

Ethics • American Philosophy

American Philosophy Series

Series editor: John J. Kaag

“Stuart Rosenbaum has succeeded admirably in balancing a pragmatist conception of the fluidity and diversity of the constituents of selfhood, with his often brilliant insights on how integrity brings cohesiveness to one’s character and choices. This wide-ranging, learned, provocative and original book will be of great interest to many.”

—**Guy Axtell**, Radford University

“This is one of those rare philosophy texts that is modest and accurate, and yet hard to put down. Its novel presentation of the moral meanings of pragmatism suggests new resolutions for old perplexities; its unpredictable tactics against pragmatism’s powerful detractors unfold like an adventure.”

—**William Dean**, professor emeritus, Iliff School of Theology

“In Stuart Rosenbaum’s view, pragmatism resists the Platonist desire to ‘get things right’; resists ‘agendas of justification’; and resists dwelling on conceptual ‘necessities’ and ‘niceties.’ Deepening and extending aspects of his previous book, *Pragmatism and the Reflective Life*, Rosenbaum now uses his distinctive view of pragmatism to focus attention on what integrity, in Dewey’s phrase, ‘exists as.’ The result is a work of philosophical and cultural significance, one energized by decidedly provocative reflections on integrity...and on the integrity of pragmatism itself.”

—**Victor Kestenbaum**, Boston University

The world of moral theory finds no place for the idea of integrity. Stuart Rosenbaum contends that the natural intellectual home of the idea of integrity is the American pragmatist tradition, as pragmatism makes possible an account of integrity that enables it to become philosophically central in thinking about morality. The idea of integrity enables what Dewey called “a working theory of morality.” Other intellectual traditions, including those most prominent in the academic world of moral philosophy, ignore integrity because of its imprecision and its inability to deliver precise answers to questions about what is right or wrong, good or bad.

Recovering Integrity: Moral Thought in American Pragmatism explains how integrity can and should become central in philosophical thought about morality. Only within the intellectual tradition of American pragmatism may integrity achieve the intellectual stature it deserves as the central idea in ordinary moral thought.

The ideas of morally diverse communities are unified to a remarkable extent when seen through the moral lens of integrity. Diverse communities having diverse ways of life share similar understandings of morality; these similarities are important for understanding what morality fundamentally is in the human world. Philosophical efforts to explain “the nature of morality” or “the nature of right action” or “the nature of the good” founder on their ignorance of moral diversity in the real worlds of human history and culture. This book will be of great interest to moral philosophers and intellectual historians who are interested in moral theory and its historical contexts, as well to students and scholars of sociology and anthropology.

Stuart Rosenbaum is professor of philosophy at Baylor University.



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Recovering Integrity

Rosenbaum

Stuart Rosenbaum

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Moral Thought in American Pragmatism