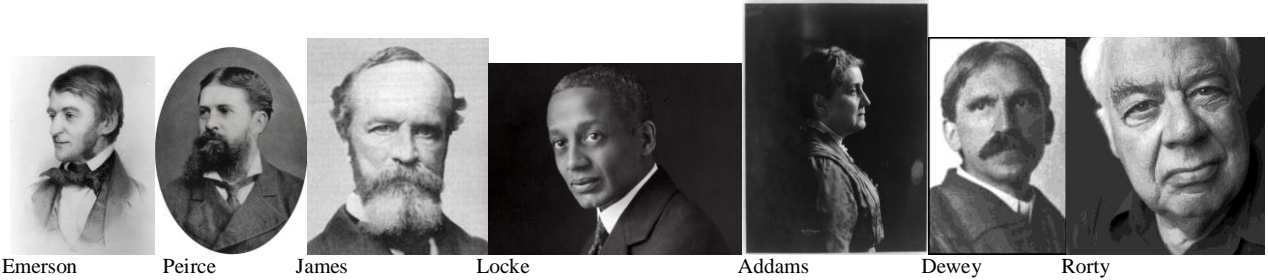


# American Philosophy



**Phil. 112, Fall 2020**

**Prof. Tom Leddy, MW 1330-1445 Sweeney Hall 241**

Over the last fifty years American Philosophy has gained increasing interest not only within philosophy but more widely. It shares much both with Continental Philosophy/Existentialism (emphasis on the individual, on emotion, and on consciousness) and with Analytic Philosophy (emphasis on naturalism), as well as with the liberal tradition in American political philosophy.

We will begin with some readings by the Transcendentalists, Emerson and Thoreau, who, although not professional philosophers, influenced later thinkers. We will then move on to such important figures in the American Pragmatist tradition as Peirce, James, Santayana, Locke, Addams and Dewey. The class will end with readings in contemporary American Pragmatism including Rorty and Shusterman. Topics covered include the nature of: consciousness, truth, meaning, belief, self, community, morality, democracy, faith, art and aesthetics.

One important theme of this class is that American Philosophy reveals the centrality of aesthetics in every aspect of our lives, a point which will be made clear when we read Dewey's *Art as Experience*.

Texts [used copies of all of these are available at Amazon.com, click on the Check "show more formats" under formats to get used copy prices]

Stuhr, John J. ed. *Pragmatism and Classical American Philosophy: Essential Readings and Interpretive Essays*. Oxford University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (1999). [You can get this used on Amazon.com for as little as \$2.50 plus shipping]

John Dewey. *Art as Experience* (I ordered the Penguin edition which is relatively inexpensive. However, if you wish you can get the scholarly but somewhat more expensive Boydston edition called *The Later Works of John Dewey, Volume 10, 1925 - 1953: 1934, Art as Experience* Southern Illinois University Press (2008))