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Category: Publication

Title: Christopher Hookway: The Pragmatic Maxim. Essays on Peirce

Description: Published by Oxford University Press (2012).

Christopher Hookway presents a series of essays on the philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1913), the ‘founder of pragmatism’ and one of the most important and original American philosophers. Peirce made significant contributions to the development of formal logic and to the study of the normative standards we should follow in carrying out inquiries and enhancing our knowledge in science and mathematics. In *The Pragmatic Maxim*, Hookway explores Peirce’s writings on truth, science, and the nature of meaning, which have become steadily more influential over recent decades. He demonstrates how Peirce’s ideas can contribute to and inform philosophical understanding in debates that continue today.

The first seven chapters explore the framework of Peirce’s thought, especially his fallibilism and his rejection of scepticism, and his contributions to the pragmatist understanding of truth and reality. Like Frege and Husserl, among others, Peirce rejected psychologism and used phenomenological foundations to defend the system of categories. The final three chapters are concerned with ‘the pragmatic maxim’, a rule for clarifying the contents of concepts and ideas. Hookway explores the different strategies Peirce employed to demonstrate the correctness of the maxim, and thus of pragmatism. As well as studying and evaluating Peirce’s views, *The Pragmatic Maxim* discusses the relations between the views of Peirce and other pragmatist philosophers such as William James, C. I. Lewis, and Richard Rorty.

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