Empiricism, Pragmatism, and the Settlement Movement

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THIS PAPER EXAMINES THE so-called settlement movement (a social reform movement in the United States and elsewhere during the Progressive Era, roughly 1890–1920) in order to illustrate what pragmatism is and what it is not. In 1906, Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch proposed an analysis of settlement house methods as part of an explanation of what the settlement movement was and how a settlement house functioned in its respective neighborhood. Because of her emphasis on interpretation and action, and because of the very nature of the settlement movement as a concrete social reform effort with vitally important consequences for anyone directly or indirectly involved, it might be thought that her analysis would be pragmatist in character. I argue that her analysis is decidedly empiricist, not pragmatist, and offer an alternative pragmatist sketch of settlement house methodology.

1. Empiricism vs. Pragmatism

A longer version of this paper would dwell on what empiricism and pragmatism are and how they differ as alternative philosophical "attitudes" or stances. We want to be clear about what the difference is—a difference that Simkhovitch's analysis of settlement house methods is supposed to nicely illustrate. So what is the difference? A quick-and-dirty account of the difference goes something like the following. It is basically a matter of how and where *action* fits into the picture.

Empiricism is an epistemological stance that takes for granted a view of human experience whereby sensory impressions are *introduced* to the thinking mind and are *processed* by way of existing conceptual systems whereby bodily actions in the world are respectively *generated and managed* in accordance with one's beliefs. This is, more or less, a circular process insofar as bodily actions

make changes in the immediate environment and thus, in turn, influence subsequent sensory inputs. Such a brief sketch of empiricist psychology is, of course, overly simple; but the point is that even more sophisticated versions are based on the same three-step core template: (1) sensory inputs are followed by (2) internal processing of such inputs as informative data, followed by (3) subsequent outputs in the form of bodily actions. More simply still: inputs are followed by internal processes which then yield outputs. Sensation informs thinking which leads then to action. We may wave our hands quickly or slowly in big or small circles as we describe this picture; but that is the basic empiricist picture of the arc of experience that has come down to us from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British empiricism, that was put to use in the psychophysical methodology of the "New Psychology" in the nineteenth century (Fechner; Wundt), and that constrained the verificationist presuppositions of logical positivism (Carnap) early in the twentieth century.

Pragmatism, originally formulated as a method for clarifying the meanings of one's terms, is a philosophical stance with a view of human experience that gives actions a more fundamental role than does an empiricist stance. Arguably, Peirce's pragmatic maxim (EP 1:132) is the key to understanding what pragmatism is; and there are at least two ways to read this maxim (so that there are multiple ways to characterize pragmatism, depending on how one weighs and relates these different readings). Namely, the pragmatic maxim may be given either an operationalist or an inferentialist reading. This ambiguity is the reflection of a view of human experience that, on one hand, is grounded in an interactive account of "sensory" inputs. On the other hand, human experience is answerable to systemic consequences of holding particular beliefs, calling for continual management of one's beliefs and their bearings on changing circumstances. These are two different conceptions of action—one that pertains to our capabilities to detect what our circumstances are by virtue of a vital interactive embeddedness in the world, and one that pertains to our capacity to alter our circumstances as the need arises. The one conception of action emphasizes interactions with objects falling under given concepts—looking for operational, evidence-oriented accounts of word meaning (for example, saying what the word "hard" means by saying how hard things would react to various interactions with them, etc.). The other conception of action emphasizes repercussions of beliefs upon other beliefs and upon subsequent conduct that such repercussions entail—basing an account of "pragmatic" meaning on a practice-oriented theory of belief (for example, saying what the word "God" means by saying how belief in such a thing affects one's way of life, how one conducts one's life in light of that belief, etc.).

