psychoculturally imbued—underlie flights to dispassion; particular social and political structures help sustain epistemic communities through

networks of acknowledgment, trust, and credibility and also help sustain the illusion of autonomy of the "autonomous" knower. In addition to stressing historical, communal, and contextual considerations in our understanding of knowledge and knowledge formation, feminist analyses are also providing new insights into the ways in which such considerations have always operated (despite historical rhetorical claims to the contrary), both in the knowledge communities thought to produce "good" knowledge, *and* in the communities of epistemologists who sought to develop theories of knowledge to help explain and justify such knowledge.

As suggested above and elucidated further below, the pragmatist tradition resists easy inclusion among traditions that are seen by feminists to encompass hegemonic gender-inscribed conceptions of knowledge and reason. Pragmatists are also suspicious of certain forms of theorizing a unitary, ideal or sovereign Reason and question rigid distinctions and claims to epistemic finality that have little to their credit other than historical familiarity. I will now proceed to detail some of the specific ways in which three influential pragmatists proceeded to, in Code's phrase, "remap the epistemic terrain" and particularly those ways that show promise for fruitful comparison with feminist analyses. Given the insights developed in feminist epistemology we can now more clearly appreciate their efforts to shift epistemic priorities. Yet we can also begin to speculate about why certain pragmatist theses were regularly misrepresented or misunderstood, or simply overlooked, and thus did not have the sustained attention they deserved throughout the twentieth century.

Central to pragmatist and many feminist epistemological projects is the important insight that knowers and the known come into being *as such* only through states, acts, and practices of knowing. Acts and practices of knowing are dynamic and ongoing and clearly linked to all sorts of actions and practices that may not immediately be thought of as epistemic. Yet *states* of knowing and states of belief are also not to be thought of as static: in pragmatist analyses "states" of belief emerge as rules for action, as guides in our active anticipation of events and consequences.

This *dynamic* dimension of inquiry was firmly set in place in what are usually considered the first two significant papers in classical American pragmatism: Peirce's "The Fixation of Belief" and "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" (Thayer 1982, 61-100). The "irritation of doubt" is for Peirce the basis of inquiry: it involves a struggle to a state of "relief" in beliefs that are themselves dynamic as guides and shapers of action. Real inquiry has its basis in what he calls "real and living doubt." This applies to inquiry within specific disciplines of knowledge, yet it also has important consequences for philosophical inquiry itself. Two kinds of starting points in epistemology come under special scrutiny with Peirce: Cartesian universal doubt (the starting point in a well-known rationalist tradition) and, alternatively, the recommendation that we begin with "first impressions of sense" (familiar from the British empiricist tradition). As both

pragmatist and nonpragmatist critics have pointed out, it is unclear that universal skepticism is epistemically possible or philosophically meaningful—even as a theoretical starting point. As for starting out from first impressions of sense, Peirce suggests a line of argument that receives even greater phenomenological elaboration in James's work in theoretical psychology (James 1950). Peirce notes that this "starting point" is the result in part of our "forgetting that our very percepts are the results of cognitive elaboration." He continues: "[I]n truth, there is but one state of mind from which you can 'set out,' namely, the very state of mind in which you actually find yourself at the time you do 'set out'—a state in which you are laden with an immense mass of cognition already formed, of which you cannot divest yourself if you would; and who knows whether, if you could, you would not have made all knowledge impossible to yourself?" (Thayer 1982, 107). However, starting points that stress *where* we are cannot overlook *who* we are and how our "living doubt" is constituted. (We will see later the significance of this as an important connection between pragmatism and feminist discussions of "second-person" and contextual knowing.)

Peirce proceeds from his own starting point to a more systematic elaboration of the process of moving from living doubt to belief, giving an account that draws specifically on the careful elaboration of the meaning of terms and propositions central to the articulation of beliefs. In order to ascertain the meaning of an intellectual conception, we should "consider what practical consequences might conceivably result by necessity from the truth of that conception; and the sum of these consequences will constitute the entire meaning of the conception" (Thayer 1982, 53). Yet even if we were to take this statement as a kind of foundational maxim for pragmatism, differing interpretations of the key notion "practical consequences" have yielded different pragmatisms. Peirce's emphasis is much more positivistic than James's or Dewey's. His emphasis is on correct methodology, on establishing the meaning of terms with "practical consequences" that turn out for the most part to be the "sensible effects" of (preferably scientifically circumscribed) action and observation. Reason must also be grounded in experience, in practical action: the "guiding principles of reasoning" must be experientially based in successful practical manipulation in the world and must be continually kept in view lest "the most masculine intellect" lose his orientation (Thayer 1982, 65).[4]

