Clandingning’s careful scholarship has again placed anyone in American thought deeply in his debt. For he has made this the best secondary source available for entering Royce’s life-world and philosophizing.

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With the publication of Joseph Brent’s breakthrough biography, *C. S. Peirce: A Life* in 1993 and with John Clendingning’s expanded and revised *The Life and Thought of Josiah Royce* last summer, Simon’s fresh, informative and graceful narration of the life of William James completes a trio of recent biographies on the Harvard’s turn-of-the-(last)-century philosophical luminaries.

Based on Frank Oppenheim’s above review—I have not yet read the expanded and revised *Josiah Royce*—Simon’s volume too, foregrounds James’s life and personality as a context and a catalyst for his thought. James’s unique and vibrant personhood emerges, staying with the reader like a recurring melody. Perhaps most informative of all of Simon’s contributions is an unmistakable sense of how difficult it was for James to forge his own identity, satisfy his own interests and eventually choose his own career and vocation. The villain, of course, was his self-absorbed, meddling, intellectually insecure and dilettante father. Henry James, Sr. emerges as a pitiful and at times sinister figure, “Henry wanted his children to appear happy, voluble, outgoing, and brilliant. Appearance was everything” (82).

Appearance notwithstanding, James’s protracted adolescence—his first signed article “Remarks on Spenser’s Definition of Mind as Correspondence came along with his marriage at age 36—finally behind him, he emerged as a force in psychology, ethics, metaphysics and epistemology. Philosophically speaking Simon’s contributions deal with the biographical factors that under gird what she considers his most persistent and important contributions: pragmatism, pluralism and Radical Empiricism. One forgets how late, in his admittedly late-starting career, comes *Pragmatism*—1907, only two years before his death.

Simon has not only mastered and mined the so far published volumes of *The Correspondence of William James*, James’s unpublished letters, diaries and notes are likewise put to good advantage. The
Simons concludes with a striking scene of brother Henry and wife Alice immediately after William's death at the summer home at Chocorua:

For the next several months, Henry stayed on with Alice and the children, partly because he still needed, as he put it, to cling to her, partly because she hoped, and he encouraged her in the hope, that William would succeed in communicating with them from the spiritual realm in which she knew he was now, profoundly alive. Just as she had after the death of her young child, she sought out likely mediums and held several séances in her home. There was no message, and yet Alice, who wore black for the rest of her life, never felt quite alone. (387-88)

William's steady, life-long, persistent, even obsessive interest in psychic phenomena is emblematic of his open, catholic and earnest effort to probe the consequences of the whole sweep of human experience. Simon deserves our thanks for providing a rich biographical and psychological source for this, as well as for many other aspects of his philosophy as well as the light her volume sheds on James the man: teacher, brother, husband and father, national and near international celebrity.

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Raymond Boisvert's *John Dewey: Rethinking Our Time* is an important contribution to the literature on Dewey since it represents a resurgence of interest in Dewey's philosophy. Dewey has left a large and fertile legacy of issues and principles for philosophers to develop and assess. Boisvert outlines some of these important features of Dewey's philosophy that are still relevant today. One possible reason for the resurgence of interest in Dewey's philosophy may be because the issues that were central to Dewey's philosophy at the beginning of the twentieth century are still relevant at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Boisvert discusses four such central issues: democracy, education, art, and religion. Boisvert devotes Chapters 3 to 7 to each of these themes.