each chapter loosely follows something of a pattern that would be a good model for similar introductory texts. An issue is identified, a process view is described advantages of such a view are explained, problems with the process approach are explored, and possible process responses are considered. All of this is done while avoiding (or clarifying) the difficult terminology employed by Whitehead and others. Part of that task is accomplished by avoiding the temptation to allow the book to be dominated by discussions of Whitehead. Rescher makes adequate reference to Whitehead's enormous legacy in contemporary process philosophy, but he makes sure to speak of the contributions by W. H. Sheldon, A.N. Ushenko, and others.

Most philosophers are now aware that the old analytic/continental division in twentieth century philosophy was never very clear in the first place. Philosophical movements are always much more complex, and the best philosophers are often the most difficult to label. Rescher's introduction to process philosophy is a good start for those who wish to take a first look at one of the currents that makes our philosophical traditions so rich.

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Robert Richardson's biography is an exquisite story of Ralph Waldo Emerson, the man who has profoundly influenced the attitude and activity of the American philosophical grain. Richardson, in his preface, calls his endeavor a probing into Emerson's "intellectual odyssey." This is a journey that begins with Emerson's years at Harvard where he was only a "fair scholar," to finally his last performance in the Dowde Library in Boston, where he spoke of Thomas Carlyle to the Massachusetts Historical Society on the same day this "friendly antagonist" was buried. This is not simply a biography about the life of Emerson, but, as the title suggests, is an exploration of Emerson's "mind on fire;" his biography illuminates the sources, influences, and experiences that shaped and molded Emerson as scholar, writer, lecturer, essayist, poet, and philosopher.

Richardson's book contains eleven general headings representing stages of Emerson's life. Within these headings are a combined total of one hundred "chapters" which give a quick and specific reference to the text, e.g. "Ellen Tucker," "The American Scholar," "Essays on Power," and "Civil War." "Death of Thoreau." Also included are photographs, genealogies, and a chronology of Emerson's life.

As one reads and follows this biographical excursion, there is a definite sense of actually hearing Emerson's thought and seeing his actions and travels. This is due to Richardson's extensive use of Emerson's own words. Richardson, in a sense, lets Emerson tell his own story by citing numerous journal en-
tries, notebooks, correspondence to an from Emerson, autobiographical fragments, and lectures—many unpublished.

Within this story of Emerson's intellectual life, one begins to see the emergence and culmination of themes central to his philosophy; for example, Emerson's emphasis on the active powers of the mind rather than that of passive spectator, the "howness" of knowledge, and the activity and process of knowing. This idea of activity of mind is an ethic for Emerson, and ethic profoundly influenced by the Scottish Common Sense Realists who asked "How should I live my life?" "a world view that emphasized ethical—rather than epistemological or metaphysical—thought" (32-33). Indeed, Emerson realizes "Real knowledge may be unattainable; the question therefore is not 'What can I know?' but 'How should I live?'" (403). We see this attitude throughout Emerson's life, whether as one outspoken and active with regard to the abolition of slavery, as one concerned about women's rights, or as one who travels extensively and speaks whenever and wherever he is welcomed.

Pivotal experiences in Emerson's life furnish us with a deep understanding of his intellectual growth. One of these experiences reveals the significance of vision as metaphor in Emerson's writing. In 1825 Emerson suffered from an eye disease, probably uveitis, only one month into his studies at Harvard Divinity School and thus, "over the next nine months, he underwent two eye operations in which his cornea was punctured with a cataract knife" (63). Richardson explains this significance:

As his sight returned, Emerson used it not for dry and interminable biblical studies syllabus but for reading that could illuminate him, as though sight was too valuable to be spent on anything other than insight. In November 1825 he was reading Plato. In December, while his eyes were still recovering and while he was seriously lame from a bad attack of rheumatism in his hip, he read Plutarch's Moralia and wrote William about the family copy of Montaigne (65).

Another pivotal experience in Emerson's life is the death of his brother Edward in 1843. Emerson speaks of his twenty-nine year old brother, "So falls one pile more of hope for this life. I see I am bereaved of part of myself." But soon after, Emerson creates a new relationship with the universe. Richardson notes, "Within ten days of hearing the news of the death of Edward, as though feeling the spur dig suddenly deeper into his side, he began actively to reflect again on what biography had to teach what was possible for life" (189). Possibility, so crucial to Emerson's philosophy, and creativity fueled by activity became apparent to him. It is this balance of the future and possible with reliance on reflection of the past that Emerson experiences. This incident occurs while living in his grandfather's house in Concord in the presence of his brother Charles, his mother, and his Aunt Mary Moody. While living in the presence of his roots, Emerson made a momentous conviction in the shadow of Coleridge.
Richardson explains:

As so often happened to Emerson, the heartening example of another triggered a new and in this case vital resolve to do his own work, to write. With characteristic—if borrowed—bravado, he stepped forward in his new position, alone at a lectern, free and able to represent no one but himself. He wrote in his journal, "Henceforth I design not to utter any speech, poem or book that is not entirely and peculiarly my own" (187).

Hence, we see the beginnings of his seminal work "Nature" of 1836.

To continue, we get insight into the beginnings of a radical empiricism when Emerson visits the Jardin des Plantes in Paris in July 1833:

Emerson was fascinated by the web of relation and analogy . . . He gazed at the exhibits and saw relationships everywhere. Not only were the specimens linked to each other, they were also linked to him . . . Emerson felt an agitated, sympathetic—almost physical connection with the natural world. He was powerfully affected . . . [F]rom now on he acknowledged an unbreakable tie between his own mind and the natural world, and in his investigations into that tie he never lost his interest in the methods and materials of science (139, 141-142).

Influenced by Goethe, Emerson proclaims "all is in each:" "Every natural form to the smallest, a leaf, a sunbeam, a moment in time, a drop, is related to the whole, and partakes of the beauty of the whole" (222). For Emerson, the most ordinary and common experiences can fulfill a spiritual hunger.

Other great information about Emerson's life includes the fact that Thoreau is not present for "The American Scholar" address given to Harvard's Phi Beta Kappa Society. Thoreau graduated and departed the day before this momentous speech by his future mentor. Emerson is also the catalyst for the immense success of Whitman's Leaves of Grass, just another example of the numerous ways Emerson influences the American scene of his day and days to come. But through it all, Emerson stands tall in the face of adversity, in the face of illness, the death of friends, siblings, wives, and his first born, and to add to this, his house burns. Emerson is indeed the example of possibility and of hope.

Richardson's biography illuminates what and how Emerson thought, his influences, and gives majestic insight into his existential character. I believe it is clear that Emerson is the forefather of what we now call pragmatism and one can see these pragmatic roots in Robert Richardson's enriching biography. This book needs to be on the shelf of anyone interested in American philosophy and the pragmatic tradition. It will fit nicely at the side of your James and Dewey texts.