While Peirce acknowledges our original placement as knowers in a world already rich in action and sensible effects cognitively imbued, James and Dewey recognize that there are important dimensions of our full experience that are not necessarily reducible to ostensible action and sensible effect yet have "practical consequences" in our lives. Whereas Peirce stresses a pragmatist semantic elaboration of terms and propositions believed, James engages the believer more expressly in also taking into account the practical conse-

quences for the believer in the adoption of belief. For James, practical conse-
quences include more than sensible effects: they also include our aesthetic,
intellectual, and affective connections with the world, particularly insofar as
these are of significance together in the "purposive ordering" of our experience.

It is important to understand James's reworking of the mental-physical split
in order to appreciate the extent of his reconstruction of the concept of
"experience," especially as this is significant for the epistemological import of
his radical empiricism. In a sharp break with traditions that locate the
"knower" in a mind that at minimum sets proper standards of distance from
and resistance to its accompanying body (except when the body can produce
clear and distinct sense impressions), James stresses that "[t]he world experi-
enced (otherwise called the 'field of consciousness') comes at all times with
our body as its center, center of vision, center of action, center of interest . . .
So far as 'thoughts' and 'feelings' can be active, their activity terminates in the
activity of the body . . . The word 'I,' then, is primarily a noun of position . . ."
(Thayer 1982, 154-55). Emphasizing the cocreation of our "stream of
consciousness" with our continuously changing experienced reality, James
clearly differentiates his position from both rationalist and empiricist positions
that sustain some kind of theoretical separation between the world of mental
activity and the world of physical and sensible experience and that seek to
cognitively represent experienced reality primarily in terms of discrete units
of sensation.

The full extent of this *remapping* of the epistemological placement of
thought, action, body, and experience must be stressed in order to appreciate
adequately the radical nature of James's conception of truth. The philosophical
task is now clearly shifted away from a conception of truth spelled out in terms
of a correspondence (as an inert relationship) between "mind" and "reality."
The terms of the "correspondence" are changed to (active) thought and belief
on the one hand and experienced (or experienceable) reality on the other. A
conception of truth must take as a starting point our purposive and meaningful
ordering of lived experience and must reflect the way in which this keeps
thought and experienced reality in continual mutation. For James, then, ideas
and beliefs are true insofar as they facilitate this "agreeable leading" in our
experienced reality, an "agreeable leading" that is everywhere bounded by
individual and communal interests and satisfactions (James 1981, 91-105). Yet
as embodied knowers we live in a world "shot through with regularities," our
sense experiences "coerce" us in various ways, and an agreeable leading
requires that we develop certain kinds of stability and consistency in our truths
about the physical world. Thus, contrary to popular misrepresentations, James
does not simply reduce truth and objectivity to "mere" utility or satisfaction
but recenters the epistemic map so that what we normally think of as the "hard
facts of reality," what James calls the "originals and prototypes of the truth
process," emerge as important loci, as examples of more "fully verified leading"

in his more expansive conception of truth. In order to appreciate the extent of the shift, we need to understand how the epistemic map starts to look quite different once we decide to question the automatic privileging of particular kinds of truth as paradigmatic of truth and knowledge. This meta-awareness—something that is quite familiar to those engaged in feminist revisionings—involves being continually alert to the ways in which primary conceptions, first principles, "standard" starting positions already define and constrain the kinds of philosophical insights we eventually obtain. While this awareness provides a key to understanding the pragmatist project as a whole, it is also a key to appreciating important differences among the pragmatists themselves.