For example, Peirce briefly discusses the concepts of flesh, blood, bread, and wine, as implicated in the doctrine of transubstantiation associated with the Christian rite of "Holy Communion." On an operationalist reading of the pragmatic maxim, a *clear* articulation of the meanings of the words "wine" and "blood" in terms of sensible results of, for example, activities of chemical analysis would entail that "to talk of something as having all of the sensible characteristics of wine, yet being in reality blood, is senseless jargon" (EP 1:131). Thus, it is meaningless on this score to say that something that is wine-like in every sensible respect is nevertheless blood. On the other hand, such a statement is *not* meaningless on an inferentialist score in that belief in transubstantiation has consequences (practical bearings) in light of other related beliefs, whether regarded as a necessary condition for the acceptance of divine grace or merely as an expression of faith. The larger point is that beliefs may be meaningful on either operationalist or inferentialist grounds alone, though for the most part, our beliefs are meaningful in both senses together.

The relationship between operationalist and inferentialist readings of the pragmatic maxim is not the main focus here. The more pressing question for now concerns the difference between *empiricism* in Fechner's or Carnap's classic sense and *pragmatism* as reflected in Peirce's original ambiguous statement of the pragmatic maxim. In this paper, then, we will look at a particular piece of history that readily illustrates this difference, though the distinction between operationalist and inferentialist readings of the pragmatic maxim will also become more apparent as we proceed.

The example we want to look at is taken from the prehistory of sociology in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century and at the start of the twentieth. Specifically, we will look at the settlement movement and examine the role and function of a settlement house in its respective neighborhood, focusing specifically on an attempt by Simkhovitch to articulate a principled account of the organization of settlement house activities. Simkhovitch's analysis is a clear instance of classical empiricism. It is inadequate (moreover) in that it ignores essential features of settlement house activities that an alternative pragmatist analysis can easily accommodate. Empiricism and pragmatism may thus be starkly contrasted by considering the case of participant observation in the social and behavioral sciences. Essentially, a passively-detached-spectator theory of observation cannot accommodate the interactive nature of observation in such cases, whereas Peirce's operationalist pragmatism easily can. The contrast between these two analyses sheds light on what pragmatism is by accenting what more it is besides mere empiricism.

2. The Settlement Movement

An operationalist reading of the pragmatic maxim emphasizes the possibility of sensible *evidence* as a necessary component of the constitution of our concepts of things in the world. But it is not enough to focus just on evidence. Evidence is what it is depending not only on its inferential role as such but also essentially on *how* it is acquired. In particular, observation is active—indeed, it is *inter*active (participatory, etc.). The following illustration makes this point in more specific terms pertaining to the social sciences. It is peculiar that various attempts so far to explain such examples have failed to convey their value as illustrations of a pragmatist methodology, given that the operational and inferential trappings of pragmatism are so obviously present.

The example, namely, is the body of methods employed by the settlement movement in the United States at the end of the nineteenth century and early in the twentieth century. It will take a few paragraphs first to describe the settlement movement as a kind of reform movement that directly influenced the emergence of sociology as a stand-alone scientific discipline (Deegan; Hull-House Residents). I will then look at one particular attempt (Simkhovitch) to analyze its methods of operation as an agency for social reform. While the latter analysis may appeal to some proponents of pragmatism by virtue of the fact that the settlement movement was dealing with "consequential" matters of vital importance for all concerned, I want to argue that that analysis is not pragmatist at all. At bottom, it is merely the product of a kind of classical empiricism. On the contrary, the settlement movement can be understood as quintessentially pragmatist in its methods. Simkhovitch's mistaken analysis thus will allow us to highlight the difference between classical pragmatism and classical empiricism.

Specifically, consider the nature and role of *participant observation* in the social sciences and in cultural anthropology in particular. Contemporary cultural anthropology has successively honed participant observation as a key research methodology. The method grew out of the ethnographic fieldwork of social anthropologists, including Boas and his students in the United States, and Malinowski and his students in Britain. Ethnographic fieldwork and participant observation also played an important role in the 1920s and 1930s in early studies of city environments by the Chicago School (or Ecological School) of urban sociology. Boas was committed to the notion that, as a method of collecting data, an anthropologist should reside for an extended period of time among the people being researched, conducting research in the native language and in collaboration with native researchers. Generally

speaking, the aim of the participant observation method is to acquire familiarity with a given group of people by participating for an extended time in their normal life activities in their natural environment.

