

RICHARD RORTY AND DEWEY'S METAPHYSICS OF EXPERIENCE

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The last decade has seen a revived interest in Dewey's philosophy. Extended scholarly treatments of aspects of his thought, such as his value theory, aesthetics, or political philosophy, have begun to supplant introductory studies or short articles.¹ Gradually, some of the prevailing myths and misconceptions about Dewey and his philosophy are being dispelled, while new, fruitful connections between his thought and that of other major philosophers, such as Merleau-Ponty, are being established. Dewey's thought is far from accessible, given the sheer bulk of material by Dewey's hand, his inelegance and imprecision of expression, his disarmingly untechnical style, and the cumulation of three-quarters of a century of criticism and interpretation. If this renewed interest in Dewey is to produce anything genuinely novel, insightful, or comprehensive, special care must be taken not to repeat the errors of the past.

Richard Rorty's recent article, "Dewey's Metaphysics," illustrates the fascinating promise and dangers of interpreting Dewey's ideas. In spite of Rorty's longstanding genial attitude toward Dewey's philosophy, which has favorably compared with Sellars, Quine, and Heidegger, Rorty has severe problems in confronting some of Dewey's fundamental concepts. In this, he is not alone, for many of the difficulties he encounters have attended Dewey's philosophy from its first lispings formulations. Rorty is unique in that he attempts to locate the origin of these internal difficulties with some of the first articles Dewey wrote in the 1880s. In the end, however, I think the basic thrust of Dewey's thought eludes Rorty, though some of the questions he raises are quite important. It is hoped that by examining Rorty's critique of Dewey's conception of metaphysics many of the stumbling blocks to understanding Dewey will be illumined, if not altogether removed.

Dewey's "metaphysics" has always been a thorn in the side of his admirers as well as of his opponents. Dewey's break with idealism and his development of instrumentalist empiricism seemed to be radically opposed to any traditional sort of metaphysical enterprise. Yet, throughout

Author's Note. Since this article was written, Richard Rorty's *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979) has appeared. See Richard Bernstein's "Philosophy in the Conversation of Mankind," *Review of Metaphysics*, vol XXXIII, (June 1980).

his middle period, one also finds such articles as "The Subject Matter of Metaphysical Inquiry,"³ which openly advocates a naturalistic metaphysics. With the appearance of *Experience and Nature* (1925), this theme of Dewey's thought comes to the fore. Dewey himself, at the beginning of this work, confessed that his philosophy of "empirical naturalism," or "naturalistic humanism," would sound to many like talking of a round square, "so engrained is the notion of the separation of man and experience from nature."⁴ Dewey's fear was born out; idealists and naturalists joined ranks in criticizing the roundness or the squareness of the work, depending which side of the philosophical fence they fell on. Santayana referred to Dewey's naturalism as "specious," being the sort of naturalism espoused by Schelling, Emerson, or Hegel. Morris Cohen characterized Dewey's position as "anthropocentric naturalism," and Thayer called it "animism at best." Ernest Hocking claimed Dewey was returning to the idealist fold. More recently, Richard Bernstein claimed that the "phenomenological strain" in Dewey's thought was totally inconsistent with the "metaphysical strain."⁵

Rorty, consciously or unconsciously, is operating in this tradition of criticism when he comments that "it is easier to think of the book [*Experience and Nature*] as an explanation of why nobody needs a metaphysics, rather than as itself a metaphysical system" (1977, p. 46). For Rorty, the work falls more into the genre of a "historio-sociological" study of the cultural phenomena called metaphysical systems. In this light, the major contribution of the book lies in its historical and dialectical analysis of other metaphysical systems which thereby allows us critically to remove such assumptions from our own beliefs. Rorty points out the fact that Dewey, late in life, came to abjure the term "metaphysics" in connection with his own philosophy and called himself "dumb" for having titled his book *Experience and Nature* instead of *Nature and Culture*.⁶ For Rorty, this means that in spite of his rejection of idealism and his professed empiricism, all along Dewey had wanted to do "real metaphysics," and then that he "wavered" between conceiving of philosophy as "therapy" and as a "scientific" system of truth. "He wanted things both ways," sums up Rorty, i.e., "to be as naturalist as Locke and as historicist as Hegel," (1977, pp. 40, 63).

