beings and of society in general. One question that comes to mind is exactly what case has been made as to why we should replace science and morality -- "order disciplines" -- with narrative sensibilities which we find in poetry and literature? Given the importance of moral, social, and political concerns, philosophy cannot be reduced to play and irony, or as Rorty calls it, conversation. Philosophy is a perennial struggle between eros and irony. Eros is that intensive drive toward order, consensus, and wholeness of understanding. Irony is the mode of thinking that knows the failure of complete system and celebrates this realization. While Hall and Rorty give priority to irony, it would seem more compatible with a truly aesthetic sensibility to see eros and irony in harmonious play with each other.

Anarchy, or the idea that reality is comprised of a "chaos of contingencies," is based on a metaphysical assumption that the fundamental status of things is radical pluralism and disjunction. So, the plausibility of Hall's and Rorty's philosophical anarchism rests with the plausibility of their metaphysical or ontological assumptions, hence it all comes back to theory. Rorty's commitment to "nominalist historicism" extends to and significantly effects the other major themes I mentioned at the beginning. The way Hall unpacks these themes is extremely worthwhile reading.

In conclusion, I heartily recommend this book to anyone interested in Rorty and the connections between Rorty's thinking and other important contemporary philosophical movements. I leave you with one final comment that summarizes my opinion of Rorty. Although I admire Rorty and have learned a lot from his work, if he truly is the prophet and poet of the new pragmatism, I say, "no thanks, I'll take the old pragmatism."

Tim Menta St. Francis College, Pa.


An edited volume is difficult to review in a short space and do justice to each of the essays and this book is no exception to that difficulty. The essays are widely different in focus and appropriateness to a volume such as this, but Aboulafia does justice in his preface as to why he has selected them as he has. Simply put, the volume addresses Mead's thought in relation to "behaviorism, functionalism, linguistic analysis, socialism, and psychoanalysis," but not phenomenology, Marxism, or feminism, according to the editor.

There are many good essays which need to be studied at length, but the Introduction provided by Aboulafia and the
"Bibliography of Recent Secondary Literature on Mead," are worth the price of the book. The author's discussion of Mead's "I" and "me" remains true to Mead's writings in most ways. Aboulafia, falls short, however by failing to address the significance of the internalization of the "I" and "me" into the "reflective self." He attempts to define all of the consciousness of the self in terms of the "I" and "me" and slights the process of the reflective self in the internal conversations which Tugendhat mentions in the opening pages of his essay.


The chief value in the book is found first, in the desire to show the importance of Mead to current discussions in a variety of fields, and second to provide a creative approach to Meadean ideas. This book is an answer to the questions of "Mead who?" "why Mead?" "did Mead contribute to anything beyond some notions in sociology?" Generally, Mead is not revered, as he should be, and Aboulafia awakens our sleepy notion of this great American thinker. The book shows Mead's importance to others and his relationship with philosophers from Peirce to Heidegger. As a result, this book will indeed prove to be an important part of the libraries on American philosophy, pragmatism, philosophy of the mind, consciousness, social relations, language, semiotics and symbols, human development, and education.

What is important about Mead, is his nonreductionistic approach to self, learning, and consciousness which this text addresses well in several places. The difficulty with the text and also with Mead is that it is a work to be studied, which takes time in our hurry-scurry world. The book makes the difficulty of Mead accessible, but the accessibility is through a variety of filters from Marx to Charles Morris, as the authors juxtapose Mead with current and past figures. The filters often have a European perspective which miss the essence of Mead's Midwestern brand of social democracy. One can gain a significant understanding of Mead, however, by studying Aboulafia's work in one hand with Mead's in the other.

George W. Stickel
Kennesaw State College, Georgia