Some twenty or so years prior to the beginnings of academic recognition and development of the method of participant observation, similar methods were already being utilized throughout the Progressive Era (roughly 1890 to 1920) in the settlement (house) movement, first in the 1880s in England (particularly Toynbee Hall in London's East End slums) and from the late 1880s to 1920 or so in the United States. The latter included Chicago's Hull-House, founded in 1889 by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, and the Henry Street Settlement in New York, founded in 1893 by Lillian Wald. These and other settlement houses (for example, Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, founded in 1894, and University Settlement House, the oldest in the United States) were important sites for Progressive Era reform. That is, progressivism was largely a social reform movement, championed by mostly middle- and upper-class individuals advocating a wide range of economic, political, social, and moral reforms in response to major social and cultural changes introduced by industrialization.

The settlement movement in the United States was typically aimed at serving immigrant communities in larger urban centers like Chicago and New York. Settlement houses were a kind of nonprofit agency that addressed the needs of immigrants or urban poor. "The name 'settlement house' came from the idea that reformers, often well-educated and wealthy individuals, 'settled,' or resided, in the area they served, in the house or agency building itself" (Tuennerman-Kaplan 753). This notion of residing with a community for an extended period of time (in this case, as an integral part of serving that community) is, as we have seen, a key feature of the participant observation method in cultural anthropology.

Undeniably, the settlement movement was largely supported and promoted not as scientific research but as a kind of charitable activity. Settlement houses were centers for neighborhood social services and reform activities aimed at bridging gaps between social classes and at solving social problems endemic to tenement living, "responding to an array of urban social problems stemming from massive immigration and overcrowding, unrestrained capitalism, and the severe economic depression of 1893. . . . Settlement workers were optimistic that a blend of residence, research, and reform would offset the major social ills of the modern age" (Abrams 762).

As agencies for social reform, settlement houses focused less on giving aid to individuals and more on identifying and eliminating shared problems

within their neighborhoods and beyond. Charitable motivations aside (but probably never being able to shake a reputation as do-gooder outsiders), practitioners of the settlement movement were continually critiquing their own practices, speculating about what they should be doing, and deliberating about how better to do it.

In particular, Jane Addams was concerned from her earliest days at Hull-House to clarify what the settlement movement was, to dispel persistent misconceptions but also perhaps to explain something that even she did not fully comprehend and yet probably knew as well or better than anyone could know. She emphasized the *experimental* nature of settlement house activities, requiring a flexible and tolerant open-mindedness free of any particular agenda other than a readiness "to arouse and interpret the public opinion of their neighborhood" (Elshtain 96). She downplayed philanthropy in favor simply of good citizenship. She emphasized the degree to which settlement residents functioned as citizens of their neighborhood. Likewise, a settlement house, in her view, had a peculiar status that to some extent set it apart in the neighborhood as a special problem-solving agency, and yet the best methods available to it for gathering the information that it needed in order to exercise this function were more or less just the methods of ordinary good citizenship.

One can see in Addams's writings a certain degree of ambivalence as to whether the settlement movement was science or charity, sociology or social work. Her writings managed to blend the one into the other by way of some sophisticated insights into the "perplexing" nature of *participant observation*. Consider her call for "scientific patience in the accumulation of facts and the steady holding of [one's] sympathies as one of the best instruments for that accumulation" (Elshtain 25–26). This is hardly what one would hear in a chemistry laboratory, not because it does not have scientific import but because of the fact that we are now talking about human relations and social interactions—interactions that may "pull upon one's sympathies" (Elshtain 72). (In a chemistry lab, one would want to have rather a steady hand and a penchant for cleanliness and accurate measurement.) Addams is all too aware of the tension between maintaining impartial objectivity versus *going native*, as it were, in the face of the "sorrow and perplexity" that participant observation often involves. Going native is not the answer; and yet giving oneself over to the "emotional incentive" of the "charitable relationship" is just what makes possible a viable and valid accumulation of facts in the course of being "emptied of all conceit of opinion and all self-assertion, . . . ready to arouse and interpret the public opinion of [one's] neighborhood," as she puts it (Elshtain 26).

