between this notion of “involuntary perception” and Heidegger’s Verstehen. Unfortunately, the discussion does not go significantly further than noting this similarity. What about a consideration of how Emerson might be of use for clarifying and/or diffusing some of the fundamental problems in hermeneutics today? Without explicitly incorporating his insights into this kind of inquiry, Emerson is doomed to remain a thinker of merely historical interest.

In his essay “Intellect,” Emerson declared that genius is comprised by two equally necessary “gifts”: insightful thought and the publication of that thought. I take this to mean that unless our insights can be transposed into some sort of commercial, communal, and temporally-situated vehicle (i.e., some discernible and recognizable “language game”) their expansion, adaptation, and criticism by a sympathetic community will be significantly hindered. That is to say, without the role of public discourse any insight will wither and die if it can even be formulated in the first place. Accordingly, insight is genuinely itself only there where it is willing to sacrifice some portion of its authenticity for the sake of being understood. This also implies that, from time to time, the publications of any and every genius need to be reissued in translation. To discover an Emerson who speaks poorly in a modern tongue may let us begin to hear his insight once more.

Mark Lombardo Arizona State University, West Campus


This book, a volume in the Value Inquiry Book Series and also in Studies in Pragmatism and Values, covers a wide range of pragmatic approaches to education. The book is well worth-while for anyone interested in the topic.

The first of the four sections of the book, “Lessons from Classical Pragmatists,” presents essays on Peirce (by Phyllis Chiasson), James (by Celal Türer) and Mead (by Jürgen Oelkers). Perhaps the most intriguing essay in this group is Chiasson’s essay which places her philosophical
conversations with her five-year-old grandson in the context of Peirce’s theory of signs, including his emphasis on “diagrammatic thinking.” Peirce’s thoughts on signs are notoriously complex, and that complexity contrasts sharply with the delightfully clear conversations of grandmother and grandson. Nevertheless, Chiasson does a fine job of relating the theory of signs and the conversations. This essay, with its lucid examples, could also profitably be read in the context of the third section of the book on philosophy for children.

Section two, "Learning from John Dewey," has four most interesting essays. In a wide-ranging essay, Naoko Saito takes on the task of reconstructing Dewey’s philosophy in the light of charges from Cornel West and others that Dewey’s philosophy - like Emerson’s - lacks a tragic sense of life and thus leads to an “oppressive optimism.” Saito suggests a way for pragmatism to “regain its hidden potential as a philosophy of education as hope" (88), and concludes with implications for a demanding curriculum that provides a moral education.

The final three essays in section two all include a discussion of pragmatic education in countries outside the U.S. Marcus Vinicius da Cunha discusses the “New School” in Brazil in the 1930’s in the context of Dewey and Piaget, both of whom were translated into Portuguese and published in Brazil during this time. Fascinating essays by Gordon Mitchell and by Helmut Schreier and Kerstin Michalik discuss children’s philosophy in Hamburg, Germany, in the light of Dewey’s philosophy of education. Ever since the end of World War I, writes Mitchell, there has existed in Germany a separation of church and state that at the same time guarantees “the right of religious communities to teach religious education in state schools” (116). By the mid-60’s, this led to a highly traditional and conservative religious education: many urged a new understanding of religion and a new dialogue with tradition. Mitchell argues that while Dewey is not explicitly referred to by the creators of the “Hamburg model,” there are strong similarities between his insistence on education as a democratic process, especially as seen in Democracy and Education and A Common Faith. Mitchell shows that Dewey has a vision that provides a basis for the multicultural discussion that goes on in the classroom, quoting from the final paragraph of A Common Faith, “Ours is the responsibility of conserving, transmitting, rectifying and
expanding the heritage of values we have received that those who come after us may receive it more solid and secure, more widely accessible and more generously shared than we have received it."

Schreier and Michalik continue this discussion of children’s education in Hamburg by giving detailed and interesting examples of the curriculum for children’s philosophy aimed at 6 to 9-year-old children, including specific questions such as “People living lives so different in kind from each other: Is that a good thing or not?” and an overview of the purposes of such questions. Matthew Lipman’s work in philosophy for children was translated into German beginning in 1980, and many educators there are drawn to Lipman’s idea of a “community of inquiry,” which is very useful in an increasingly diverse Germany where spirituality is taught in the schools. Nonetheless, write Schreier and Michalik, educators have found the exercises in Lipman’s teachers’ manuals to promote a Socratic dialogue that may resemble cross-examination and thus be at odds with the crucial goal of encouraging children to talk.

This essay is a good bridge to the third section, “Philosophy for Children,” where all three essays focus on Lipman’s approach. In the first, “Philosophy for Children’s Debt To Dewey,” Lipman writes a charming historical account of how he came to philosophy and to Dewey, and how Lipman’s “Philosophy for Children” was born. While drawn to Dewey’s view that theory and practice are interdependent, Lipman was put off by Dewey’s writing style (Lipman gives an amusing example of the reasoning process by which he concluded the problem was Dewey, not necessarily philosophy itself). He also was most puzzled by a passage in Philosophy and Civilization where Dewey wrote, “...philosophy may be defined as the general theory of education.” Lipman writes, “I stared skeptically at the passage. How could Dewey, the champion of practicality, define philosophy as altogether theoretical?” As Lipman thought about this question over the years, he ultimately came to develop a view of how philosophy could be employed to fit Dewey’s pedagogical criteria. Dewey’s criteria include the need for students to encounter problems, which leads them to think for themselves, and the need to be forward-looking by giving support to emotions, sociality, habit-formation, imagination, and interest. Lipman, using these considerations, came to the view that “the practice of philosophy is the methodology of education” (148) and
that philosophy for children requires a specific pedagogy, a community of inquiry, and a curriculum with specially prepared texts. The texts are novels and stories from which children can learn to "detect philosophical ideas and reasonings that lie concealed within ordinary discourse" (149). The children within these stories serve as models for ongoing philosophical inquiry. In the next essay Rosalind Ekman Ladd examines Lipman’s adaptation of Dewey, and gives examples of how their approaches could be useful in a hospital ethics committee. In the final essay in the section Philip Cam writes on "Dewey, Lipman, and the Tradition of Reflective Education." Examining the role of discussion in learning to think and how that discussion can help in the reflection on values in school education, he quotes Lipman’s excellent question, “So why not educate for better judgment?”

The final section, "Recent Pragmatist Theories," ranges from an interview with Richard Rorty on philosophy of education (by Paulo Ghiraldelli, Jr.) to an essay on Rorty and Derrida (by Michael A. Peters) to "The Rhetoric Turn" (by Tarzo Mazzotti) to a concluding essay by Ghiraldelli on "Neopragmatism, Philosophy of Education, and Our Future." In this final essay Ghiraldelli widens the discussion of pragmatic education with a provocation comparison of five writers (Herbart, Dewey, Freire, Saviani, and himself) across five stages of learning (preparing, displaying, association and assimilation, generalization, and application). A broadening essay such as this one is an appropriate way to conclude this book on pragmatic approaches to education.

Norris Frederick
Queens University of Charlotte


This densely argued book, always close to Faulkner’s writings yet laced with numerous allusions to William James and R. W. Emerson, less frequently Nietzsche and Richard Rorty, has been long in coming. In 1996, a conference at the University of Mississippi, "Faulkner and the Natural World" (July 28-August 2) listed David Evans of Rutgers