

quest for home through multiple forms of inscription is pursued by means of his rhetoric of self-correction, however, resulting in an insistent and, in Garber's view, constructive indeterminacy.

Garber juxtaposes Thoreau's ideal of being at home wherever one is with his recurring realizations that we are never entirely at home in this world. In A Week Thoreau both celebrates the purely natural life, declaring that "Here or nowhere is our heaven," and also imagines "another, purer realm" of which we can catch only glimpses from this world. Building this own house at Walden was perhaps Thoreau's most explicit manifestation of his quest for home, but Garber suggests that Thoreau was profoundly aware of the underlying irony that "Dwelling in the largest sense of being at home in the world cannot be fully compatible with the building of a dwelling" (149). The Canadian woodchopper Alek Therien is a "natural" man who seems to be "at home in the world," but his very naturalness prevents him from being sufficiently "alert" to his condition (176). The "single and central query that determined the thrust of [Thoreau's] life," as well as "the basic question this study has asked from its own beginning" is formulated by Garber this way: "Is it possible even for someone with all the alterness Thoreau requires to make what for Thoreau would be a sufficient home in the world?" (176). Clearly, the answer to this highly qualified question is "no." Not surprisingly, Garber's meditation concludes by celebrating Thoreau's--and his own--inability to resolve this question or to conclude the quest: "As for the present, our home making will be just as our language is, incomplete, imperfect, open-ended, unresolved" (202).

Garber's reading of Thoreau is both illuminating and provocative. He is especially good at teasing out the ambivalences and contradictions in specific passages from Thoreau, and he is therefore convincing when he generalizes about Thoreau's "rhetoric of self-correction" as well. While the question of being "at home in the world" is demonstrably a recurring theme in Thoreau, Garber sometimes strains to build this into a coherent "fable" that comprehends the range of issues he addresses in this study. This, however, does not seriously detract from the insightful and valuable contributions this book makes to Thoreau studies.

Steven Fink

The Ohio State University

**REFLECTIONS ON "THE PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGY: WILLIAM JAMES AFTER A CENTURY,"** Edited by Michael G. Johnson and Tracy B. Henley, (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1990). xvii plus 323 pp. \$49.95.

There is an historical appropriateness to this book prepared and published in 1990 to celebrate the centenary of the printing

of William James' Principles of Psychology (1890). It also closely approximates the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of James' birth (1842). The book serves as a timely incentive to inspire renewed interest in James's pivotal volumes, as well as to reawaken appreciation of their achievement.

The book consists of thirteen essays by contributors who are primarily, though not exclusively, associated with various American Universities. These essays range over a variety of topics from the situating of the Principles in their historical context, to relating them to other perspectives in philosophy and psychology, to assessing their contemporary impact and significance. They also explore a number of specific issues raised in the Principles such as theories of cognition, perception, imagination, consciousness, the will, and the self. The thirteen chapters describe different philosophical, psychological, medical and even theological dimensions of James' thought, though it would seem fair to say that the primary emphasis is on psychology. Most of the contributors acknowledge the tension that exists in James' effort and intent to explain the person in terms of psychology, conceived as it is in its late nineteenth century sense as a natural science, and his unavoidable yet excusable lapses into philosophy and metaphysics. Many of these contributors also lament the limited advance of scientific psychology since the time of James' writings under its various guises of positivism and behaviorism. At the same time they applaud any number of his insights and breakthroughs, even if these come imbued with certain Jamesian characteristics we have come to expect, such as confusions, inconsistencies, and apparent contradictions, often better understood as paradoxes, or what Mary Henle of The New School of Social Research ("William James and Gestalt Psychology") more benignly refers to as the "productive contradictions" (p. 83) of this transitional figure reaching across the nineteenth toward the twentieth century.

Most also recognize that he was not as able to preserve psychology from the intrusion and even "contamination" of metaphysics as cleanly as he sometimes claimed was necessary. This though is not necessarily to be seen as a negative. In fact even James himself later recanted the adequacy and urgency of such an effort. In his first presidential address to the American Psychological Association in 1895 James publicly admitted that "no conventional restrictions can keep metaphysical and so-called epistemological inquiries out of the psychology-books." In fact he spent much of the last fifteen years of his life clarifying his own metaphysical view on the nature of ultimate reality, particularly through his philosophy of radical empiricism.