The claim that James reduces truth to "mere" utility has some force *only if* we take the desires, interests, and satisfactions that comprise the utilitarian to be "mere" desires, "mere" interests, and "mere" satisfactions. Given a philosophical tradition that (at minimum) distances reason from emotion, desire, and interest, the *cognitive* value and import of emotion and interest have not been given the kind of sophisticated attention that we would like. Feminist analyses provide significant additions in three ways. First, feminists are likely to take more seriously an analysis of the cognitive import of affect simply because they seek to reexamine the historical conflation of the affective with "the feminine" and the consequent epistemic denigration of both. Second, because this kind of critical reexamination was not available to the pragmatists and could not be incorporated into their work, they were unable to respond adequately to persistent charges about their reducing truth and knowledge to "mere" utility and interest—they could not fully uncover the layers of epistemic gendering encoded in the "mere." Third, feminist analyses of the social manipulation of needs and interests differentially by gender give especially important insights into the ways in which *all* needs, interests, and affects are the active site of social and institutional influence and interpretation. Nancy Fraser, for example, provides a specific analysis of "the politics of need interpretation" in her examination of the way in which gender norms and meanings are deployed in the political manipulation of poverty, particularly through the construction of social welfare systems (Fraser 1989, 144-60). The development of an understanding of affect and interest as something more than "mere" affect and interest is a distinguishing mark of the work of both James and Dewey, though much less so with Peirce, who asserts: "[M]y pragmatism [has] nothing to do with qualities of feeling. . . . Those qualities have no intrinsic significance beyond themselves" (Thayer 1982, 58). Before examining (in the next section) the way in which Dewey provides a more adequate analysis of the *social* dimensions of interested and embodied knowing, it is important to see how James set out to redefine the concept of rationality in a way that takes account of these wider dimensions of knowing and acting subjectivity.

While many philosophers have at least acknowledged the importance of the affective and the aesthetic, James does so in a way that expands on their epistemological significance and this is reflected in his conception of rationality. He seeks to develop a conception of rationality that acclaims the maximal satisfaction of the whole range of our interests. He writes: ". . . rationality has at least four dimensions, intellectual, aesthetical, moral, and practical; and to find a world rational to the maximal degree *in all these respects simultaneously* is no easy matter" (James 1977, 55). In particular, James adopts a somewhat complex stance with respect to the traditional distinction between theoretical rationality (as in the intellectual need to develop overarching and comprehensive understandings of human nature or "the world") and practical rationality, when we need to develop specific rules of thought or action to help us weave our way effectively through the practical demands of our everyday encounters with the world. However, as Charlene Haddock Seigfried argues, James is more inclined toward experiential rationalism than toward theoretical rationalism, and his attempt to develop a conception of "rationality in its fullest sense" meant that he could distinguish, but not tear apart, the rational demands of sense, theory, and practice; this accounts in part for his alternating rationalist and antirationalist tendencies in his genealogy of rationality (Seigfried 1990, 373-89). It is thus important in James's account (and in pragmatist accounts more generally) to undo a strict division between a theoretical and a practical rationality, and this is clearly linked to the undoing of the theory-practice distinction. In addition, a more robust appreciation of the aesthetic, affective, and moral demands on our knowing and acting in the world requires that we understand these demands in both their practical and theoretical implementation.

In his expansion on the cognitive role of the affective there are two specific lines of argument with which James achieves some interesting readjustments with respect to the "traditional" role of the affective. In his account of the "intellectual" *need* to develop theoretical frameworks, he asserts that this need emerges in part from our passion for order and clarity in the world, our "passion for generalizing, simplifying and subordination" (James 1977, 15). In his essay "The Sentiment of Rationality," he notes that "the transition from a state of puzzle and perplexity to rational comprehension is full of lively relief and pleasure" and that a distinguishing mark for the philosopher in attaining a "rational conception" is a strong feeling of ease, peace, and rest. "The passion for parsimony, for economy of means in thought," he writes in this same essay, "is the philosophic passion *par excellence*" (James 1979, 57-58). However, elsewhere he adds that if this passion, this "law of parsimony," is made the exclusive law of the mind it will "end by blighting the development of the intellect itself" and must therefore be joined with our other moral, aesthetic, and practical wants (James 1979, 104-5; Seigfried 1990, 117-38). The point here is not to say that particular kinds of intellectual need are "merely" passion

(only an account that opposes intellect and passion forces such a claim) but that there are such things as genuine intellectual needs (which may often conflict with each other) and that such needs are in part aesthetic and passional. (As I mentioned earlier, feminist analyses have been uncovering some of the levels of cultural-historical passional formations motivating some traditional philosophical accounts of reason and knowledge.) James notes elsewhere that the tenacity with which different philosophers subscribe to different philosophical systems can only be accounted for in terms of different "temperaments" in philosophy: general philosophical tendencies toward ratio-nalism or empiricism (toward the "tender-minded" or "tough-minded") form an unspoken bias underlying some significant clashes of temperament in the history of philosophy (James 1981, 7-10). He adds: "For the philosophy which is so important in each of us is not a technical matter; it is our more or less dumb sense of what life honestly and deeply means" (James 1981, 7). To those who might protest that since James's time philosophy has (in some circles) become more precisely and more effectively a technical matter, James would surely respond that the desire to account for "what life honestly and deeply means" primarily or totally in terms of technique is itself the mark of a particular temperament in philosophy.