Before proceeding with Rorty's analysis, one error must already be clarified. While Dewey did express regret that his use of words like "metaphysics" or "experience" had been misinterpreted, being taken in their traditional sense rather than in Dewey's modified version, he never regretted the ideas they expressed. To one critic, Dewey called himself "naive" for supposing the word "metaphysics" could be rescued from its engrained use. Yet, he added, "while I think the words used were most unfortunate, I still believe that that which they were used to name is gen-

uine and important.”⁷ With respect to the proposed substitution of “culture” for “experience” in the title, Dewey did not mean that he should abandon epistemology for “socio-historical” analysis. What he meant was that his concept of experience, unlike that of most modern philosophers from Descartes on, was, among other things, a social and cultural one. Rather than standing for something uniquely private, experience stood for the broad domain of shared meanings of civilized life. In this, Dewey was developing ideas developed mainly by George Gerbert Mead. The problem was that most of Dewey’s critics continued to take “experience” in its old sense.

This, of course, does not mean that there is not a tension in Dewey’s philosophy, especially in his concept of “metaphysics.” The fact that so many critics have responded to this tension indicates that it is related to that part of Dewey’s philosophy which is genuinely novel and thus difficult to get at. The tension, as Rorty points out, is between what Dewey called his “empirical or denotative method,” which was to keep all inquiry grounded in primary objects of experience, and Dewey’s description of metaphysics as the quest for “generic traits.” Dewey’s method, so often merely taken to be a crudely updated form of Baconian empiricism, is in fact quite complex. Briefly, Dewey does not claim that the primary objects of sense are “sense data” nor is he saying that the objects corresponding to nouns exist *simpliciter*. Objects of experience are perceived *meanings*. These meanings arise through biosocial interaction with the environment, gradually becoming stabilized common points of reference and action. Meanings are thus objective modes of social experience. The stable environment constitutes “the given” in inquiry, though, with Peirce, Dewey agreed that none of these objects were absolute or immune from investigation itself.

Dewey also promoted the view that philosophy *qua* metaphysics should attempt to describe the “generic traits” of existence. In his article, “The Subject Matter of Metaphysical Inquiry,” Dewey espoused an empirical sort of metaphysics which he linked with Aristotle’s science of “existence as existence,” which is distinguished from other domains of knowledge “by its generality and its lack of attention to those specific features of existence which make many sciences an intellectual necessity.”⁸ In this sense, metaphysics was concerned with denoting “certain irreducible traits found in any subject of scientific inquiry.”⁹ In *Experience and Nature*, Dewey enlarged this enterprise beyond the parameters of scientific inquiry to include all aspects of experience. There he says that “metaphysics (is) a statement of the generic traits manifested by existences of all kinds without regard to their differences into physical and mental . . . It begins and ends with analysis and definition. When it has revealed the traits and char-

acters that are sure to turn up in every universe of discourse, its work is done” (Dewey, 1929, p. 412–3). Dewey, unfortunately, never gave a comprehensive list of these traits, though the following list can be gleaned from his writings: qualitative individuality, constant relations, contingency and need, movement and arrest, ends or finalities, means or efficacies, time, process, potentiality, actuality, and continuity.¹⁰

It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the viability of these categories or the success of Dewey’s metaphysical enterprise. It should be noted in passing, however, that the idea of an empirical metaphysics which tentatively sets up basic categories was shared by Peirce and Whitehead, both of whom admitted at once the fallibility and necessity of the enterprise.¹¹ In short, these thinkers, along with others, such as Mead, Heidegger, or Merleau-Ponty, have attempted to redefine the metaphysical enterprise, disassociating it from the demonstrable science of self-evident *a priori* intuitions advocated by Neo-Platonists (such as Proclus), by the Neo-Platonically influenced thinkers of the seventeenth century, or by the dialectical systems of the nineteenth century idealists from Schelling to Royce.¹²

