



Do Not Block Inquiry Philosophy in America – The Tradition of Socrates and Peirce

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Abstract: Romano is correct that philosophy today needs to become more public and inclusive. But different models for philosophical practice are needed: not Rorty, maybe Isocrates, but definitely Socrates, Peirce and Royce. Rorty's focus on the individual and the private and on conversation misses the strong emphasis in pragmatism on balancing individual and communal needs and on the call to build community. Isocrates fits into pragmatism's concern for reflection and deliberative choice, but Socrates asks us to probe, criticize, and seek to change fundamental assumptions. Also needed today in light of a dominant scientism is a Peirce/Royce notion of science as a human but significant community endeavor.

Keywords: Rorty, Richard; Isocrates; Socrates; Peirce, Charles Sanders; Royce, Josiah; scientism; community.

Carlin Romano's main claim in his book is that, contrary to the claims of some critics that America is "idiot America,"¹ an "America of unreason,"² America is the most philosophical culture in the history of the world, an "unprecedented marketplace of truth and argument."³ Yes, in his view, academic philosophy itself has miserably failed because its epistemological and linguistic focus has narrowed philosophical vision, which has resulted in the abandonment of a public role. Philosophy as a discipline in general has lost relevance and become marginal to the genuine philosophical concern of the amorphous marketplace of ideas that

Romano highlights in *America the Philosophical*. Romano then draws on a wide spectrum of thinkers outside of academic philosophy as models for how philosophy should be done, claiming that they engage in other forms of persuasion. These include psychologist philosophers such as B. F. Skinner, Abraham Maslow, Robert Coles, Howard Gardner; Literary critics such as Kenneth Burke, Irving Howe, Harold Bloom, and Edward Said; Political theorists Francis Fukuyama, Dennis Thompson, George Fletcher, and Noam Chomsky. Then we have linguist George Lakoff (who Romano acknowledges did work with philosopher Mark Johnson); mathematician Robert Kaplan, and neurologist Oliver Sacks. He goes on to discuss "casual wise men" such as Robert Fulghum, Paul Fussell, and Hugh Hefner; print journalists such as Max Lerner, I. F. Stone, Christopher Hitchens; and broadcasters such as Howard Kurtz, Bill Moyers, and Joseph Campbell. I, for one, have admired the wisdom provided by a number of these figures; I use the work of Oliver Sacks in several

¹ This is a reference to Charles P. Pierce, *Idiot America: How Stupidity Became a Virtue in the Land of the Free*, New York, NY: Doubleday, 2009.

² This is a reference to Susan Jacoby, *The Age of American Unreason*, New York, NY: Vintage, 2009.

³ Carlin Romano, *America the Philosophical*, New York, NY: Knopf 2012, p. 6. [Henceforth cited as AP]

of my courses on person and self and mind and George Fletcher's book on loyalty is a parallel to *Philosophy of Loyalty* by American philosopher, Josiah Royce.⁴ Yet, I am puzzled by what seems a series of portraits and reviews of these individuals. There is no clear connection discernible amongst them, or any distinct criteria that makes the work of them philosophical. What is Romano's intent in this discussion?

Romano also seems to miss a point made very well in a recent piece by Scott Soames in the *New York Times*.⁵ Soames, in a similar manner to Romano, is countering the argument that "philosophy is isolated, an 'ivory tower' discipline cut off." Soames reviews the history of philosophy and cites various philosophers who were involved in issues of their day, and who were interdisciplinary: philosopher-mathematicians Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, Kurt Gödel, Alonzo Church, and Alan Turing; linguists Rudolf Carnap, and Saul Kripke, decision theorists Frank Ramsey and Richard Jeffrey as well as a number of philosophers who assimilated physics into their philosophies. Philosophy as a discipline, in many ways, was the mother of all other disciplines. As for America's history we have the classical American philosophers, William James, Josiah Royce, and John Dewey, who all contributed to psychology and served as Presidents of the American Psychological Association. These three were also public philosophers speaking to issues of education, war, and race. Royce's history of California is considered a classic in historical writing.⁶ Romano, of course, does acknowledge that pragmatism has given credence to philosophy's public role. However, he focuses on the work of Richard Rorty as a model for philosophy. I will return to this claim shortly.