The question of religious belief provides another arena for James's effective reworking of the intellectual, the rational, and the affective. Most notably in his essay "The Will to Believe," James directly challenges the notion that faith as experienced in religious or spiritual contexts is somehow opposed to reason. He discusses this issue within a more general critique of an accepted view that "it is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence" (James 1979, 18). It is important to locate James's argument within his general account of what it means to acknowledge the full dimensions of the "practical consequences" of our lives. We live lives in which we are often presented with options that are "living and momentous," that present unique and timely opportunities, and that involve choices that matter to us. We are quite justified on such occasions, James argues, in taking action based on adopting beliefs for which we don't or cannot have sufficient evidence. "Our passional nature not only lawfully may, but must, decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds" (James 1979, 20). While he seems to rely here on a distinction between the "passional" and the "intellec-tual," the full impact of his essay involves something of an undoing of the "passional" and the "intellectual" as they are often deployed. Very few impor-tant decisions can be made based on clearly formulated rules or maxims applied to "objective," fully verified evidence. This may be the case especially when dealing with matters of religion, but some of the more radical implications of James's argument also apply to areas like politics and science. In such areas we rarely have direct evidence—often our evidence is a kind of "faith in someone

else's faith." Science, he admits, would be far less advanced than it is "if the passionate desire of individuals to get their own faiths confirmed had been kept out of the game" (James 1979, 26). While it is generally accepted that the growth and progress of science certainly does depend on risk taking, on faith in hunches and instincts, and on passionate adherence to particular working hypotheses, it has also been commonplace in philosophy to distinguish this from the truth or rationality of established theories and hypotheses, where the latter is seen to be more a matter of intellectual compulsion than of passional adherence. This question touches on a significant area of debate in philosophy of science, and in the next section I will address recent developments in this debate emerging out of new understandings of the *communal* practice of science. I maintain that some of the more far-reaching implications of James's argument for science can be expanded more effectively in that context: faith in someone else's faith is, after all, as much a communal matter as it is an individual one.

In fact, although he opens up the intellectual/passional, and theoretical/practical divisions in ways that are philosophically insightful and fruitful, James's arguments overall rely on an understanding of full working context that is in some ways remarkably individualistic. In this same essay, James does acknowledge the role of faith and trust as a necessary element in the establishment and maintenance of social and personal relationships and moral accords (James 1979, 28-29). Yet these "social organisms" are often quite impersonal. While James is quite eloquent in his discussion of the full philosophical appreciation of our affective, moral, and intellectual needs, he is often less so in his discussion of the way our reality as *social* beings brings these various needs together, the way these needs are developed and expressed as social needs. Elsewhere, in stressing the need to develop a conception of rationality that takes account of our connectedness and "intimacy" with the world, he notes that "we are, ourselves, parts of the universe and share the same one deep concern in its destinies. We crave alike to feel more truly at home with it, and to contribute our mite to its amelioration . . . the common *socius* of us all is the great universe whose children we are" (James 1977, 11, 19). This "universe" that we "all" inhabit together is in some ways quite unpeopled. For surely the particular ways in which we feel more truly at home in the universe often involve feeling more truly at home with individual others and particular communities; contributing our mite to the amelioration of the universe most often involves contributing to the amelioration of the particular sufferings of others; finally, though mediately children of the universe we are initially and compellingly children of particular others. Thus our full understanding of our interactive being in the world must take account of these specific ways in which we are concretely situated in the world. Before examining Dewey's account of the social dimensions of our knowing and acting in the world, it is important to recall how the distrust with individualist accounts that eclipse important

social and communal dimensions of good knowing has emerged in recent feminist discussions (though such distrust is not to be identified with all or only feminist work).

