It is no secret that disputes between philosophers working in separate traditions do arise, especially along the analytic-continental fault line. Flashes of disagreement between analytic philosophers and pragmatists have also been witnessed in recent years. Many analytic philosophers allege that pragmatism lacks logical rigor or contains a naïve theory of truth (i.e., what is useful is true). Some pragmatists contend that analytic philosophy fails to address practical issues—what John Dewey called ‘the problems of men’—and endorses a faulty fact-value dichotomy. Many of these disagreements reflect mistaken views on both sides of the analytic-pragmatist divide, views that could easily be corrected through more open dialogue across the two traditions. Since at least the mid-twentieth century, analytic philosophers and pragmatists have reached out to each other in an effort to bridge the divide. When the founders of the analytic tradition, the logical positivists, immigrated from Austria and Germany to the United States during World War II, the stage was set for greater collaboration. Indeed, the logical positivist Otto Neurath invited the American pragmatist John Dewey to contribute to the Encyclopedia of Unified Sciences. This collaborative spirit finds expression in the present collection of essays. According to the editor, ‘(t)his volume aims to clarify the most recent developments in this process (of collaboration), focusing on the key theoretical issues in the revival of salient themes in the classic tradition of American philosophy within the context of analytical thought’ (xi).

The first three chapters address the topics of practice, naturalism and normativity, respectively. In ‘Allowing Our Practices to Speak for Themselves’, Vincent Colapietro examines the intersection between analytic philosophy and pragmatism, particularly in the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Charles Sanders Peirce. Although Wittgenstein denied having any pragmatist credentials, his later works focused on the distinctly pragmatist theme that practice is the primary mode for shaping human-environment interactions. Similarly, Peirce and other early pragmatists (including William James and John Dewey) were concerned with how humans inherit their everyday practices and improve upon them through rigorous inquiry and experimentation. While contemporary pragmatists and analytic philosophers disagree about whether the linguistic turn (or turn towards the analysis of language) in the history of philosophy eclipsed the pragmatic turn (or turn towards a concern with practical affairs), Colapietro insists that, at least in Wittgenstein’s case, they were one in the same. (See also my ‘The Linguistic-Pragmatic Turn in the History of Philosophy’, Human Affairs 21 (2011), no. 2: 280-93.) Indeed, both traditions acknowledge the importance of linguistic meaning: ‘The pragmatic tradition no less than analytic philosophy was inaugurated by the self-conscious impulse to be the master of our meanings, to clarify our words and other signs sufficient for the purposes for which these linguistic and other signs are employed’ (9-10).
Mario De Caro’s contribution, ‘Beyond Scientism’, emphasizes another turn in philosophical history: the naturalistic turn. The generic form of naturalism, the view that philosophy should be concerned only with the goings-on within the natural and not any supernatural world, is often confused with scientific naturalism, the position that all philosophical issues can be resolved through recourse to a scientific treatment of the natural world. According to De Caro, the presence of generic naturalism and experimentalism in the programs of the classic pragmatists (especially Dewey and Peirce) has resulted in an unfortunate association between pragmatism and scientific naturalism, which is just a thinly veiled form of scientism, i.e., devotion to science as a panacea for all philosophical ills. However, most of the classic pragmatists were not devotees of scientism, for they ‘were characteristically much more open-minded than contemporary scientific naturalists’ (31).

In the next chapter, Rosella Fabbrichesi investigates the close entanglement of logic and ethics in Charles Sanders Peirce’s philosophy. In the notion of an ideal scientific community dedicated to intelligent inquiry and action, she sees an ‘inalienable ethical core’ to Peirce’s pragmatism, joining the logical, aesthetic and ethical, converting facts into values and ultimately translating logos into ethos (37-8).

The middle three chapters treat the themes of truth, definition and semiotics, respectively. Maurizio Ferraris’s essay ‘Indiana James’ examines the early analytic philosopher Bertrand Russell’s charge that William James as well as other pragmatists espoused the ‘Transatlantic Truth’: namely, that the claim \( X \) is true translates into thinking that \( X \) is true has, on the whole, positive consequences. Following Russell, many analytic philosophers reject the pragmatist theory of truth because it marries together two pernicious views: 1) hedonism (truth is happiness) and 2) psychologism (‘thoughts are objects’) (51). According to Ferraris, this misunderstanding is easily overcome if we understand James to be proposing a theory of scientific inquiry without ontological implications, not (as Russell misconstrued it) a theory of truth with deep ontological commitments.