First, I applaud Romano for arguing that philosophy today needs to be more inclusive. He has a section of his book entitled "The Rising Outsiders." This section focuses on African Americans, Women, Native Americans, and Gays. By setting these individuals

aside under this title, there is a suggestion that they are somehow newcomers to philosophy. Of course, they are in the sense that these groups are only now being allowed to have a presence at the American Philosophical Association (APA) even if not always on the main program, although this too is changing. However, I think it more appropriate to say of these groups what he says in his introduction to African American philosophy: "America the Philosophical always included African American philosophers" (AP 313). The section on the African-Americans is very powerful. Romano begins with the debate over the question whether Africans took part in the creation of Western philosophy, and then moves to the book by historian Jeremiah Moses on black nationalism and messianism in America. He discusses the work of W. E. B. Dubois and works by Fredrick Douglass, Martin Delaney, David Walker, Anna Julia Cooper, and Francis Ellen Watkins Harper. Attention is also given to the work of Alain Locke, William Fontaine, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Cornel West, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Michael Eric Dyson, and finally to some young scholars, Eddie S. Glaude, Jr., Lewis Gordon, Tommie Shelby, Charles W. Mills, Paul Taylor, and George Yancy. African-American philosophy has been and continues to be a vibrant and crucial part of America the philosophical.

Romano's discussion of women in philosophy continues the theme of exclusion but is a little less satisfactory. Romano begins his discussion of women philosophers with the Neoplatonic thinker, Hypatia, arguing that "knowing the historic facts about women in philosophy remains challenging" (AP 346). He focuses on historical works that have attempted to remedy this situation, especially the work of Genevieve Lloyd (AP 346-7). Romano bemoans the marginalization of female philosophers and applauds those works that have addressed this neglect such as the Penn State press series of "Feminist Interpretations" of great philosophers edited by Nancy Tuana (AP 350-1) as well as works by John J. Conley, Mary Ellen Waithe, and Beverly Clark (AP 351). The shoddy extremely biased account of Margaret Fuller by Pulitzer prize historian, Vernon L. Parrington, in his book, *Main Currents in American Thought*, is recounted in some detail (AP 353). Jane Addams also received less than accolades from some scholars, but Romano rightfully credits Charlene Siegfried with her book, *Pragmatism and Feminism* as establishing Addams as a pragmatist philosopher who made substantial contribution to the initial formulation of pragmatism. Romano writes:

⁴ Josiah Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*, Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1995.

⁵ Scott Soames, "Philosophy's True Home," *The Stone Series, New York Times*, 7 March 2016, http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/03/07/philosophy-true-home/?_r=0.

⁶ Josiah Royce, *California from the Conquest in 1846 to the Second Vigilance Committee in San Francisco [1856]: A Study of American Character*, Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1886.

So, in recent years, mulling Jane Addams, instead of just Hulling her...revealed that pragmatism's tent in American intellectual life always stretched much farther than philosophy professors or standard anthologies acknowledged. Today, philosophers increasingly recognize that persuasive storytelling, the genre in which Addams and Coles excel, may count as effective philosophical argument. [AP 359]

It is true that story-telling is now recognized as effective philosophical argument, but we must not ignore the fact that pragmatists, including Addams, engaged in very effective argumentation when they also argued for situated knowledge as an important kind of knowledge and the stories of the marginalized as a reliable basis for research and then for public recommendations and action.

I, like several other reviewers, do not know what to make of the Hannah Arendt section in Romano's book that focuses more on her relationship with Heidegger than on an explanation of how she fits into the America as Philosophical story. The dismissal of Martha Nussbaum as too professorial (AP 417) though seen from the eyes of someone used to writing for the press, I believe ignores the substantial contribution she has made to social and political philosophy and philosophy in general. On a clearly positive note, I especially appreciated the section on African American women philosophers, the Collegium of Black Women Philosophers, and Anita Allen.

The sections on Native American philosophy and Gays are a bit sparse, partly because so little attention has been paid to these issues by the philosophical establishment. I recall well the Albuquerque meeting of the APA and the unprecedented five sessions on American Indian philosophy. John Ladd is a legendary figure in this area and indeed Scott Pratt's *Native Pragmatism* is the finest book available on the place of Native American thought in American Philosophy. It would have been helpful for Romano to speak more of current development in this area. I also would ask Romano to relate his project to the following comments of Viola Cordova who teaches environmental ethics at the University of Idaho. She says, "Native Americans should play the role of questioning those who are never questioned. They should be disturbers of the peace."⁷ This, I believe, is a central role of philosophy in general. Cordova also warned against the creation of another ethno-philosophy, another campus ghetto in

philosophy. She insists that Native American thinkers should grapple with the Euro-American tradition's unexamined assumptions. Does Romano agree? Is this why he brings those who could be seen as outsiders into America the philosophical? And why does he ignore the increasing inclusion of Mexican and Latin-American philosophy into the philosophical dialogue? This was promoted heavily at the recent meeting of the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy in Portland in March 2016.

