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 reasoning 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 "Neo-pragmatism, 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.

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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
University as one of the speakers. The conference program stated that Evans had just written his doctoral dissertation on "Communities of Confidence: William Faulkner, William James, and the American Pragmatic Tradition." Although "Communities of Confidence" has been removed from the title, the theme or problematic so designated is very much evident in the book by Evans that I have in hand, published twelve years later. Evans is now an associate professor of English at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia. His argument is compelling, linking William Faulkner to the tradition of the confidence man in American literature and culture, while at the same time attempting to call this artistic amalgam "pragmatist" in the sense imparted to the word by William James. What might be a community of confidence? It is a community of those who have nothing in common but the desire and will to conjure and foist, finally institute the truths they can negotiate in various situations. For the novelist Faulkner and his characters, it is a "struggle for narrative supremacy." As Evans puts it, "Characters do not simply offer alternative stories; their contradictory accounts are bids to assume the position of the dominant interpreter of their community" (21).

This is an ambitious project relying on a slight of hand very difficult to pull off. Evans tells us that the relation between Faulkner and pragmatic thought, the very thesis of his book, is a "mystery." The catchword elective affiliation (echoing Goethe's "elective affinity") is invoked like a talisman, but it is an insufficient hermeneutic key if left unexplained. It is meant to imply an inner relation, however tenuous, between the writing of Faulkner and the philosophy of William James. The bridging mechanism is the confidence man, a steam boat illusionist in Melville, but given a more encompassing role in the following passage from Evans's book:

The confidence man can thus be seen as a kind of buried genealogical connection between pragmatism and Faulkner, constituting a secret familial relation of the sort that so often serves as the "final revelation" in his own narratives. Lest there be any misunderstanding, I am not proposing that the con man is in any sense the "solution to the mystery" of the elective affiliation between the writings of Faulkner and pragmatic thought—for that matter, I do not think that the supposed
discovery of the secret really fulfills that function in the novels, in spite of appearances. But the figure and its ambiguous significance in American culture provide one of the most suggestive strands of the network that is the common intellectual context which gave birth to America’s most original philosophy and its greatest twentieth-century novelist. (27-28)

The writing here is nuanced, evincing discursive fluency. It is also vague. Yet vagueness is a sort of virtue, according to Evans, citing James. Or rather, clarity is overvalued in philosophy. “From James’s perspective, lack of clarity and vagueness were not necessarily problems; indeed, in many ways they could be seen as solutions. James’s vagueness can be seen not as an intellectual shortcoming but as a deliberate literary strategy and a way of resisting the illusion created by artificially distinct terms and concepts” (97). It is not over the top to suggest that when Evans speaks of James advocating vagueness, he is being self-serving. Evans quotes James to this effect perhaps unaware that the observation is a commentary on his own writing: “As soon, in short, as we are enabled to think of a thing with perfect fluency, that thing seems to us rational” (84). Fluency stands as a simulacrum of rationality.

A way to describe William Faulkner, William James, and the American Pragmatic Tradition is that it is a literary critical simulacrum whose truth claims are conjured in pragmatist fashion—as “games of confidence” to quote Evans. And this is as it should be. The writing is brilliant, stylistically flawless. It follows that in this book we witness a highly privatized synthetic discourse, one might almost say imaginary web of relations between the confidence man, James, and Faulkner, finely wrought by the author, Evans. This is not to say the web is unreal, as Evans believes it and wills it; but it lacks concreteness; it was conjured as a pragmatic necessity for Evans dissertation, and over the years since 1996 this discourse has matured like a fine cognac, more spirit than substance. The logic of a Faulkner/James conjunction is entirely immanent to the intertextual web that Evans has created. Our responsibility here is to assess the validity or at least the believability of the thesis that Evans espouses and defends with admirable subtlety. His truth claims are less important; we are in the land of pragmatism where
situational truths are episodically sovereign. What do we have? The commentary on literature is interesting and, as I said, well written. The novels covered by Evans include Absalom, Abasalom!, The Hamlet, and Go Down, Moses. One might say, to follow Evans quoting James’s The Meaning of Truth, that this book is a “sort of spiritual double or ghost of [the facts] apparently!” (152). Furthermore, the chapters on James and pragmatism are highly informative, with luminous passages of James’s prose chosen for analysis and citation. I think the chapter titled, “William James and the Transaction of Confidence” the best in the book, and stand alone in quality. I have already recommended it to my advanced students.

Committed as I am to supporting collaborations between literature and philosophy, I remain at once admiring and incredulous before this project, whose early encouragement in the dissertation stage came from Richard Poirier at Rutgers, a scholar and critic who almost single handedly imported the pragmatism of William James and Richard Rorty into literary criticism. No one else was doing this (doing it well) in the heyday of Deconstruction and New Historicism. Poirier wrote the magisterial Poetry and Pragmatism (1992) and The Renewal of Literature: Emersonian Reflections (1987). Now we have a new work in that tradition, and it is noble in its upholding of a framework of meaning and set of values loyal to its origins.

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In this volume of essays, each chapter flows together so seamlessly that the whole could easily be mistaken for a single monograph. Authored by Larry Hickman, the Director of the John Dewey Center, these essays coalesce around two major themes: (i) John Dewey’s pragmatism is, to borrow Richard Rorty’s turn-of-phrase, “waiting at the end of the road” that postmodernists have been trekking and (ii) Dewey’s ideas have far-reaching implications for several areas of contemporary philosophic interest, such as global citizenship, technology, logic, religion and the environment. In memoriam to Dewey, John Herman Randall, Jr., remarked: “The best way of honoring Dewey is to work