But why be ready to arouse and interpret public opinion? Our main concern here is pragmatism, particularly as reflected in an operationalist reading of the pragmatic maxim. Participant observation as practiced in the settlement movement was a perplexing, emotionally charged affair that nevertheless need not for those reasons compromise the possibility of impartial, objective accumulation of facts. The notion of being ready to "interpret the public opinion of one's neighborhood," meanwhile, moves us toward inferentialist readings of the pragmatic maxim. Looking more widely beyond the operations of observation as such, the notion of *interpretation* introduces a broader array of concerns—the kind of concerns, as a matter of fact, that many self-professed pragmatists might prefer to dwell on. The function of a settlement house in a given neighborhood was not just to accumulate facts but also to help institute some manner of "reform," to craft solutions, when those facts yielded evidence of present or impending problems for the neighborhood. Indeed, the whole idea of social reform suggests activities that are more like engineering than pure science. Unlike the activities of a contemporary engineering agency like NASA, for example, that both exploits and advances the progress of science, the activities of the settlement movement in its day probably gave more to social science than it got from it, particularly since it predated the very existence of sociology as a viable stand-alone science. These contributions to science included not just valuable insights concerning participant observation. Hull-House residents in particular were early pioneers in the use of quantitative statistical methods in sociology, perfecting a method of mapping demographic information about urban populations according to their geographic distribution (Hull-House Residents; Deegan). In this role, they were social engineers advancing the goals of pure science.

The settlement movement thus successfully combined science and service. Conflicting priorities between these two concerns alone would have generated a bit of critical self-examination as to the proper role of a settlement house in a respective neighborhood. As evidence of an attempt to bring some sort of common organizational clarity to bear, one finds references to the so-called "three Rs" of the settlement movement: "residence, research, and reform" (Trattner; Tuennerman-Kaplan; Abrams; *Answers.com*). It is hard to determine where such a slogan originated, but it seems to have hit the mark as an organizational ideal, succinctly summarizing in broad strokes some defining features of settlement house practices.

The notion of *residence* was essentially the idea behind the method of participant observation, requiring that settlement workers live (dwell, participate, interact) in the neighborhoods they served.

The notion of *reform* pointed to the settlement's mission to recognize problems in its neighborhood and to devise solutions to those problems with the aim of improving living and working conditions in the neighborhood. Such solutions might be in the form of legislation if not in the form of direct services such as child care, libraries, cultural programs, nursing services, after-school clubs, or job training (to name just a few examples).

The notion of *research* involved a critical concern for developing ways to identify and understand problems so as to facilitate implementation of neighborhood activities designed to eliminate those problems. Implicit in the very notion of accumulating hard *facts*, the notion of *interpretation* becomes centrally important in the face of a persistent need for flexible and innovative problem solving. Creative design of new and effective solutions calls for insightful interpretation of problematic situations and of what the respective consequences may be of various ways of readjusting neighborhood activities to deal with those circumstances. Fischer argues that Addams identified the settlement's function in this setting *primarily* in terms of reciprocal interpretation—"clarifying and making accessible American institutions to immigrants" as well as "explaining immigrant customs and experiences to non-immigrant Americans" (Fischer 1). "The Settlement is valuable as an information and interpretation bureau. . . . The attempt to interpret opposing forces to each other will long remain a function of the settlement, unsatisfactory and difficult as the role often becomes" (Addams, *Twenty Years* 99, 134). "Her aim throughout was to encourage sympathetic understanding among disparate groups and thereby foster growth toward social democracy" (Fischer 1).