I agree wholeheartedly with Romano's plea for philosophy to become more public and inclusive. I would like more detail about what this means. I also applaud Romano's overview of some of many philosophical activities that are challenging the standard image and focus of contemporary academic philosophy, including the Public Philosophy movement; the Philosopher's Café; and the intriguing insights offered by such books as *The Simpsons and Philosophy*, *The Matrix and Philosophy*, *Twilight and Philosophy*, *Aristotle and the Aardvark Go to Washington*, and *Heidegger and a Hippo Walk Through those Pearly Gates* (AP 16-7). I join Romano in challenging contemporary American philosophy, by including Part III, "The Rising Outsiders" (AP 311-463), to continue to expand its path to inclusiveness of all areas, offering these issues and philosophies a more central place in APA programming: Romano also discusses the explosion of cyber philosophy. These sections of his book are worthy of attention and action. However, rather than focusing so much on what outsiders are doing, I will emphasize continual reform within some of the more mainstream areas of philosophy, asking: what shall be our model for philosophical practice?

Romano is correct that the pragmatic tradition holds the key to re-envisioning the nature and role of philosophy both in its academic and public role. One of the problems of mainstream contemporary philosophy in America is that it either has ignored its history or misinterprets the ideas of the classic pragmatists. History tells us that the early pragmatists all argued for a re-envisioning of philosophy and emphasized its public role. Thus, John Dewey and Josiah Royce both criticized academic philosophy for its inward focus on problems of knowledge rather than on the practical problems of contemporary life. Dewey held that philosophy should seek to apply what is known to the intelligent conduct of life, while Royce claimed that "You philosophize when you reflect critically upon

⁷ Cited in AP 446 without reference.

what you are actually doing in your world."⁸ Charles Sanders Peirce criticized the Cartesian paradigm—one that still dominates philosophy and other disciplines today. Further, Peirce and Royce presented a view of science unlike today's scientism, which is the view that science is the only reliable source of knowledge and that the methods of the natural sciences alone yield true knowledge about man and society. This exalts so-called scientific truths above any others and leads toward an excessive reductionism in all fields of human knowledge. In contrast to this view of science as the only valid source of knowledge, Royce and Peirce viewed science as the ideal community of critical inquiry and the scientific process as self-correcting, based on reasonable doubt, problem focus and the recognition that there is no possibility at any time of one's beliefs gaining absolute certainty, whether these beliefs are about physics, biology, or in some other domain. This view of science is probably that of most practicing scientists; it is the philosophers, and even the general public, that have come to hold science as the final arbiter of truth. One role that philosophers need to play today in America is to educate the public both about scientific knowledge and about its reliable but fallible nature.

William James captured the views of Royce, Peirce, and Dewey on critical inquiry in his *Will to Believe* when he argued that one always holds one's beliefs hypothetically and with an open mind, while also drawing on the current wisdom of other areas of inquiry.⁹ Human knowledge, in any domain, is always fallible, and, as Peirce advocated, "never block the road to inquiry."¹⁰ Further inquiry is driven by encountered problems that are genuine (a life problem for the inquirer), forced (needs a resolution now), or momentous (having significant impact on one's life and that of others). Such approach to knowledge seeking, to inquiry, is needed in all of contemporary philosophy today and not just in some areas of study. This is one

aspect of a good model for philosophical practice.

Romano holds up Richard Rorty as one of his models of philosophy. However, Rorty, along with others, misinterprets or ignores certain basic aspects of that classical pragmatist thought. Thus, Rorty provides an inadequate pragmatist model in his emphasis on free-flowing conversation, a conversation that is individual and private and not focused on public issues, debate or argument. In contrast to Romano and Rorty, Dewey, Peirce, and Royce saw critical inquiry, not conversation, as an essential element in a responsible philosophical response to pressing human problems and they, though not ignoring the role of the individual, viewed community as an essential part of such inquiry, contributing significantly to the self-correcting aspect of such a process, as it does in science. Dewey and Royce both criticized the strong individualistic bent of American life. Dewey found the "enormous ineptitude of the individualistic philosophy to meet the needs and direct the factors of the new age."¹¹ He bemoaned a lack of a real democratic public as he writes: "'The new age of human relationships' has no political agencies worthy of it. The democratic public is still largely inchoate and unorganized" (*PIP* 109). For Dewey, it is the idea of community that is at the heart of the democratic life. He proclaims: "Till the Great Society is converted into a Great Community the Public will remain in eclipse" (*PIP* 142).