III. KNOWING IN COMMUNITY

The epistemological significance of the development of personhood has emerged as an important issue in analyses that seek to uncover the role of the moral and the political within individual and communal knowing. Annette Baier stresses how personhood is essentially second-personhood: "A person, perhaps, is best seen as one who was long enough dependent upon other persons to acquire the essential arts of personhood. Persons essentially are *second* persons" (Baier 1985, 84). Individual knowers are persons, and so the arts of knowing (and specifically "individual" knowing) involve the arts of personhood, including in many situations the ability to have, in James's words, "faith in someone else's faith." Because of the "autonomy obsession" that has so often characterized the traditional ideal knower, not enough attention has been given to the epistemological significance of the fact that so much of our knowing is second-person knowing. While stressing the need to be careful with problematic essentialist moves in our understanding of traditional "feminine" attributes like care, dependence, and connection, Code (1991) argues for a more thorough understanding of the role of second-personhood in many different arenas of epistemic activity. Knowing what it is to know well requires an appreciation of what it is to trust well. Even in what seem like the most formal or impersonal arenas of knowledge production (in scientific inquiry, for example), knowers rely on intricate networks of epistemic trust, critique, and acknowledgment: "A knowledge claimant positions herself within a set of discursive possibilities which she may accept, criticize, or challenge; positions herself in relation to other people, to their responses, criticisms, agreements, and contributions" (Code 1991, 122). With her emphasis on developing an understanding of science as a form of *social knowledge*, Helen Longino maintains that the practice of transforming the many activities of science into a coherent understanding of a given phenomenon is a matter of social negotiations—she argues that "the objectivity of scientific inquiry is a consequence of this inquiry's being a social, and not an individual, enterprise" (Longino 1990, 67). With their specific focus on those who have traditionally been denied access to such "privileged" communities of epistemic trust and acknowledgement, feminist theorists are thus gaining important insights into these culturally imbued (and otherwise generally unrecognized) formations of epistemic access and authority.

Of the three pragmatists under discussion Dewey has developed the most extensive understanding of this second-person dimension of knowing. More broadly, Dewey developed an analysis of inquiry and knowledge as organic

modes of participation, as forms of deliberate engaged interaction between organism and environment. Dewey's "environment" includes more that the physical-organic conditions of behavior and action: he stresses "the extent in which social as well as biological organization enters into the formation of human experience" (Dewey 1948, 91). What we normally associate with the "mental" does not emerge simply as an epiphenomenal castoff in the grand march of sociobiological destiny: thought, intelligence, and inquiry are active reorganizational modes that incorporate human value and purpose into our experience. Thinking involves the deliberate assessment and reorganization of experience; the more systematic products of inquiry (formal systems of logic, for example) formulate the clarified and systematized procedures of favorably adapted thought. One cannot fully appreciate Dewey's account of knowledge as a kind of "intelligently conducted doing" without an understanding of his efforts to revision the epistemic map around the undoing of theory/practice, mind/body, and fact/value distinctions. He argues that we need to rethink the categories of the mental and the physical in relation to the centrality of the social: "the social, in its human sense, is the richest, fullest, and most delicately subtle of any mode actually experienced" (Dewey 1931, 80). He continues:

> Now of the mental as of the physical and organic it may be said
> that it operates as an included factor within social phenomena,
> since the mental is empirically discernible only where associa-
> tion is manifested in the form of participation and communi-
> cation. . . . The implication is not that [the mental and the
> physical] have no describable *existence* outside the social, but
> that in so far as they appear and operate outside of that large
> interaction which forms the social they do not reveal that full
> force and import with which it is the traditional business of
> philosophy to occupy itself. (Dewey 1931, 86)

A key to understanding the force of the social in Dewey's conception of knowledge can be found in his analysis of the development of language and communication. Some of the insights in his essay "Nature, Communication and Meaning" (Dewey 1958, 166-207) bear a distinct resemblance to claims about second-personhood. Language develops as a natural function of human association, Dewey argues; thus the way in which we grant meaning and significance to events incorporates "the distinctive patterns of human association" involved in our social and communal activities and projects. He adds: "[S]oliloquy is the product and reflex of converse with others; social communication not an effect of soliloquy. . . . Failure to recognize that this world of inner experience is dependent upon an extension of language which is a social product and operation led to the subjectivistic, solipsistic and egotistic strain in modern thought" (Dewey 1958, 170, 173).[5]

The development of Dewey's understanding of *affect* as part of the integrated interaction of the individual within an organic social environment provides an important extension that ultimately bears on an understanding of the role of value in science. The notion of "qualitative thought" is central to his analysis. It is a point of departure for integrating our felt reactions to our environment with our more systematic regulative practices of thought and action. In rejecting simplistic views of feelings as "merely organic responses" Dewey develops an understanding of feeling within an account of the "unifying qualitativeness" of a situation. He seeks to undermine the notion of feeling or impression as simply "inner" psychic fact: feeling indicates the presence of a dominating quality in an experienced situation, a quality that in many cases signals both the need for action and also suggests the contours for the fulfill-ment of that action. "When, for example, anger exists, it is the pervading tone, color, and quality of persons, things, and circumstances, or of a situation . . . the gist of the matter is that the immediate existence of quality, and of dominant and pervasive quality, is the background, the point of departure, and the regulative principle of all thinking" (Dewey 1931, 99, 116).