Fischer discusses this theme of interpretation at some length, initially by way of examining Addams's attempt (in "Chicago Settlements") to explain the actions she and others undertook in response to the Chicago police chief's shooting of a Russian-Jewish immigrant, Lazarus Averbuch, an alleged assassin and anarchist, at a time and place—Chicago in 1908—when anarchists and anarchism were perceived by many to be as much of a clear and present danger to the country's security as "terrorists and terrorism" are so perceived today. I will not repeat Fischer's discussion except to pick out some choice claims and observations that briefly summarize Addams's conception of the settlement's interpretive function as a professional duty.

Fischer emphasizes early in her paper that Hull-House, as Addams saw it, was first and foremost a neighborhood residence where "neighborliness" entails *duties of citizenship*, requires *sympathy* as the primary mode of social interaction, and promotes *fellowship* as the means for sustaining social relationships (Fischer 2). *Interpretation* on many levels—of neighbors to one

another, of the neighborhood to the larger community and vice versa—was a primary feature of settlement residents' work (Fischer 4). Competence and authority to fulfill such a role could only be "obtained from a standpoint of immersion in a group, so that sociological data is sympathetically cast within the context of the group's aspirations, dreams, and modes of thought and feeling" (Fischer 10).

In performing this interpretive function, settlement house activities were notably different from charitable social work. As Fischer puts it, "'diagnosis' and 'treatment,' as sought by charity workers, did not exist in settlement workers' vocabulary" (6). On the surface, in some instances, settlement residents' work might be difficult to distinguish from charitable work; but the residents regarded what they did simply as "neighborhood citizenship," attempting to show by example that all citizens of a neighborhood "were responsible for improving their neighborhoods on their own initiative" (Fischer 9).

A settlement house was thus in a position to "use its advantage of residence as a local force for civic reconstruction," as Addams herself put it (Fischer 9). At the same time, Addams found that her own perceptions and understanding were changing as a result of being swept up in the "cares and joys, desires and frustrations, needs and generosities" of the people in the neighborhood in which she lived. The reconstruction thus was mutual: "From such neighborly fellowship, personalities were transformed, and joint activity was a natural outgrowth" (Fischer 8).

For the record, to put it somewhat abstractly, Fischer's discussion clearly links the validity and effectiveness of interpretation to properly executed participant observation, so to speak, so that an interpreter of neighborhood activities, to be competent as such, would have to be interactively embedded in the neighborhood. Note, in this regard, that the analogy between charity workers and physicians is not appropriate for settlement workers since the latter are not like doctors observing live patients from a distance.

This is all interesting for its own sake; but what is even more interesting for present purposes is Fischer's subsequent discussion of other attempts, besides those of Addams, to analyze and explain settlement movement methods. One of these in particular was an attempt by Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch in 1906 to explain settlement work in terms of three *stages*. This three-stage analysis is in fact the target we have been aiming at in the present discussion of the settlement movement insofar as it clearly exhibits a mistaken *empiricist* analysis of a kind of life and experience that is better understood in *pragmatist* terms. Looking at its details helps to highlight more clearly just what the difference is.

For Simkhovitch, like Addams, settlement work was primarily "a method of living, through which fine-grained knowledge of the neighborhood gave authority to interpretation" (Fischer 11). Her three stages of settlement organization were labeled and described as follows:

> *Social impressionism:*
> The first stage . . . is the pouring in of the vivid life about one upon the sensitive and waiting personality. Group impressions then come into existence. A group must get a more varied, a more complex and a truer picture of life than any one individual can hope to obtain. (Simkhovitch 568)

> *Interpretation:*
> [In the second stage,] the settlement group has to impart what it knows—not the intimate confidences which belong to one person alone—but it has to tell what it finds of virtue and beauty, of hampered life, of tragic economic conditions. It may tell this in a thousand different ways. (Simkhovitch 568)