The pragmatists fully recognized that the individual alone tends to not be self-critical and thus does not change or refine views unless confronted by others with differing ideas. Royce, in fact, defined other selves as "the endless treasury of *more ideas*."¹² The common pragmatic theme of testing habits and beliefs by the new and the different is stated well by William James when he writes: "The individual has a stock of old opinions already, but he meets a new experience that puts them to a strain...He seeks to modify until 'at last some new idea comes up which he can graft upon the ancient stock with a minimum disturbance of the latter, some idea that mediates between the stock and the new experience and runs them into one another most felicitously to make them admit of novelty'."¹³ A key

⁸ Josiah Royce, *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin 1892, p. 1.

⁹ William James, "The Will to Believe and other Essays on Popular Philosophy (1897)," in *The Writings of William James: A Comprehensive Edition*, ed. John J. McDermott. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

¹⁰ Charles Sanders Peirce, "The First Rule of Logic (1899)," in *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, Volume 1*, eds. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1931, p. 135.

¹¹ John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*, Chicago, IL: Swallow Press, 96. [Henceforth cited as *PIP*]

¹² Josiah Royce, *The World and the Individual*, New York, NY: Dover Publications 1959, p. 171.

¹³ William James, *Pragmatism*, Cleveland, OH: Meridian 1955 pp. 50-1.

notion in Dewey's philosophy was the disturbance and changing of habit through encounter with a problem, with anything new. Again, individuals in isolation are not necessarily good philosophers for they are missing the critical feedback of one's fellow philosophers as well as the public in general. Philosophers today need to explore new and creative ways to balance genuine individualism and genuine community and to practice humility and openness to views other than their own.

This brings us back to the inadequacy of Rorty as a model for philosophy. Rorty was an advocate for the private and the individual, and he argued to keep the private, individual domain of life separate from any public engagement of an individual. He offers a view that asks us to be "content to treat the demands of self-creation and of human solidarity as equally valid, yet forever incommensurable."¹⁴ The demands of people to achieve their private ends, their pursuit of endless self-creation need to be clearly separate from demands for social fulfillment, justice and freedom. Rorty focused on developing new creative vocabularies, but we must keep those developed in pursuit of personal fulfillment, self-creation, and self-realization completely distinct from those developed for deliberation about social goods and social and political arrangements. A crucial question to Rorty by his critics was always whether such a separation is viable. Feminist philosophers argue that the public/private divide has differential impact according to factors such as race, class, (dis)ability, and sexual identity as they intersect with gender and that it matters especially in dealing with these issues. They are especially concerned about the rights and protection of women and children, and the disabled.

Who then might be a model for the philosophical practice today? I will return to Isocrates, but now I want to use claims made by Royce, in his memorial piece for James, about William James as one of three representative American philosophers.¹⁵ One characteristic he cites is very relevant to today, namely, that a philosopher must give utterance to philosophical ideas that are characteristic of some stage and of some

aspect of life of one's own people. In Royce's view, James addressed three main areas crucial to his time. The first was the impact of evolutionary thought, particularly the notions of change and process. All four classical pragmatists—Peirce, James, Dewey, and Royce—took evolutionary thought seriously in forming their own views and contributed to the application of evolutionary ideas to other areas of thought and practice. Today there are also strong focuses on evolutionary thought and its wide-ranging applicability for explaining many aspects of human life and thought. Unfortunately, many contemporary philosophers have reverted to an earlier period, already transcended in the period of classical pragmatism; namely, they do not engage in true criticism of these ideas. Rather, there is a group of scholastic-type philosophers who wish to defend and exalt scientific views as authoritative for all areas of life, while dogmatic religionists assert the priority of religious truth and focus. The representative philosopher for today needs to engage in interpreting the implications of evolutionary thought for human living while also promoting a sense of humility about science as a valuable area of critical but self-correcting inquiry. While advocating tolerance and open-mindedness they need to be vocal critics of any form of reductionism about reality and life— all is not explained by physics, or genetics, or computation, or by religion. Each domain may have valuable insight for solving human problems. Here one can also recall the work of psychiatrist/philosopher Karl Jaspers who argued that human beings are distinguished by the fact that they have authentic attributes of existence and transcendence—that is, by their ability to raise questions about themselves and their freedoms that cannot be posed in material or scientific terms, and by their resultant capacity for decisive reversal, self-transformation and transcendence. Jaspers emphasizes the notion of transcendence in concept of the Axial Age, the notion of a time of enigmatic synchronous emergence of cultural innovations and advances, times that occur through human history.¹⁶

In this regard, James, Royce and Dewey played a significant role in developing the new science and discipline of psychology. All three argued that there is no sharp division between emotional and cognitive faculties, and all three combined this psychological insight with their concern for developing an adequate

¹⁴ Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press 1989, p. xv.