Some developments in feminist theory that call for a more critical analysis of the social, political, and cognitive functions of emotion invite comparison with Dewey's views on the significance of feeling and qualitative background in the critical apprehension of situations, the kind of apprehension that can propel inquiry and change. In an essay on anger and insubordination Elizabeth Spelman (1989) draws on a cognitivist view of emotion to argue that people in oppressive situations not only have a right to be angry but ought to be so, and that such anger functions in part as a kind of judgment that can propel understanding of the forces circumscribing the oppressive situation. In her discussion of the "politics of emotion" she argues that "the systematic denial of anger can be seen as a mechanism of subordination, and the existence and expression of anger as an act of insubordination" (Spelman 1989, 270). Justified anger (as well as the potentially liberatory insights that can emerge from it) is often denied women: where men are "righteously justified" in their anger women are often portrayed as "hysterical" and thereby denied avenues of acknowledgment and expression available to men. Thus feminist analyses that seek to uncover the limits imposed on women's cognitive and political possibilities cannot overlook the role of the political manipulation and inter-pretation of emotion. Such analyses help underscore the epistemological significance of feeling in providing "unifying qualitativeness," the apprehen-sion of which, in Dewey's view, is a necessary prerequisite for effective thought and action.

Another connection can be made with the debate about "a different voice" in moral deliberation, a discussion that has been a catalyst in the development of feminist ethics. Those purportedly speaking with a different voice request details that enhance the qualitative appreciation of moral situations—partic-

ularities of contexts and persons and relationships among agents involved—
before being able to prescribe rules or guidelines for action. There has been
significant discussion about the possible interpretation of this difference as a
"feminine" adjunct to the "masculine" application of abstract moral principles.
Drawing on Dewey's reflections into the nature of qualitative background, I
would argue that an important case can be made for the claim that what is
being requested (in the "different voice" articulations) is an expansion on this
dimension of pervasive quality in the moral situation, not as an adjunct to but
as the necessary background for the development and application of rules of
thought and action. In other words, we need to understand the way in which
this "additional dimension" provides an apprehension of the situation as a
locus for the effective formation and application of thought, of rules and
principles as they function in the full context of an integrated social-environ-
mental (and in this case moral) experience.[6]

For Dewey our *immediate* experience of situations is often a *felt* experience
that provides a qualitative unity that sets inquiry in motion, particularly when
that pervasive quality involves some form of discord or conflict. Qualities are
neither "in" the inquirer nor in the situation but are best understood as
qualities of interaction that set the background for the knowledge that will be
gained in the situation when that interaction is carried forward as part of an
intelligent reorganization of the situation. There is an important sense, then,
in which inquiry and knowledge are always located with respect to some
qualitative uncertainty or disturbance. Inquiry is not propelled by "uncertainty
at large" but by the situation's "unique doubtfulness," which is a "unique
quality that not only evokes the particular inquiry engaged in but that exercises
control over its special procedures" (Dewey 1938, 105). Thus the particular
kinds of knowledge that are developed in inquiry are a direct result of the
particular kinds of uncertainty that situations evoke for inquirers who quali-
tatively experience those situations in terms of their potential to satisfy or
frustrate the ends-in-view or values that these inquirers have come to expect
as part of their satisfactory interaction with the world. Yet, as we learn from
many feminist analyses, what inquirers come to expect as part of their satisfac-
tory interaction with the world has much to do with their social and cultural
placement within the world more generally, and also within the various
microworlds of inquiry. We see here the emergence of a direct link from social
and cultural embeddedness in the world to the formation of specific types of
value, and from thence to the development of particular forms of uncertainty,
inquiry, and knowledge.

