
Alain Locke’s presence in the American philosophical landscape had been suspiciously denied until the 1980’s. Having studied philosophy at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar and finished his dissertation at Harvard in axiology, Locke went on to significantly impact American academe; broadening its perception of race, aesthetics, community, culture, and value theory. Following the work of Russell Linnemann, Jeffery Stewart, and Johnny Washington, in 1991 Leonard Harris published The Philosophy of Alain Locke, which, for the first time, anthologized Locke’s philosophical adventures. In this current text, Harris compiles a series of essays by a myriad of conscientious contributors from varying disciplines that not only critically engage Locke from within the pragmatist tradition, but also confront and probe him for direction on perennial global issues.

Pragmatism and Value Theory’, includes articles by Nancy Fraser, Astrid Franke, Sally J. Scholz, Mark Helbling, and Judith M. Green. These scholars wrestle with Locke for alternatives to prevalent notions of pragmatism, the representation of collective identities, linguistical theories, critiques of essentialism, and orientations to the concept of value itself. The second section, ‘Aesthetics’, with writings by Richard Shusterman, Jane Duran and Earl L. Stewart, Richard Keaveny, as well as Rudolph V. Vanterpool, acknowledges the penetration of Locke’s corpus in aesthetical analyses. These discourses treat Locke’s aesthetics from the perspectives of pragmatism, blackness, identity, and the boundaries of culture. The third section, ‘Community and Culture’, notes the internationalism of Locke’s scope. Greg Moses, Charles Molesworth, Verner D. Mitchell, Clevis Headley, and Kenneth W. Stikkers offer an intellectual glimpse at the insights that Locke retrieved from his battles with bigotry, nationalism, parochialism, race, global objectivity and objectification. In the fourth section, ‘Edification and Education’, the authors present Locke’s philosophy of education and vision for adult education. Drawing from his interests in the pervasive black adult illiteracy of his time, Talmadge C. Guy, LaVerne Gyant, Rudolph Cain, and Blanche Radford Curry accentuate Locke’s work as a paradigm to carve a progressive path for specified, group-centered education that rejects essentialism while respecting the force of social shapers. Section five raises critical verses in Locke’s scholarship. Labeled ‘Paradoxes, Dilemmas, and Critiques’, this portion of the text proffers opposing and revisionist viewpoints to Locke’s
implementation strategies for cultural pluralism, epistemology, and multicultural education through the articles of Segun Gbadegesin, Stephen Lester Thomas, Paul Weithman. The final section is a postscript by Beth J. Singer entitled 'Alain Locke Remembered' in which she chronicles her personal experience as a student of Locke at the University of Wisconsin as well as other encounters with him and his work in subsequent years.

The commonality of these essays are that they recognize the gargantuan donation that Alain Locke has made to American scholarship in general; notwithstanding the enterprise of American philosophy. Even though Locke has not been regarded in the pantheon of eminent American philosophers, the ontology of Harris' text demands that he should be. As Cornel West suggests, America's evasion of philosophy has partly been an evasion of race, class, and indisputable philosophical voices articulating the concerns of marginalized others. Noting that Locke's published texts include Race Contacts and Interracial Relations, The New Negro, The Negro in America, The Negro and His Music, Negro Art: Past and Present, Frederick Douglass: A Biography of Antislavery, and A Study in Race and Culture Contact, he certainly qualifies as a case in point. In a growing American tradition, philosophy needs other benchmarks to assess its progression; other referents to verify the historicity of the journey. Harris' text represents the enduring quest for such verification in a world struggling for survival and a philosophical tradition struggling for application.

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These valuable essays introduce current debates about pragmatism, with sections on philosophy, socio-political thought, law, and literature and art, based on a 1995 City College of New York conference.

Morris Dickstein sketches the reception of classical pragmatism by Lippmann, Randolph Bourne and Lionel Trilling and then outlines the recent debate. The philosophical section opens with a provocative essay by Rorty, "Pragmatism as Romantic Polytheism." Normally showing little interest in religion, he advocates polytheism, not as belief in immortals, but as acknowledgment of conflicting forms of human life. Hilary Putnam continues to refine his version of realism by studying the "natural