¹⁵ The other two are Jonathan Edwards and Ralph Waldo Emerson. See Josiah Royce, "William James and the Philosophy of Life," in *William James and Other Essays on the Philosophy of Life, 1911*, Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press 1969, pp. 3-45, here pp. 4-7. [Henceforth cited as *WJP*]

¹⁶ Karl Jaspers, *The Origin and Goal of History*, transl. Michael Bullock, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953.

ethic for living. Such an ethic had to pay attention to the whole person and to the person as socially embedded as well as to an obligation for the person to act to better their community and society. The emphasis in ethics cannot be exclusively on the rational, on the cognitive but must include the emotional, imaginative and even the spiritual dimension of humans. An increasing body of work is now occurring on the emotional and neurological factors in ethical and other forms of decision-making. Thus, Antonio Damasio has formulated the "Somatic Marker Hypothesis," which proposes a mechanism by which emotional processes can guide (or bias) behavior, particularly decision-making.¹⁷ Philosophers in political and social philosophy argue against the dominant focus on rational debate and consensus in understanding democratic deliberation. However, exclusive emphasis on the rational and on scientism is still very evident in contemporary philosophy and psychology. The developing focus today in psychology is on the brain and neuroscience, and with often exclusive emphasis on brain and on science. Again, dogmatism and reductionism in this discussion must be avoided. It is not only the brain. Cognitive science, for example, has considered the body as peripheral to understanding the nature of mind and cognition. Correcting this view, Anthony Chermo argues that cognition should be described in terms of agent-environment dynamics rather than in terms of computation and such interaction crucially involves the body.¹⁸ This view is a direct descendant of the American naturalist psychology developed by William James and John Dewey. These new views allow philosophy to address issues of our age in creative ways and with relevance to the problems of living; just as Oliver Sacks marvelously describes the human mind in perceiving oneself and has applied it to human problems in life.

Royce discusses a third characteristic of James' time to which he responded as a philosopher, namely, the age of occupation of new territory, economic growth, immigration, and the aftermath of the Civil War (*WJP* 17). Royce further notes that the nation was

"attempting to find itself anew, to redefine its ideals, to retain its moral integrity, and yet to become a world power" (*WJP* 17). This bears some striking similarities to the status of the United States today. Though we are a world power, we seem to be struggling to redefine what that means. In addition, we are facing an immigration crisis demanding solution. And, though we are no longer in a state of civil war, we as a nation have been involved in the civil wars of others, balancing our national security with our economic interests while attempting to advocate human rights and democracy. These efforts have left us viewed with suspicion by many other nations and also raised serious questions for many citizens of the United States. We need to return to the view of the pragmatists that democracy is more than a particular form of government; it is a way of living. Philosophers can rightfully be expected to use their intellectual resources and facilitate fruitful democratic discussion among the public to advocate this view. America truly needs to be an agora, a field of democratic debate and deliberation.

A final aspect of Royce's classification of James as a representative American philosopher is that he meets the criterion of giving "utterance to philosophical ideas which are characteristic of some stage and of some aspect of the spiritual life of his own people" (*WJP* 3-4). Royce says of James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* that it "expresses, better than any sectarian could express, the recent efforts of this spirit to come to an understanding with modern naturalism, and with the new psychology" (*WJP* 24). Further, James' view of religious experience, like those of other pragmatists, is deliberately unconventional and intensely democratic. This is significant today because contemporary philosophy can be given a label of "tone-deafness" to religious experience, similar to what Judith Green has asserted in her assessment of Philip Kitcher.¹⁹ Yet there is no doubt that religion plays a crucial role in our time in various ways, whether it be a more sectarian, authoritarian view represented in Christian and Islamic fundamentalism, or the views of Eastern religions, or the commitment of many intelligent, thoughtful people to some kind of religious experience (in contrast to religious doctrine or membership). Whoever speaks

¹⁷ Antonio R. Damasio, Daniel, and Hanna C. Damasio, "Somatic Markers and the Guidance of Behavior: Theory and Preliminary Testing," in *Frontal Lobe Function and Dysfunction*, eds. Harvey S. Levin, Howard M. Eisenberg, Arthur L. Benton, New York, NY: Oxford University Press 1991, pp. 217-29.