If we think of science as a more systematic form of inquiry (of "intelligently
conducted doing"), we can now begin to see why Dewey could not separate
the project of science from the development and actualization of human value.
Doubt, discord, and disturbance, the motivational forces for inquiry, arise out
of conflicts of values or out of the desire to satisfy or develop values that are

in some way experienced as lacking. Values are not to be thought of as something independent of experience and nature, nor are they to be identified simply with feeling or preference.[7] Values indicate the end points that engaged action in the world seeks to satisfy and, like the development of engaged action and interaction, are cultivated over time and through experience. These ends-in-view that condition our valuing are in part determined by the norms and standards of our shared communal experience as well as by the practical demands of our embodied experience—though these latter are to a significant extent also socially mediated.[8]

Recent work in feminist/political analyses of science brings some of Dewey's views into sharper historical-critical relief than was possible for him earlier in this century. Feminist analyses of many of the biological sciences (including sociobiology) show how cultural valuations linked to racism and sexism have helped define the goals and methodology of those sciences and have in turn helped to justify those same cultural valuations under the banner of the "natural" (Bleier 1984; Fausto-Sterling 1985; Hubbard 1990). The development of an enhanced understanding of the role of different kinds of values in science is now seen to be central to the feminist project in philosophy of science (Longino 1990 and 1992; Rooney 1992). Feminists are reevaluating aspirations to a "value-free" science. Drawing on insights into the cultural valuations normalized into traditional conceptions of objectivity and autonomy, these analyses help us achieve a better understanding of science in social context and a better understanding of the way in which cultural valuations can become constitutive of the different projects of science. We need to rethink critically the ways in which traditional calls to "value-freedom" and objectivity simply encode particular kinds of value, most prominently, perhaps, the value of seeking to deny or transcend our natural transactional social and embodied experience. Joseph Rouse (1987) develops a political philosophy of science around a "practical hermeneutics," encouraging a careful analysis of the development of scientific communities around specific practices and specific instruments of observation. Scientific instrumentation has, since Dewey's time, expanded exponentially in the ever more sophisticated worlds of technoscience, yet his exhortation to "understand the way in which the invention and use of tools [plays] a large part in consolidating meanings" (Dewey 1958, 185) can be usefully recalled within the critical framework that Rouse presents.

The reemergence of this critical focus on the context and practice of science brings us right back to the beginnings of classical pragmatism and Peirce's call to attend to "the community of inquirers" as a locus for significant and new theorizing in epistemology. Feminists are again raising new kinds of critical questions about how communities of inquirers are formed, how actions and their consequences are constituted and evaluated therein, and how all of this influences and is influenced by wider social and political contexts. By tracing a particular development from Peirce to James and Dewey I have argued that

pragmatist epistemology is neither uniform nor monolithic but opens up productive (rediscovered) analyses and creative tensions that lend themselves to especially fruitful feminist critique and expansion.

IV. PHILOSOPHY'S FEMINIST FUTURE

At the outset I noted the importance of understanding pragmatism on two levels. One cannot fully appreciate pragmatist remappings of the terrain of epistemology (or any other area within philosophy) without a simultaneous appreciation of pragmatist revisionings of the significance and role of philosophy itself in a changing world. In particular, the three pragmatists we have examined all stressed the creative and productive role of the irritation of doubt, of discord, of uncertainty as the starting point for new inquiry, the kind of inquiry that compels us toward the future (yet without overlooking how the past has contributed to our uncertainty). Change, for James, produces momentous options that bring to bear new "live" questions and "real possibilities" in philosophy. Live questions that actively involve us are more likely to engage all of our practical, aesthetic, moral, and intellectual passions and are thus more likely to engage "rationality in its fullest sense."

Feminist philosophy is developing out of such tension and uncertainty. Many feminist philosophers have experienced too much of a "barbaric disjunction" between their activism and their philosophizing. Many disciplinary discourses in philosophy (even in social and political philosophy) have been seen to come up short, to be unable to entertain theoretically and critically the kinds of possibilities for constructive change that feminists know are available. This often emerges as a problem for feminists, but pragmatist insights help us see that this is perhaps more crucially a problem—though a potentially creative one—for philosophy. Feminism is opening up fissures of tension within philosophy. A pragmatist welcomes such tensions, such "irritations of doubt," as signaling possibilities for change. Dewey's conception of the progress of reason and inquiry requires the kind of possibility for change that feminism projects. In sharp contrast to a conception of reason as conformance to antecedently or transcendentally established law, reason in its "creative, constructive function" has to do with the projection of a future that more effectively addresses and articulates the possibilities that such tensions anticipate. Change in this sense must be welcomed: "change becomes significant of new possibilities and ends to be attained; it becomes prophetic of a better future" (Dewey 1948, 116).