One reason why Dewey attempted to “reconstruct” the sense of “metaphysics” was that he wished to eliminate a restricted meaning imposed by a certain brand or type of metaphysics. Unfortunately, as even Dewey saw, this was nearly impossible. Rorty, like many of Dewey’s critics, seems to take an uncritical or unhistorical view of the meaning of Dewey’s use of the term, rendering some of his criticisms confused. Rorty applauds the critical, historical side of Dewey’s *Experience and Nature*, as he does the dialectical portions of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* and Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*. These thinkers were led astray, asserts Rorty, when they turned to a positive metaphysical project. In Dewey’s case, the desire to construct a metaphysics, a “science of the Real,” as Rorty characterizes it, cut directly across his critical task of exposing the unsound assumptions of past doctrines. Either Dewey wanted an objective value-neutral science to compete with the other sciences, or he wanted to criticize normatively the values and institutions of society. The former, dictates Rorty, is metaphysics, the latter definitely cannot be. The dilemma is: “either Dewey’s metaphysics differs from ‘traditional metaphysics’ in not having a directing bias concerning social values because Dewey found an ‘empirical’ way of doing metaphysics which abstracts from any such biases and values, or else when Dewey falls into his vein of talking of the ‘generic traits manifested by existences of all kinds’ he is in slightly bad faith” (Rorty, 1977, p. 48).

Dewey’s quest for generic traits, claims Rorty, “would resemble traditional metaphysics in providing a permanent neutral matrix for future inquiry” (1977, p. 60). If this is so, Dewey’s enterprise is just as useless as

any other metaphysical system because it is not clear "how displaying such generic traits could either avoid banality or dissolve traditional philosophical problems" (Rorty, 1977, p. 48). In fact, according to Rorty, logical empiricism did a better job of demonstrating the false problems of traditional philosophy because of its analytical method, even though it itself was committed to questionable metaphysical presuppositions, than did Dewey's broad historical method. This method of analysis succeeded in showing how the "Cartesian-Humean-Kantian" positions were "self-refuting." Dewey's problem arose from wanting to "do justice" at the same time to Hegelian historicism and Lockean naturalism. About this, asserts Rorty, "One can put this point best, perhaps, by saying that no man can serve both Locke and Hegel," (1977, p. 60). One cannot be both objective and dialectical, or combine, in Rorty's dubious terminology, "sociology" with "physiology." In short, the position of "naturalistic humanism" or "empirical naturalism" which Dewey espoused was speaking of a "round square," in Rorty's opinion.

Rorty's commitment to certain hard and fast distinctions is already patent. He clearly believes metaphysics *as a science* must be "value neutral," a position which, we shall see, Dewey did not hold for metaphysics or science. Correspondingly, to express value preferences for Rorty is not to be "objective"; but by inference, it is to be "subjective," another position Dewey did not hold. Also, the ideal of a "permanent neutral matrix" which Rorty attributes to Dewey was never espoused by him after the 1880s. Though not explicitly stated, Rorty's admiration for the self-correcting method of logical empiricism inclines one to think that for him it is a value-free methodology capable of making traditional philosophical problems "disappear." Dewey would disagree. Finally, Rorty rather indiscriminately applies the sets of terms "dialectical," "historical," and "*sociological*" to Hegel's objective idealism, and "empirical," "naturalistic," and "*physiological*" to Locke's brand of realism. What this seems to indicate is that Rorty is committed to some of the basic dualisms Dewey spent his life criticizing, not to mention to a confusing use of the terms "physiological" and "sociological."

Rorty is particularly critical of Dewey's attempt to eliminate mind-body dualism with the concept of *emergence* and continuity; he says:

Again, only someone who thought that a proper account of the 'generic traits' of existence could cross the line between physiology and sociology—between causal processes and self-conscious beliefs and inferences that they make possible would have written the chapter in *Experience and Nature* called 'Nature, Life, and Body-Mind,' or would have attempted to develop a jargon that would apply equally to plants, nervous systems and physicists (Rorty, 1977, p. 61).

The passages Rorty quotes to illustrate Dewey's confusion of these orders are precisely the passages in which Dewey argues, with Whitehead and Merleau-Ponty among others, that qualities cannot be simply located either "in" a mind or "in" an object; rather, they are functional parts of an interacting situation.¹³ Certainly, Dewey's theory of transactional situations is far from clear or immune from criticism. To argue, as Rorty does, that it violates some self-evident natural classification of things into body (and its corresponding "body language") and mind (and its corresponding "mental language") is to be dogmatically convinced of dualism. Instead of further analyzing Dewey's ideas, Rorty tends to resort to positivist rhetoric: "Dewey wanted . . . phrases like 'transaction with the environment' and 'adaptation to conditions' to be simultaneously naturalistic and transcendental. . . . So he blew up notions like 'transaction' and 'situation' until they sounded as mysterious as 'prime matter' or 'thing-in-itself.'" ¹⁴

For Rorty, there is an insurpassable gulf between the physical, causal order and the logical, mental order, and Dewey's attempt to see the two related functionally, evolutionarily, and emergentistically is coarsely brushed aside. The similarity between Dewey's ideas and contemporary information theory or cognitive development, exemplified best perhaps respectively in the work of Gregory Bateson and Jean Piaget, is presumably no argument for the viability of Dewey's position as far as Rorty is concerned. It is Rorty, who by merely asserting the necessity of the distinctions which support his criticism, is the one who is "in slightly bad faith."