¹⁸ Anthony Chermo, *Embodied Cognitive Science*, Boston, MA: MIT Press, 2011.

¹⁹ Judith Green, "Jamesian Reasonable Belief and Deweyan Religious Communities: Reconstructing Philosophy Pragmatically with Philip Kitcher," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 50/1 (Winter 2014), 69-96. Here pp. 70, 76.

to contemporary Americans, this tone deafness is a distinct liability. In addition, it betrays an ignorance of the history of American philosophy—a history that included a variety of reflections on religious experience including those of Jonathan Edwards, the Transcendentalists, the founding fathers like Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, and, of course, the classical American pragmatists other than James, such as Peirce, Royce, or Dewey. Again, to be tone deaf to religious experience and practice is to be tone deaf to the problems of contemporary America.

One cannot speak of a philosophical America without exploring what the phrase "America" as a term describing United States society might mean. Romano does this through an exploration of the views of two leading political theorists—John Rawls and Michael Walzer. Romano criticizes Rawls for his emphasis on philosophical justification, his image as "the ultimate argument machine and grand systematizer" and his distance from popular culture (*AP* 565). I believe Rawls' flaw is not this but his adoption of the Enlightenment view of the human person as the rational individual chooser, ignoring, as the classical pragmatists did not, the essential role of emotions and other factors in decision-making and deliberation. Furthermore, like Jürgen Habermas, Rawls believes that somehow through pure reason, consensus on public issues could be achieved. Objectors to Rawlsian liberalism and to Habermas' consensus view see the nature of politics in a pluralistic democracy as inherently conflictual, with battles over power and hegemony being the central tasks of democratic struggle. This group believes that the major question any political theory must address is, "How should we deal with irreducible difference?" They want to design democracy so as to optimize the opportunity for people to express their disagreements.

In this regard, Michael Walzer sees America in terms of an irreducible pluralism, an association of citizens, a union of ethnic, racial and religious groups, individuals and groups with varying identities and the freedom to choose which aspect of their identity they wish to emphasize in what context and for what purpose.²⁰ However, Walzer also argues that the adjective "American" in a political sense emphasizes

the values of liberal politics: generosity, tolerance, and accommodating, allowing for the survival and "the enhancement and flourishing of manyness" (*WDM* 635). In his view, "America is still a radically unfinished society, and for now, at least, it makes sense to say that this unfinishedness is one of its distinctive features" (*WDM* 652). Classical pragmatism, of course, emphasizes the openness of all inquiry and of reality itself. And, again, as Romano stresses, attention must be given by philosophers to issues of justice such as discrimination and citizenship rights of immigrants.

Romano cites as his other model of philosophy Isocrates rather than Socrates. Scholars of Isocrates' work argue that he is not a Sophist, for he demands reflection and deliberative choice, not unthinking response.²¹ Romano is correct that this attitude seems that of pragmatism in its emphasis upon creative problem solving; however, Socrates also represents critical dialogue and problem solving. Greek liberalism, unlike that of Rawls and other contemporary political theorists, was fundamentally communal and rhetoric, the art of persuasion, was central to the polis.²² This fits with the emphasis by the pragmatists on continual, communal critical inquiry.

Thus, we have argued that the model for philosophical inquiry today should be one of critical, open, yet humble inquiry about the problem of creating a truly democratic public, a democratic community, and of promoting democracy as a way of life. It should include a critical analysis of contemporary philosophical and public views of science and promote a view of science as a reliable, but not a certain or only path to knowledge. In addition, philosophy must be self-critical, recognizing its tendency to exclude certain important philosophical voices and to neglect its public role. Philosophers should be using their intellectual resources to help address issues of justice including discrimination and citizenship. Finally, today's philosopher can no longer be tone deaf to religious experience and practice for this is to be tone deaf to contributors to the problems of contemporary America as well as perspectives and voices to be included in addressing these problems.

²¹ Cited in *AP* 545. John Poulakos, *Sophistical Rhetoric in Classical Greece*.

²² Carolyn R. Miller, "The Polis as Rhetorical Community," *Rhetorica* 11/3 (Summer 1993) 211-240, here p. 216.

²⁰ Michael Walzer, "What Does It Mean to Be an 'American'?", *Social Research* 71/3 (Fall 2004), 633-654. [Henceforth cited as *WDM*]