seems, dogmatizes his skepticism in his rejection of realism. Once the authoritarian claims of traditional justificatory epistemology are given up, there is no need to undermine the assumption of an objective truth or an external reality in order to preserve democratic access to the philosophical conversation. Skeptical modesty inspired by respect for the ideal of truth and the fact of human fallibility plus an eagerness for discussion will do.

The volume concludes with an interesting discussion of the practical implications of Rorty’s edifying project for the current and future practice of American philosophy.

Despite my complaint above, I think Kolenda has done a great service by bringing the discussion of Rorty’s philosophy closer to the tradition which he attempts to repudiate and revolutionize. I think it moderates and thereby democratizes conversation about the future direction of that conversation. To return to our earlier question: is it bad taste to put such foundation-seeking questions to anti-foundationalist Rorty? I think the question is always open; as Rorty himself asks “How then do we know when to adopt a tactful attitude and when to insist on someone’s moral obligation to hold a view?” (Rorty 372). Although he concedes that there is no way to answer this question—which I think is too restrictive in its posing of alternatives anyway—he does suggest a more polite approach which is to see “edifying philosophers as conversational partners” and to evaluate them in terms of “the practical wisdom necessary to participate in a conversation” (Rorty 372). I am not sure whether this is helpful. Indeed Kolenda does see in Rorty’s views a continuation of a conversation with Kant, that is as a response to his interrogatory. Does this make Rorty less edifying? Does it make Kant more edifying? Or does it miss the point of Rorty’s philosophy entirely? Perhaps this is tactless, in Rorty’s words, but I think Kolenda is correct to ignore the implicit effort to spell out the terms of interpretation in advance. I do not see how Rorty can object to this democratic counter-revolution of Kolenda’s ingenious narrative strategy.

St. Bonaventure University Michael Chiariello


As Prof. Hickman notes, John Dewey’s philosophy has received little attention in recent discussions of the philosophy of technology. Yet it is Hickman’s contention that not only is Dewey an important philosopher of technology, but that technology is at the core of his entire approach to philosophy, and indeed that “late in [Dewey’s] life, ‘technology’ became a synonym for his very method of inquiry” (p. 1). Hickman argues that for Dewey inquiry should be called technological because it is “the means of effective control of an environment that is not what we wish
it to be" (p. 41). Language, logic, theories, even "bodily motor skills" (p. 44) can all be seen as "tools" of which we make use in the "technological" process of dealing with problematic situations. Hickman further notes that "Dewey repeatedly held that science was a branch of technology" (p. 46), that Dewey's aesthetic theory sought to break down the distinction between the "fine" and "applied" or technological arts (Ch. 3), and even that "Dewey is unequivocal in his view that the state is a technological artifact" (p. 173).

Certain important qualifications to his thesis concerning the "technological" character of Dewey's philosophy should be kept in mind. First, Hickman is at pains to distinguish Dewey's instrumentalism from the "straight-line instrumentalism" often attributed to him by his critics. That is, Dewey rejected the view that the tools of inquiry are "value neutral" and "that valuation comes from outside experimental technology" (p. 149), holding rather that "means and ends interpenetrate" (p. 163), so that the process of inquiry is not simply one of discovering the best means to predetermined ends but also involves the critique and refinement of ends themselves. Secondly, Hickman is sensitive to the importance of the aesthetic dimension in Dewey's philosophy. If for Dewey art is a kind of technology, it can also be said that "technology is art" (p. 68), and technological artifacts or "tools" of all kind have their own aesthetic qualities. Furthermore, Hickman emphasizes that for Dewey "there are . . . areas of human experience with which knowing has no business. In Dewey's view, human beings find themselves in situations and exhibit responses that are much richer than would be characteristic of forms of life in which the construction and use of tools was the highest good" (p. 11).

This book is a significant work of Dewey scholarship. Hickman displays an impressive grasp of the entire corpus of Dewey's work, supporting his interpretations with reference to writings dating from 1891 to 1948. Hickman's use of the idea of technology as a unifying theme for the interpretation of Dewey's thought will certainly be the basis for continuing discussion among students of American pragmatism. There is also much in his book of more specific interest to philosophers of technology.

Hickman begins by attempting to "locate" Dewey's views with respect to various contemporary philosophical perspectives on technology, but concludes that Dewey's approach is unique in its "contention that tools or instruments cut across traditional boundary lines such as those between the psychical and the physical, the inner and the outer, and the real and the ideal" (p. xii). In a later chapter he compares Dewey's ideas to those of thinkers on technology such as Marx, Ellul, and Langdon Winner on the central question of "technological determinism." In a brief epilogue, Hickman reflects on the significance of Dewey's approach for developing a 'responsible technology.'

Though Hickman repeatedly refers to Dewey's "critique" or "criticism" of technology, some readers may be disappointed that
there is little in his account to suggest any systematic criticism of technology or technological society. In part, I think this follows from his contention (see Ch. 6) that Dewey would reject any attempt to treat "technology" as a single unitary phenomenon, and thus as the subject for the "totalizing critique." This said, however, I believe that more might be done to apply Dewey's thought in criticizing certain pervasive tendencies in modern technology. On the other hand, some will feel that Dewey's own "technological" philosophy stands in need of further criticism. Hickman's view of Dewey seems to be uniformly positive; when he discusses Dewey's critics, it is almost always to argue that they misunderstood or distorted his thought. Yet it is surely possible to raise some concerns from a perspective which is both understanding of and basically sympathetic to Dewey's approach. Was Dewey too preoccupied with the need for control? Was he too ready to see all problems as amenable to a "technological fix?" Was he insufficiently sensitive to some of the dangers of modern technology and "technological" modes of thinking? To raise such questions is not in any way intended to detract from either Dewey's accomplishments or those of Hickman's book, but to suggest some further possibilities of discussion for those interested in the significance of Dewey's thought for the understanding and critique of technology.

Christian Brothers University

Peter Limper


Mark Noll, a professor of intellectual and religious history at Wheaton College in Illinois, weaves a three-generation story of creating a "Republican Christian Enlightenment" at the College of New Jersey. Noll intertwines intellectual biographies of three presidents with the institutional history of Princeton. He begins with the introduction of a Scottish synthesis of science and religion and ends with a renewed emphasis on religion over science in the college which led to the creation of Princeton Seminary to specifically train ministers. For the political context of the rise and fall of this synthesis of science and religion, Noll follows Gordon Wood's thesis in The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787 of an initial whig optimism for social unity which crumbles when Federalists faced rebellions by a non-deferential populace who took the ideals of 1776 to heart. At Princeton, Noll recounts how the student riots of 1806-07 signaled, for the Federalist leaders, the failure of the educational program which united science and religion in support of social order. After the riots, religion was emphasized over science in Princeton's continuing "attempt to master the chaos through intellectual effort" (p. 4).

Such is the outline of the book; taken at full length,