This is especially true insofar as Dewey was not trying to reduce the mental or logical order and its realm of discourse to the physical, causal order and its realm of discourse. Dewey's "generic traits" were not intended to be absolutely inclusive in the sense that all meanings could ultimately be translated into a few categories. Dewey was particularly insistent that each domain of inquiry develop the terminology appropriate to its procedure, and he was harshly critical of those who did attempt to reduce one realm of discourse to another. What Dewey's generic traits were supposed to do was to keep the various areas of inquiry from becoming frozen, isolated, and so mutually incomprehensible. For Dewey, no category was sacrosanct or immutable, and to pretend it was was to throw a barrier across the path of inquiry. "Over-specialization and division of interests, occupations and goods create the need for a generalized medium of intercommunication, of mutual criticism through all-around translation from one separated region of experience to another," states Dewey. "Thus philosophy as a critical organ becomes in effect a messenger, a liaison officer, making reciprocally intelligible voices speaking provincial tongues, and thereby enlarging as well as rectifying the meanings with which they are charged" (1929, p. 410). Without this corrective, warns Dewey, "Narrowness, superficiality, stagnation follow from lack of the nourishment

which can be supplied only by wide and generous interaction" (1929, p. 409).

Perhaps the fundamental difference between Rorty and Dewey is nowhere so evident as in their conception of philosophy, which accounts for how Rorty has failed to grasp the spirit as well as much of the content of Dewey's thought. Rorty is obviously as concerned as Dewey is to remove the troublesome "dualisms" from contemporary thought, but the reasons and means of doing so derive from Wittgenstein and the analytical movement rather than from Dewey or pragmatism. At one point, Rorty muses that "Dewey never quite brought himself to adopt the Bowsma-like stance that philosophy's mission, like that of therapy, was to make itself obsolete" (1977, p. 63). This, of course, was the furthest thing from Dewey's intent. Rorty assumes that the problems Dewey was dealing with were such that mere linguistic analysis could solve them, i.e., that they were the problems inherited from the philosophical tradition derived from misuse of language. But philosophical problems were only part of the picture for Dewey; and if they were *merely* philosophical problems, he probably would not have spent much time with them. Above all, problems in philosophy represented for Dewey problems in society, problems in life, problems affecting the value and meaning of experience. Philosophy, for Rorty, since it cannot have anything to do with science, sociology, or practice, must in the end become a gloss on its own welcomed demise.

Rorty does have a positive program for philosophy, especially since the foregoing conclusion might cause some to question why academic institutions should support philosophers at all. "The working out of the pseudo-ness of pseudo-problems is by now familiar," states Rorty. "As usual when their fountains of inspiration dry up, English-speaking philosophers are looking to the Continent for some new ideas, and what they find there is just what Dewey hoped for" (1977, p. 51-2). Rorty here is referring to Dewey's expressed hope that one day philosophy will reflect as seriously upon the social sciences and humanities as it has for the last three centuries upon the mathematical and physical sciences. Rorty believes that such thinkers as Habermas, Foucault, Derrida, Cavell, and Danto, among others, have indicated how this procedure might be pursued. Rorty believes that these philosophers are pursuing Hegelian historicism without making any sort of metaphysical or epistemological commitments, and so he grows sanguine saying that "we are now about to enter a golden age of philosophy under the aegis of Hegelian historicism" (1977, p. 53).

In the course of Rorty's article, one becomes fairly giddy with name dropping, though very little solid analysis is offered to substantiate these references. Particularly, the question of how one practices "Hegelian historicism" without *any* of Hegel's metaphysical presuppositions is ignored.