> *Action:*
> To act on the basis of the knowledge gained is the purpose of the settlement. Without such action the life of the settlement is sterile; it is only an interesting and highly educational life for the residents. . . . There are countless methods by which [positive action] can be brought about. It is not in the least essential that the settlement itself shall do the work. Its responsibility is only to see that it gets done. [That] will depend on the environment in the given case. (Simkhovitch 568)

We have here a description of the settlement house residents as a coherent group, functioning like a single participant observer and agent of change. This three-stage description of their method, though, is oddly familiar: the soaking in of impressions by the waiting observer is followed by appropriate actions of the observer upon the environment as mediated by reflection upon and interpretation of those impressions.

> What a settlement should seek to undertake depends then upon a whole series of other social phenomena. But the underlying method remains the same and we hold the key to the genuineness of the settlement by the test of this method. If it be the simplest group in the tiniest house, or if it be a large group occupying a whole block of imposing buildings with hundreds of activities, *it is in both cases a settlement if whatever action takes place is based on the knowledge gained by the group through its own impressions of the surrounding life.* (Simkhovitch 568–69)

It is pretty clear from the latter summary statement and from Simkhovitch's descriptions of each of the three stages that she has given us nothing other than a kind of classical empiricism (applied to a group of settlement residents working together as a single collective agent). Everything else she says, other than this three-stage analysis, points to the importance of, for example, being "in vital touch" with neighborhood life, or of the identification of settlement life with the life of the neighborhood—an interactive immersion, that is, in the life of the neighborhood. Almost anything Addams or Simkhovitch or other proponents of the settlement movement have said suggests pragmatism at work in the trenches. Simkhovitch's three-stage analysis of this scenario, on the other hand, depicts the settlement as a passively detached spectator—a loving, caring, sympathetic, neighborly, committed, honest, objective passively detached spectator, acting in the world only in a way that classical empiricism would characterize such involvement. (Apparently the hand of empiricism weighs heavily on our imaginations even when the evidence runs so forcibly against it.)

But what exactly is the problem here? If Simkhovitch's classical empiricism is not acceptable, what is the pragmatist alternative? The first big hint that Simkhovitch's analysis is on the wrong track is the fact that she has made the same kind of mistake that Carnap made by focusing at bottom merely on "impressions" (that is, "evidence") without properly accommodating the different kinds of interactive means by which such impressions may be acquired (Putnam 69–71). *Action* comes into Simkhovitch's picture only at a third stage, whereas we have seen throughout our account of settlement house activities that the first stage requires an *interactive* immersion in neighborhood life that enables a kind of *participatory* observation. She says as much, and yet it falls through the holes of her analytical net. Action—interaction, participation—should be there in the first stage. Impressions are the results of the operations of participation in the life activities of the neighborhood. Third-stage activities are something else altogether, namely, the kind of adjustments and readjustments of the life activities of the neighborhood ("reforms" based on settled agenda) that inferentialist pragmatism deals with. That is what a dual reading of the pragmatic maxim would have us believe anyway.

So what might a pragmatist analysis of settlement organization look like? It would be better perhaps to frame such an analysis in terms of the three Rs of the settlement movement. Something like the following is what Simkhovitch should have said, putting aside the notion of "stages" and working instead in terms of three coexisting aspects or features of settlement organization:

Residence: The foundation of settlement work is active immersion in

the life of the neighborhood. Where well-intentioned charity workers come to a neighborhood with ready-made solutions to pre-established problems (often a useful and important thing to do, for example, in the aftermath of large-scale natural disasters), settlement workers become integral parts (active "long-dwelling" citizens) of the neighborhood—engaging in the life of the neighborhood more or less on its own terms as a way, first, of establishing baselines for what is factually "normal." This is a matter of embracing and participating in the ethos and pathos of the neighborhood just to be able to observe what, in fact, neighborhood life is like. This first function of "residence" is to foster opportunities to observe neighborhood life honestly and objectively, free of preconceptions. A second function of residence in the neighborhood is to utilize these opportunities of observation, given an always-developing sense of what is normal and not normal, to discern and highlight the neighborhood's shared *problems* on its (the neighborhood's) own terms—to see (feel, know) these problems as citizens of the neighborhood see (feel, know) them. One can be in a position to do this by virtue of being an engaged and responsible citizen of the neighborhood.