Ultimately, what does emerge from James' Principles is the conception of psychology as a science of the whole person. It is a view that is predominantly person-centered. It takes cognizance of contemporary concerns in scientific psychology and the

laboratory techniques developed in England, France, and Germany. These James blends with his own uniquely American brand of functional psychology along with his pragmatism and pluralism. This point is made, for example, by Eugene Taylor of the Harvard Medical School. He also insists that the Principles ought not to be read either in part or apart from other works as they often have been by "modern academic psychologists" following only what has been "appropriate to their parochial interests." He describes James in the following manner: "A pioneer in the uniquely American tradition of functionalism, he remains eclectic without succumbing to chaos; pragmatic without becoming merely utilitarian; and empirical without losing a vision of the whole person." ("The Origin of James's Experimental Psychology," p. 58). James by his own insistence rejected any possibility of a perfectly closed philosophical system; for in any effort at an absolute position, the juices of metaphysical assumptions leak in at every joint.

As in any book of this type there is a certain uneven quality. Some contributions are better presented than others; some more appealing, others more revealing; some more philosophical in tone, others more psychological. Some, while certainly well researched, try to do too much in a relatively short space, and eventually tend to drown the reader in a deluge of notes and texts. This is true, for example of an otherwise very helpful chapter, "William James on the Self and Personality." Positively, it is here recognized that the self is primarily a "center of knowledge and interest" but that it also exists in the margins beyond the ordinary field of consciousness. Further, it is realized that this self must live the 'strenuous' life of the experiencing, willing, choosing, responsible person for whom the construction of a worthwhile life is found in the following blueprint etched in the margin of James's copy of the Briefer Course: "Sow an action, and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap character; sow a character and you reap a destiny." In my ear this resonates with the Ethics of Aristotle and the role of virtue in human growth and finality.

Many other points could be made as well, such as the close connection between James' methodology and phenomenology recognized by among others, Irvin Rock, Mary Henle, and Amedeo Giorgi; or the linkage of James with various traditions as acknowledged by Howard Pollio in "The Stream of Consciousness Since James." But what perhaps deserves special notice is James' attempt to have the science of psychology use as its basic data human experience, while trying to remain close to the point of view of natural science as it was envisaged by his contemporaries. For him this meant assuming certain data uncritically (e.g. thinking and feeling exist and are vehicles of knowledge), and claiming that psychology could go no further as a natural science when she had ascertained the empirical correlation of the various sorts of thought or feeling with definite conditions of the brain, in his

case closely bound as it was to the physiology of the nineteenth century. But as has been noted, James was also ineluctably drawn beyond this standpoint. In his own introduction James writes: "Psychology, the science of finite individual minds, assumes as its data (1) thoughts and feelings, and (2) a physical world in time and space with which they coexist and which (3) they know. Of course these data themselves are discussable; but the discussion of them (as of other elements) is called metaphysics and falls outside the province of this book." (Principles I: v). Fortunately for posterity James did not always follow his own intentions. Metaphysics and phenomenology did leak into the pages of the intended and supposed treatise on the science of psychology. And for this reason his work is richer and therefore more worthy of our retrieval than even he might have supposed or anticipated.

It is fitting to conclude I thin, as Mary Henle does, with an excerpt from a review of the Principles by Leon Marillier in the Revue Philosophique: "in spite of the objections which would necessarily be raised to the theories it contains, it is nevertheless a glorious work."

James F. Brown

University of Washington, Tacoma

**JOHN DEWEY: RELIGIOUS FAITH AND DEMOCRATIC HUMANISM** by Steven C. Rockefeller. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991. xiii + 683. 50.00.

In his moving conclusion to A COMMON FAITH, Dewey maintains that it is our responsibility to render "the heritage of values we have received . . . more widely accessible and more generously shared than we have received it." Steven Rockefeller has most impressively discharged that responsibility as regards the values bound-up with the life and thought of Dewey. The accessibility of this work to a wide audience does not diminish its importance for those already familiar with the main contours of Dewey's life and work. Their understanding of Dewey will be enhanced by new details and fresh insights. Those less familiar with the extended life and monumental work of Dewey will be engagingly led into the richness, complexity, subtlety, and scope of his views, centering around but in no way restricted to those concerned with "religion."

The purpose of this study, the author tells us, "is to approach Dewey's life and thought from the perspective of its religious meaning and value." (5) However, since "the religious dimension of Dewey's thought cannot be understood apart from his philosophy as a whole," (18) Rockefeller will consider at some length Dewey's views relating to metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, science, education, and politics. Not only does Rockefeller avoid isolating Dewey's religious concerns from his philosophy as