I do not wish to imply that the nature of the project Rorty proposes is impossible or that the thinkers he mentions are not, in a very profound manner, closely aligned with Dewey's philosophy. Nevertheless, Rorty does not ask how historical criticism is possible without making some positive commitment to a position which might be called metaphysical or epistemological. Every critical dialectic must be based on some positive philosophy, so there is some basis *from which* to criticize other positions. Even the ideal of pure method which is "presuppositionless" rests tacitly upon such presuppositions. In the end, after Rorty has charged Dewey's quest for generic traits with being either banal or useless, he really cannot offer any justification for pursuing what he has called "historicism." Philosophy, as he conceives it, must end up as a self-justifying *Fröhliche Wissenschaft* where one comes to treat the philosophical past "as material for playful experimentation rather than as imposing tasks and responsibilities upon us." Philosophers are those people "who work with the history of philosophy." "This is a modest, limited enterprise," says Rorty, "—as modest and limited as carving stones into new shapes, or finding more basic elementary particles" (1977, p. 71). It seems that in the end, philosophy for Rorty is a pure art (the sort of pure art Dewey derides in *Art as Experience*) solely concerned with showing why it should not exist by constantly reflecting on its own erring past. Such was not the goal of philosophy for Dewey, and his thought is ill designed for such a purpose.

What was the purpose then of philosophy for Dewey, and how were the "generic traits" he sought necessary to it? Philosophy, for Dewey, is characterized as criticism, but it is a criticism which is eminently concerned with "tasks and responsibilities" and which rejects the idea of being a self-enclosed autorumination. Criticism, for Dewey, means "intelligent perception and evaluation," and so is concerned with noting conditions and consequences, means and ends:

philosophy is inherently criticism, having its distinctive position among various modes of criticism in its generality; a criticism of criticisms as it were. Criticism is discriminating judgment . . . and judgment is appropriately termed criticism where ever the subject-matter of discrimination concerns goods or values . . . philosophy is and can be nothing but this critical operation become aware of itself and its implications pursued deliberately and systematically (1929, pp. 389-403).

The problem of philosophy is one with the problem of intelligent action leading to enduring "replenishment and fructification" of enriched, meaningful experience. For Dewey, this meant a commitment to establishing those "wide and generous interactions" in all aspects of human life: education, ethics, politics, science, logic, and art.

The need for philosophy to be general, given this general goal, is evident. And this was why Dewey articulated the need for finding certain "generic traits" which would regulate philosophical inquiry. If philosophy is criticism, metaphysics, as noted, is concerned with generic traits, which seem Dewey noted "to have nothing to do with criticism and choice, with an effective love of wisdom" (1929, pp. 412-3). But to note these traits, he added, is to note "both the sources of values and of their precariousness" (Dewey, 1929, p. 413) and so to commence the possibility of intelligent action. That is, one comes to see *how* values arise from and are secured by certain general features of situations.

Dewey concluded: "Any theory that detects and defines these traits is therefore but the ground-map of the province of criticism" (1929, p. 413). Criticism, then, is not a "value-neutral" enterprise, since it is pre-eminently concerned with "the construction of good" as Dewey called it. The essential thrust of Dewey's theory was that values did not inhabit a subjective mental realm, nor did they exist in a water-tight linguistic domain. The very nature of intelligence is one with correlating goods with natural agencies through social cooperation. Thus, for Dewey's critical, value-oriented philosophy to work at all, the quest for generic traits is imperative. "To note, register and define the constituent structure of nature is not then an affair neutral to criticism," asserted Dewey. "It is a preliminary outline of the field of criticism, whose chief import is to afford understanding of the necessity and nature of the office of intelligence" (1929, p. 422). From a Deweyan perspective, Rorty's attempt to remove the quest for generic traits from criticism is to remove at once the objectivity and usefulness of the critical enterprise.

Rorty's conception of criticism, as we have seen, is largely a negative one. It must be asked, however, is a purely negative dialectic possible? Aristotle, Hegel, and Dewey, whom Rorty admires for their negative attacks on other philosophies, made their criticisms only as a preliminary step for arguing their own positions. One wonders whether their criticisms would have been possible at all without having an alternative positive stance from which they could make their comparative analyses. Dewey himself states that criticism is impossible without a "heightened appreciation of the positive goods which human experience has achieved and offers" (1929, p. 412). Without some form of a new imaginative synthesis of ideas, no criticism can operate.