In the following chapter, ‘Action and Representation in Peirce’s Pragmatism’, Nathan Houser takes up the fundamental question: what are pragmatism and analytic philosophy? While neither can be defined monolithically, he surmises that ‘pragmatism is the first teleological philosophy’ to take Charles Darwin’s conclusions seriously and analytic philosophy is the first philosophical movement to integrate logic, science and the analysis of language (61). In order ‘to enable analytic philosophers and pragmatists to reconnect as they did in a short-lived way in the 1930s,’ what they must return to is the shared task (pace John McDowell’s observation) of determining what experience fundamentally means (68). In ‘Semiotics and Epistemology’, Ivo Assaf Ibri challenges pragmatists and analytic philosophers alike to not think of Charles Sanders Peirce’s semiotics as only a theory of signs, but as also advancing a sophisticated epistemological position. At the core of Peirce’s semiotics is a deep-seated realism which overcomes those pesky dualisms that haunt contemporary epistemology, such as the dualisms of the general and the particular, and externalism and internalism (79).

The final four chapters in the volume speak to matters of ethics, metaphysics, intentionality and representationalism, respectively. Giovanni Maddalena’s essay,
‘Wittgenstein, Dewey, and Peirce on Ethics’, returns to the question (originally posed by Colapietro) of the symmetry of views expressed by Wittgenstein and the early pragmatists. He highlights a passage in the *Philosophical Investigations* where Wittgenstein claims that creating definitions in ethics and aesthetics is similar to the difficult task of making a sharp picture based on a blurry one. Similarly, for Dewey and Peirce, reflective morality requires applying the exact instrument of inquiry to the vague material of social conditions and value-based ends, an exercise in converting an inexact image into an exact one (89). In ‘Different Pragmatist Reactions to Analytic Philosophy’, Michele Marsonet identifies the shared tenet of analytic and pragmatist philosophies as epistemological intersubjectivity, but sees their most salient differences in the area of metaphysics: ‘On the one side (of analytic philosophy) we thus have monism and reductionism (neopositivism), and on the other pluralism and anti-reductionism (pragmatism)’ (103).

The following chapter, ‘Pragmatism and Intention-in-action’, is authored by one of the most well known contemporary analytic philosophers concerned with the influence of pragmatism on linguistic analysis, John McDowell. He confronts the pragmatist ‘suspicion’ that analytic philosophers ‘over-intellectualize their conception of how practical intelligence is manifested in action, and thereby tend towards a problematic interiority in their understanding of intelligence or the ability to think in general’ (119). While contemporary analytic philosophers such as Wilfred Sellars and Robert Brandom believe that they are operating in a pragmatist spirit, their attempts to restore action and practice to philosophical analysis fail to do justice to the core idea of pragmatism, namely, that practical intelligence should inform action through and through, not just offer an instrument for resolving deeper metaphysical and epistemological issues (121).

Eva Picardi authors the final chapter, ‘Pragmatism as Anti-representationalism?’. This is an attempt to tackle the question whether contemporary analytic philosophers have properly understood the distinction between inferentialism and representationalism. While practically all pragmatists are self-declared anti-representationalists (i.e., rejecting the notion that all conceptual content re-presents given non-conceptual content, such as sense data or impressions), ‘not all pragmatists are inferentialists (i.e. believing that all conceptual content is immanent in the norms of language and thus ready-made for reasoning and inference)’ (136). In addition, Picardi argues that, despite their protests, most pragmatists implicitly accept some form of minimal representationalism (e.g. ‘that in judgment we aim at an optimal fit with state of affairs’) (143). Consequently, categorizing analytic philosophers as representationalists and pragmatists as inferentialists proves unhelpful if we hope to encourage open dialogue across the two traditions.

Overall, this collection of essays makes a significant contribution to the current literature at the intersection between analytic and pragmatist philosophy. A minor point of criticism is that many of the authors’ analyses would have benefited from fuller treatments of John Dewey’s two oft-neglected later works: *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938) and *Knowing and the Known* (1949), the latter co-authored with Arthur F. Bentley and a direct response to the logical positivists. Also, the volume’s contributors do not ask
whether there was some particular event that sparked the interests of classic American pragmatists and early analytic philosophers (or logical positivists) in each other’s work. A good candidate is the encounter (mentioned above) between Otto Neurath and John Dewey. Ernest Nagel tells the story of how Neurath tried to persuade Dewey that it was in his interest to write a monograph for the Encyclopedia of Unified Sciences. At first, Dewey declined to write the piece on the grounds that logical positivists ‘subscribed to the belief in atomic facts or atomic propositions, and since Dewey did not think there are such things, he could not readily contribute to the Encyclopedia’ (Corliss Lamont, ed., Dialogue on John Dewey, New York: Horizon Press 1959, 12). After Neurath’s frustrated attempt (in broken English) to correct Dewey’s misimpression, a humorous moment ensued. Neurath stood up, elevated his right hand and pledged to Dewey that he did not endorse the existence of atomic propositions, to which Dewey reacted positively, agreeing to write the monograph. After hearing Nagel’s story, James Farrell commented: ‘John (Dewey) liked Otto (Neurath) and considered him the one empiricist—or the one pragmatist—in the Logical Positivist movement’ (13). Hopefully this volume will go a long way towards generating similar collaborations between present-day pragmatists and analytic philosophers.

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