In tracing the etymology of the term "pragmatism," H. S. Thayer has noted a special historical event. Early in the eighteenth century Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI instituted the "Pragmatic Sanction" to insure that his dominions could be inherited by female heirs in lieu of male heirs of the Hapsburg line—to the convenience of his daughter Maria Theresa (Thayer

1968, 8). What we see now is the emergence of another "pragmatic sanction" as women more numerously inherit—however enthusiastically, problematically, or subversively—the many dominions of philosophy.

NOTES

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1. In this paper I focus primarily on classical pragmatism and on the work of Peirce, James, and Dewey in particular. Though they are three key figures in the development of pragmatism, their work should not be seen to encompass all of that tradition. I seek to confine my analysis within a relatively well-circumscribed period in the development of pragmatism; however, one can argue that many of the most trenchant and revolutionary insights of pragmatism emerge in their clearest and freshest form in the classical pragmatist tradition, and thus they provide some of the clearest links with critical approaches in feminism.

2. It is important to stress that there was not one (classical) pragmatism but many different pragmatisms that still shared significant common concerns and methodologies. Peirce, whose papers in the late 1870s are often associated with the birth of American pragmatism, later lamented the misuse of the term "pragmatism" and the many different pragmatisms that had emerged. In 1905 he chose to reclaim his original definition with the new term "pragmaticism," which he thought was "ugly enough to be safe from kidnappers" (Thayer 1982, 105). C. J. Misak argues, however, that Peirce himself formulated pragmatism in at least three different ways throughout the full course of his work (Misak 1991, 3-45).

3. For a fuller account of work in feminist analyses of reason, see my "Recent Work in Feminist Discussions of Reason," forthcoming in *American Philosophical Quarterly*.

4. It is important to note that this empiricist emphasis on correct methodology, on correct inference, constitutes something of a shift in conceptions of reason (though a shift that was anticipated in John Stuart Mill's work on mathematics and logic). Reason is no longer identified with "clear intuition" or with the discovery or apprehension of *a priori* or transcendental laws. The emphasis is on reasoning as inference, as applicable methodology, as representable (ideally) in formal logical systems. At around the same time a similar view was also being developed by Gottlob Frege ([1879] 1962) who is regularly recognized as "the father of modern symbolic logic."

5. Readers familiar with the work of the later Wittgenstein will recognize that this particular line of argument by Dewey bears significant resemblance to Wittgenstein's private language argument.

6. For a helpful collection of philosophical essays on this "different voice" debate see Kittay and Meyers (1987). See Walker (1989) for a discussion of epistemological issues raised by the feminist ethics debate. Drawing in part on a critical reevaluation of traditional genderings of rationality and emotion I argue for an alternative to some standard readings of the "different voice" in Rooney (1991a).

7. This understanding of the development of value in context is linked to Dewey's account of the functioning of "operational thinking" in the world. He writes: "Without

the introduction of operational thinking, we oscillate between a theory that, in order to save the objectivity of judgments of values, isolates them from experience and nature, and a theory that, in order to save their concrete and human significance, reduces them to mere statements about our own feelings" (Dewey 1929, 263).

8. The implications of Dewey's analysis of inquiry and value for his account of observation and of hypothesis and theory formation in science are far-reaching (Dewey 1938), and here I can only trace the contours of parts of that analysis and suggest important links with recent work in philosophy of science that reengages some of the political aspects that Dewey underscored. Observation in science is, for Dewey, always diagnostic and purposeful, "specific and limited by the character of the trouble undergone" (Dewey 1948, 141); hypotheses and theories emerge around constellations of meanings that map out possible solutions with respect to the problem experienced and the ends-in-view that are sought. Claims by scientists and epistemologists to be able to know or understand nature "objectively" (in some sense, independently of human valuing) emerge as quite problematic for Dewey because for him "nature" is simply the ever-changing sum of our "natural transactions" as we intelligently pursue our various practical, social, moral, and aesthetic ends. Lisa Heldke (1987) claims that there a "shared epistemological tradition" in Dewey's and Evelyn Fox Keller's views on objectivity in science: she argues for a comparison between Dewey's work on the dynamic interactive process of inquiry and Keller's development of the concept of "dynamic objectivity" (Keller 1985, 115-26).

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