For Dewey, there was nothing apodictic or absolute about the generic traits he discussed, since they were all arrived at and subject to his empirical "denotative method." They were a priori only pragmatically, i.e., as "controlling conceptions of inquiry,"¹⁵ or, in Peirce's terms, "leading ideas." Without seeking such traits, the organization of inquiry, as well as the possibility for meaningfully coherent experience, collapses:

Because we are afraid of speculative ideas we do, over and over again, an immense amount of dead, specialized work in the region of "facts." We forget that such facts are only data; that is, are only fragmentary, uncompleted meanings, and unless they are rounded out into complete ideas—a work which can only be done by hypotheses, by a free imagination of intellectual possibilities—they are as helpless as are all maimed things and as repellent as are needlessly thwarted ones.¹⁶

Without imaginative speculation which seeks to frame a coherent world-view and an attempt to denote the general features of existence, criticism is as impossible as it is useless, for it then can only operate with the given categories it has inherited.

Rorty's tendency to erect such categories as "physical" and "social" into absolute distinctions without regard to their functional origin and relation is to condemn any alternative philosophy or cultural world-view as an instance of a "category mistake," hardly a fruitful assumption for one who believes the future of philosophy lies in "socio-historical analysis." To philosophize, for Dewey, is to be dealing "with something comparable to the meaning of Athenian civilization or of a drama or a lyric. Significant history is lived in the imagination of man, and philosophy is a further excursion of the imagination into its own prior achievements" (Dewey, 1931, p. 5). But it does not do this merely passively, "In forming patterns to be conformed to in future thought and action, it is additive and transforming in its rôle in the history of civilization" (Dewey, 1931, p. 8). The socio-historical role of philosophy for Dewey thus did anything except fight shy of imaginative speculation, for to do so would be to forsake the promise of funded meaning which intelligence offers.

To conclude, I have tried to show how even a perceptive, informed, and—to some extent—sympathetic critic like Rorty can be misled in interpreting Dewey's philosophy. The source for this lies, I think, in a failure to comprehend the basic thrust of Dewey's thought as well as an inability to question certain presuppositions which Rorty himself entertains, e.g., about fact and value, the absoluteness of linguistic categories, and the "true" purpose of philosophy. I do not mean to imply that Dewey's ideas are "right" or are immune from ambiguity, contradiction, or criticism from alternative philosophical standpoints. Nevertheless, if what is of value in Dewey's thought is to be discerned by intelligent criticism, one must attempt to overcome typical confusions, superficial interpretation, and procrustean procedures. Dewey's theory of generic traits is a highly questionable aspect of his philosophy, but this is not to say it is inconsistent or indefensible from a more refined perspective. Rorty totally ignores analyzing Dewey's "principle of continuity" which underlies his emergentist metaphysics, as it does the similar metaphysical systems of Peirce,

Mead, and Whitehead.¹⁷ To leave this idea unanalyzed and to make wild claims that Dewey secretly subscribed to a theory about a synthesizing transcendental ego, as Rorty does at one point,¹⁸ is hardly helpful. If Anglo-American philosophy is in need of new ideas, it would indeed do well to take into consideration rich thinkers from its own immediate past, like Dewey and Peirce, for it will discover many challenging alternatives as well as similarities to its own orientation. This is especially useful if, as Rorty suggests, some attempted synthesis with Continental thought is desirable.¹⁹

