CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue of William James Studies

In view of Peirce’s eventual rejection of ‘pragmatism’ as a label for his philosophy, and his preference for the deliberately less attractive ‘pragmaticism’, it is often maintained that he and William James represent divergent pragmatist traditions. Indeed, Rorty came to be of the view that Peirce falls outside the pragmatist tradition, providing it with little else than its name. For Rorty, Peirce remains too wedded to quasi-philosophical concerns inherited from the European tradition, and it is only with James and Dewey that the radical humanistic potential of American pragmatist philosophy is appreciated. Hence Peirce and James are often presented as differing in their respectively ‘scientific’ and ‘humanistic’ priorities. Whereas Peirce introduces his pragmatism as a methodological principle for facilitating the solution (or dissolution) of metaphysical problems, James’s pragmatism is of far greater scope and is intended to address such concerns as the value and desirability of human existence. While Peirce’s sympathisers object to a lack of logical rigour in James’s writings and to an epistemic frivolity which has tarnished the reputation of pragmatist philosophy, those sympathetic to James complain of the narrow technical preoccupations which prevent Peirce from adequately addressing moral and existential concerns.

To sharply distinguish, however, between a ‘scientific-objectivist’ Peircean pragmaticism and a ‘humanistic-subjectivist’ Jamesian pragmatism is to risk overlooking the numerous commonalities between Peirce and James. Contrary to his reputation as a narrowly technical logician, Peirce did engage seriously and in depth with ethical matters, and his later architectonic makes logic systematically subordinate to ethics and aesthetics. James’s scientific interests and his strong empiricist leanings should also cast doubt on the long-held suspicion that his philosophy gives license to undisciplined wishful thinking. What is more, Peirce and James are both explicitly committed to reconciling a commitment to modern scientific method with a profound religiosity. In addition, little is known of the important personal and intellectual conversations that they sustained over many years, conversations that, according to the testimony of each of them, affected and stimulated their thought, and even in a dramatic way.
Without seeking either to exaggerate or to understate the differences between Peirce and James, the guest editors for this special issue of *William James Studies* welcome contributions examining the connections between these two friends and co-originators of American pragmatist philosophy, who kept up a life-long correspondence on matters of mutual philosophical interest. Possible topics include the following:

- James, Peirce, and the Pragmatic Maxim
- James and Peirce on truth
- James and Peirce on the community and the individual
- James, Peirce, and the nominalism/realism debate
- James, Peirce, and the American Philosophical Tradition
- James, Peirce, and the reception of pragmatist philosophy in Latin America, Africa, and Asia
- James and Peirce on philosophy and vital matters
- James, Peirce, and metaphysics
- James’s and Peirce’s respective conceptions of the nature and tasks of philosophy
- James, Peirce, and the human being: habit, instinct, and sentiment
- James, Peirce, and the nature of scientific understanding

Submissions addressing all aspects of the James-Peirce relationship will be enthusiastically received, but those comparing their views in moral theory, political philosophy and other areas where their respective outlooks have less often been discussed together shall be especially welcome.

Documents of up to 8,000 words submitted on or before June 30th will be given full consideration.

The guest editors will be happy to assist with any inquiries concerning the special issue and may be contacted at d.r.herbert@sheffield.ac.uk (Daniel Herbert) and panielosberto.reyes@upaep.mx (Paniel Reyes Cardenas).

Submissions will be accepted in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.