intellect ... even to the point of defining a religious dimension to human experience” (129).

Such experiences are oftentimes “felt” or “had” more than they are “known.” These “animating bases of action” provide the spring of all meaningful human action. Where their absence is most recognized is in the current situation concerning educational practice. Here we are confronted with “a movement towards mechanical pedagogy” (174) because the animating source from which to take the risks essential for growth and development have dried up. Management technique, represented by a growing number of “curriculum managers,” is given a higher priority than pedagogic craft. A similar situation exists in the current state of the “pragmatic intellectual” who must urgently “recognize one’s ordinariness” and recover “thought[s] ... develop[ment] from lived hopes and doubts (250).” Anderson believes that this will require the embracing of an “amateur status” but are amateurs welcome in a field, like philosophy, that is still clutching on to its identity as a Fach – to use a term of Rorty. “To be at home in transition” is a well-intended maxim and an improvement upon the detached spectator model, but one has to ask just how “transitional” is the reality of the ivory tower?

Much of the richness of Anderson’s book has been omitted in this review. However, Anderson himself demonstrates a high degree of self-reflective awareness throughout by realizing his own limitations - his insights are to a large extent determined by the factual conditions of his upbringing, education, and vocation. However, it is these same limitations that are able to produced highly nuanced observations and insights – a welcome relief from the typical “sociological study.” He mentions the significant impact that writers outside of the pragmatic tradition narrowly conceived such as Annie Dillard, Norman Maclean, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Robert Pirsig have made upon his thinking. Anderson references “a second volume that will deal with philosophical voices and traditions in the Americas that have been marginalized or simply neglected.... (xi).” We should await this sequel with anticipation.

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Lawrence E. Cahoone, Cultural Revolutions: Reason Versus Culture in Philosophy, Politics, and Jihad (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2005). 240 pages. $35

Cahoone tackles a series of issues each concerned with the concept of culture. These issues include the recent interest by political philosophers in taking culture seriously in political thought (chapter 1), defining culture, including discussion of key cultural categories (chapters 2 and 3), the fate of culture in modernity and postmodernity (chapters 4 and 5, respectively), the role culture plays in shaping our sense of reality (chapter 6), cultural relativism (chapter 7), and the culture of Islam (chapter 8).

Chapter 1, “Liberalism and La Revanche de la Culture,” assesses the recent upsurge of interest on the part of political philosophers in the category of culture, in
contrast to the otherwise neutralist approach usually taken. While Cahoone approves of this interest, the primary aim of the chapter is critical, in that many of the new culturalists, as he calls them, fail to take culture seriously enough, ignoring the fact that cultures are many, and thus highly variable, some coming in very “thick,” identity determining forms. In other words, in contrast to what the new culturalists imply (or would like to imply), liberalism is not consistent with many thick cultures, as liberalism exists in a culture that is quite thin.

To back-up this critique, Cahoone then spends two chapters on defining culture, showing that cultural identity is bound up with some categories that liberalism would like to forget. Chapter 2 deals mostly with how cultures produce meaning, through their practices, artifacts, and narratives. So far so good. Nothing too much here to take issue with. But chapter 3, on the other hand, strikes a chord that liberalism would prefer to avoid, namely the claim, and I think correct, that the categories of race, blood, soil, and ethnicity, for good and bad, play a crucial role in the production of cultural identity.

Next, with a definition of culture in tow, Cahoone analyzes the anti-culture of cultural modernity, calling it “a novel way of life built on the constant transgression of tradition for the sake of progress” (79). The culture of modernity is anti-cultural because it gives up some of the key defining limits of what culture is, especially the thick categories that tend to establish and enforce norms of identity over time. Modernity is a cultural phenomenon, in other words, that sees itself as transcendent to culture.

Chapter 5 takes these reflections further with an analysis of postmodernity, which, Cahoone says, is not separate but within modernity, and describes “the recent deinstitutionalization or decontextualization of key elements of modernity…” (98). Postmodernity is a further slide away from the definition of culture detailed in chapters two and three. Postmodern society is a collection of autonomous spheres (economic, politics, science, art, etcetera), each of which possesses its own logic. Gone is the overriding and transcendent narrative that gives an entire cultural body meaning and purpose. Instead, we exist in these various spheres simultaneously, each with its own meaning and possibly no purpose. But all is not lost, according to Cahoone. The benefits of postmodernity, even given its drawbacks, are its non-rigidity, egalitarianism, and openness to all.

Postmodernism also puts us in a cognitive predicament, one manifestation of which is that it leads to constructivism, the view that reality is largely a cultural construct. Cahoone takes up this possibility in chapter 6, “Playing Reality,” in which he gives an overview of various contemporary views on play and its relation to reality. Cahoone’s approach is to recognize that it is from within culture that reality is conceived as a set of ends in themselves. He says “my point is that the sense of reality is complexly funded. Simply put, reality is an acquired taste” (132). He is making the very Deweyan point that reality is not a pure construction, as the real environment imposes many constraints on the sense of our reality. At the same time, and also in line with Dewey, our sense of reality is largely an emotional and affective sense.
The conclusion of chapter 6, which may invite the charge of cultural relativism, is met by chapter 7, “Why There is No Problem of Cultural Relativism.” Cahoon does so by arguing that “no human being, and no culture, has a belief system at all” (157). No culture is enclosed in boundaries such that its judgments are only valid for itself, the collection constituting a systematic whole. All cultures, in other words, are porous, evincing internal and external disputations and agreements, giving cultural relativism little sense.

The final chapter, “What is the Opposite of Jihad?” attempts to tackle the problem of cultural fundamentalism, especially in its Islamic form. Cahoon here gives a fair reading of Islamic fundamentalism, in terms of its historical antecedents and competitors, but fails to do justice to its history in relation to the West. He argues that “the militant Islam evident since the 1970s is caused by a yet unmodernized Islam’s confrontation with Western modernity” (181). While this is certainly true, it is certainly not true that unmodernized Islam has confronted only “Western modernity,” unless it is made clear that Western modernity includes a long history of Western violence against unmodernized Islam. It gives the impression that the West is simply trying to open McDonald’s in Jerusalem, rather than reigning bombs on Arab peoples. While Cahoon is most interested in the internal development of Islamic fundamentalism, ignoring this aspect of its rise hardly paints a fair picture.

The greatest virtue of Cultural Revolutions is that it takes culture seriously, in its full range of manifestations, its power to shape identity, and in the recognition that cultures can and do conflict, especially with modern liberalism, that anti-cultural cultural manifestation. Its weakest point, structurally, is that its chapters are somewhat disconnected. For instance, after spending two chapters defining culture, we see little use of this definition in the chapters following. This is especially important as a way to evaluate the definition in light of modernity and postmodernity and their anti-cultural character. But all in all, Cultural Revolutions succeeds by showing that, to be relevant, political philosophy must take culture and cultural difference seriously as it is culture that shapes political identity.

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Brendel has rendered an admirable service both to the field of psychiatry and to pragmatism studies more generally. Brendel is to be commended for avoiding the problems of philosophers and addressing instead some very real and wrenching problems of men and women, both on the side of sufferers of mental disorders and of their would-be healers. Although trained philosophically, Brendel is a practicing psychiatrist, yet his expertise never gets in the way of presenting his case in straightforward language easily accessible to the layperson. In some sense, Brendel’s enterprise is to make our idea of psychiatry clearer. He is attentive throughout to the ethical dimension that such a