NOTES

1. For example, James Gouinlock, *John Dewey's Philosophy of Value* (New York: Humanities Press, 1972); Victor Kestenbaum, *The Phenomenological Sense of John Dewey* (New York: Humanities Press, 1977); Alfonso Damico, *Individuality & Community* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1978).
2. Richard Rorty, "Dewey's Metaphysics," in *New Studies in the Philosophy of John Dewey*, Stephen Cahn, ed. (Hanover, N.H.: The University Press of New England, 1977), pp. 45-74.
3. John Dewey, "The Subject Matter of Metaphysical Inquiry," *Journal of Philosophy*, XII (1915), 337-45; reprinted in Richard Bernstein, ed., *Dewey: On Experience, Nature, and Freedom* (Indianapolis, Ind.: Bobbs-Merrill, 1960), pp. 211-23.
4. John Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 2nd. ed. (1929), p. 1a.
5. See Santayana, "Dewey's Naturalistic Metaphysics" (1925), in his *Obiter Scripta*, pp. 213-40; Morris Cohen, "Some Difficulties in Dewey's Anthropocentric Naturalism," *Philosophical Review*, XLIX (1940), 196-220; H. S. Thayer, *The Logic of Pragmatism* (New York: Humanities Press, 1952), p. 80; W. E. Hocking, "Dewey's Concept of Nature and Experience," *Philosophical Review*, XLIX (1940), 228-44; and Richard Bernstein, "John Dewey's Metaphysics of Experience," *Journal of Philosophy*, LVIII (1961), 5-14.
6. See Dewey's reply to Sholom Kahn, *The Journal of Phenomenology and Philosophical Research* IX (1948), 709-13, and his letter to A. F. Bentley, Jan. 18, 1951, in *John Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1961), p. 643.
7. John Dewey, reply to Sholom Kahn, "Experience and Existence: A Comment," *op. cit.*, p. 712.
8. "The Subject Matter of Metaphysical Inquiry," in Bernstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-6.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 213. Dewey was influenced in this by the Aristotelian naturalism of his colleague, F. J. E. Woodbridge. See Dewey's "Biography," in the Schillp volume, *Philosophy of John Dewey*, pp. 35-6, and Woodbridge's essay, "Metaphysics" (1908) in his *Nature and Mind*, esp., p. 96. Many of these ideas were developed by Dewey's and Woodbridge's student, John Herman Randall, in his *Nature and Historical Experience* (1958), esp. pp. 125-6, where generic traits are discussed.
10. Various lists of the generic traits appear in *Experience and Nature*, pp. 413, 421, and throughout the book. In addition to "The Subject Matter of Metaphysical Inquiry," one should consult the late article, "Time and Individuality" (1940), in Bernstein, *op. cit.*, and the first section of *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*.
11. See Peirce, *Collected Papers*, I: 131, and Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, I:iii.
12. The a priori geometrical method is first extensively used in Proclus's *Elements of Theology*, a highly influential work for rationalists in the Middle Ages and Renaissance; for the influence of Neo-Platonic ideas in the seventeenth century, see Ivor Leclerc's *The Nature of*

Physical Existence (New York: Humanities Press, 1972). The influence of Neo-Platonism and Neo-Platonically inspired ideas on the idealists, such as Schelling, as well as upon the Romantics and Transcendentalists, should be noted.

13. Rorty refers to *Experience and Nature*, 2nd. ed. (1929), p. 23, and, esp., where, e.g., Dewey says, "The qualities were never 'in' the organism; they were always qualities of interactions in which extra-organic things and organisms partake" (1929, pp. 258-9).

14. Rorty, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-6; see note 18, below.

15. John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (1935), p. 317.

16. John Dewey, "Philosophy and Civilization," in *Philosophy and Civilization* (1931), p. 11.

17. For the role of continuity in Peirce see *Collected Papers* VI: Chs. 6 & 7; for Mead, see "The Nature of the Past," in *Selected Writings* (1964) Andrew Reck, ed., *The Philosophy of the Act*, Part III, and *The Philosophy of the Present*, Ch. II, and passim; for Whitehead, see *Process and Reality* II:ii and III.

18. Rorty, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-7, where, e.g., Rorty asserts: "The system that was built in *Experience and Nature* sounded idealistic, and its solution to the mind-body problem seemed one more invocation of the transcendental ego, because the level of generality to which Dewey ascends is the same level at which Kant worked, and the model of knowledge is the same—the constitution of the knowable by the cooperation of two unknowables," (p. 67). Not only is this statement a patently erroneous interpretation of Dewey's theory of situations, but reveals, I think, Rorty's own dualistic presuppositions, i.e., that there must be an object and a subject prior to a situation. For Dewey the two emerge *within* a developing situation and are functionally related. Rorty seems to persist in asking for what the table, e.g., is *in itself*, and concludes that it is really "swirls of atoms." This does not correspond to Dewey's objective relativism, where to ask about the nature of something *in itself* is meaningless.

19. For various studies re. Dewey and phenomenology, see Kestenbaum's *Phenomenological Sense of John Dewey*; Michael Sukale, "Heidegger and Dewey," in his *Comparative Studies in Phenomenology* (1976); Sandra Rosenthal and Patrick Bourgeois, "Pragmatism, Scientific Method, and the Return to Lived Experience," *Jour. Phil. and Phen. Res.*, XXXVII (1977), 56-65; Kenneth Chandler, "Dewey's Phenomenology of Knowledge," *Philosophy Today*, 21 (1977), 43-55; and Richard Rorty, "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey," *Review of Metaphysics*, 30 (1976), 280-305.