beneficial to include another essay on alternate approaches to supplement Tan’s excellent piece.

The volume is also noticeably narrow at points. It fails to include any essays dedicated to aesthetics, philosophy of religion, or the ways American studies of the history of philosophy affect current debates (for example, Kant and Hegel studies in America); an odd omission both since there is a lot of fruitful work being carried out in these areas in leading philosophy departments in America, and since the classical pragmatists themselves were greatly interested in aesthetics and value inquiry, philosophy of religion, and the history of philosophy.

To conclude, there are two virtues that ought to recommend this volume to two different readerships. First, it contains many new, clear and expansive essays that provide an introduction to and survey of some of the most important figures and areas in Anglophone philosophy. In this respect, this volume would make an ideal first reference point for any students wishing to begin readings in classical pragmatism, as well as numerous other core areas in Anglophone philosophy. On this score, the volume also contains several new essays on somewhat marginal figures, such as Thorstein Veblen, Alfred North Whitehead, Sidney Hook (see Talisse’s essay), and George Santayana, who tend to be glossed over or too easily assimilated into mainstream classical pragmatism in other anthologies. More importantly, this volume tells a story; a story that appears at times coherent and powerful, and at other times deeply complex and inconsistent; a story that draws attention to the development, clarification, rejection and resuscitation of several powerful ideas. As analytic philosophy in the Anglophone world continues to become more self-aware and attempts to articulate a precise and energizing account of its roots and direction, professional philosophers will do well to reflect upon stories like the one that emerges from Misak’s volume.

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This little book is well aware that its author has died. Though Richard Rorty’s name features prominently on both its front cover and binding, only eleven pages of the text are his. The rest of the book is made up of three pieces that seek to situate those eleven pages, which were originally given as a 2005 lecture in Turin, Italy. The shortest of the companion pieces is Gianni Vattimo’s
original introduction to the lecture; the longest is G. Elijah Dann’s conclusion, which takes up more than half the book’s length and attempts to give an assessment of what we can say for religion and philosophy in the wake of Rorty’s work.

The third included piece is Jeffrey Robbins’s foreword, which undertakes some of the work normally done by a book review: giving a general sketch of where this piece falls in Rorty’s broader intellectual corpus. It also rehearses both Rorty’s central philosophical commitments and opinions of him within the profession and culture. The tone throughout is retrospective; Rorty has written all he will write, and now the task is to see what threads and themes can be teased out and to what use we can put them. Robbins carries this task out by walking through and commenting on the central theses of Rorty’s major texts, especially Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature and Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity. To those already familiar with Rorty’s work, the foreword is a pleasant reminder of both the biographical impulses that fueled his positions as well as his intellectual insouciance. To those without prior exposure to Rorty, perhaps brought to this book by its timely and ambitious title, the foreword is welcoming and hospitable, giving readers the background necessary to jump right into Rorty’s already easily consumable lecture.

Starting from Rorty’s status as America’s “best-known public philosopher,” Robbins claims that no one other than he “was better equipped to write an ethics for the lay person” (xvii). The lecture at this book’s center, Robbins argues, provides an example of just such an ethics, particularized to the topic of religious authority. In order to discover what a broader Rortian ethics for today might look like, readers can presumably generalize from Rorty’s words here, along with the included explanations of his anti-foundationalism and pro-democratic thinking. Robbins is careful to note that the late career remarks on religion offered here do not square with all that Rorty wrote on the subject. This topic is taken up more directly in the book’s conclusion. Of special importance is the question of whether religion is a conversation stopper, as Rorty famously argued, and then whether it is possible and perhaps even necessary to keep having conversations about those subjects which putatively stop our conversations. The lecture at this book’s center is evidence Rorty ultimately considered such discussions to be worth having.

Two of Rorty’s last three books – The Future of Religion (2005) and the work presently under review – are overtly concerned with the question of religion’s place in society. Each of these texts includes a selection from Gianni Vattimo, the Italian philosopher, and readers who are interested in how Rorty’s thought lines up with this sympathetic but vaguely religious respondent will do well to read the two pieces together. Vattimo’s piece in An Ethics for Today serves only to introduce Rorty to those assembled for his lecture, and it is from him that we learn that Rorty’s pragmatism is concerned with achieving ends “toward our happiness” (4).