

PHIL 190 section 01
Seminar in Philosophical Classics
The American Pragmatists
Mon/Wed 1:30-2:45 in DMH 226B
Fall 2021
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What is the controversial philosophical view known as ‘pragmatism’? William James summed it up thusly, “Grant an idea or belief to be true... what concrete difference will its being true make in any one’s actual life? How will the truth be realized? What experiences will be different from those which would obtain if the belief were false? What, in short, is the truth’s cash value in experiential terms?”

- What is “truth” according to the Pragmatists?
- Did Pragmatism really fall into a midcentury decline, or did it remain influential throughout the twentieth-century?
- What does Richard Rorty mean when he replaced the notion of truth with that of “solidarity”?

Prerequisite(s): Upper division; and completion of A3, ENGL 1B, HUM 2B, or equivalent with a C- or better OR completion of WST or WST Self-Directed Placement (For more info, visit sjsu.edu/wac/wst/students). Or Graduate/PBAC standing.