



Some Pragmatist Themes

D. S. Clarke

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Pragmatism is a widely misunderstood philosophical movement, with its central theses the subject of distortions. Perhaps the most serious of them is the widely held view that pragmatism is somehow antithetical to contemporary systematic philosophy, that it offers an alternative to what is labeled "analytic philosophy." In *Some Pragmatist Themes*, Dr. D. S. Clarke corrects this misunderstanding by demonstrating that certain general topics of controversy in recent American philosophy are derived from two central claims of classical pragmatism, the claims that cognitive inquiry must be understood relative to action and purpose, and that relations between inquiry, action, and purpose in humans have parallels in sub-human species. Clarke shows how from these claims follow distinctive pragmatist themes that engage us in compelling controversies regarding the nature of truth, the viability of reductionist projects, reference to the past, and the structure of moral reasoning. Throughout the book Clarke sustains the pragmatists' vision of philosophy as an antidote to specialization in the contemporary world, a discipline using critical reason in order to integrate factual information derived from science with moral values. *Some Pragmatist Themes* is a stimulating text that will appeal to those interested in contemporary philosophical issues and comparative literature.

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