Research: With a sense of what the neighborhood's problems are, as felt and owned by the neighborhood itself, efforts can be made to discover efficient and effective ways to solve them. Almost any citizen will bring unique perspectives and resources to bear in such efforts. The settlement movement is premised on the assumption that settlement residents come to neighborhoods with particularly useful perspectives and potentially powerful resources that would otherwise not be available from within a poor urban neighborhood by itself in the absence of the settlement residents. Nevertheless, settlement workers do not come to a neighborhood with ready-made solutions but rather, presumably, with enhanced capacities to assist a neighborhood in acknowledging, understanding, and solving its own problems—not to dole out solutions, but to enhance the neighborhood's capacities to conceive, test, and implement its own solutions. As noted earlier, a capacity for insightful *interpretation* is crucial in the face of a persistent need for flexible and innovative *problem solving*. Creative intelligence in the design of efficient and effective solutions to clear and present neighborhood problems requires interpretation of problematic situations and of possible consequences of readjusting neighborhood activities in various ways to deal with such situations. A settlement house may enhance potentials for fostering such intelligence—as a repository of information about reusable techniques and solutions to recurrent problems, as a facilitator of discourse aimed at fathoming given problems, as a source of expertise relevant to given problems, as an organizer of local

expertise, as a facilitator of communication between the neighborhood and larger communities, as muscle to implement viable solutions formulated by the neighborhood at large, and so forth.

Reform: The life of a neighborhood, like life in general, is dynamic. Besides recognizing problems emerging in an ongoing flux of activities and designing solutions to those problems, the settlement's mission is to aid in the implementation of such solutions with the aim of improving living and working conditions in the neighborhood. Such solutions might be in the form of legislation if not in the form of more direct services like child care, cultural programs, nursing services, job training, and the like. Where Simkhovitch speaks simply of action at this stage, the emphasis should rather be on reform as *adjustment* and *readjustment* of the dynamics of neighborhood life. This is indeed a kind of action, but in the sense of implementing overall programs for change in the way lives are lived, as a way of solving recognized problems inherent in current ways that lives are lived. This is action of a sort that is distinguishable from actions inherent in one's participation in "normal" neighborhood life.

On this account, *residence* is a kind of embedded interaction aimed primarily at being informed about the facts of neighborhood life. *Reform* is a kind of action aimed at changing those facts. For that matter, *research* is itself a kind of intermediate reflective, deliberative (inter)activity aimed at interpreting the facts and scoping out alternative avenues of reform. On this view, the ambiguity of the words "action" and "interaction" can be rather problematic when one fails to notice it.

A simple example might help at this point.

(1) Suppose that, after residing in a given immigrant community for a while, settlement residents detect that a notable proportion of the neighborhood children to varying degrees are becoming unduly lethargic by comparison with children elsewhere of comparable ages. That is a *problem*—one whose emergence might be too subtle to notice except as a consequence of living in the neighborhood for long enough to see it.

(2) Openly or discreetly, settlement residents would proceed to look for possible explanations (reasons, causes). Is the lethargy evidence of psychological or physical abuse? Substance abuse? Dietary deficiencies? Environmental toxins? An infectious disease? One particular role of the settlement house as a whole is that of wielding a broader sense of what the alternatives may be, or at least of how to discover what they are. The residents may seek out medical and other expert advice. They may look for similarities among the children and their living conditions. They may look more broadly at other neighbor-

hoods to see if it is not just a local problem. They will deliberate, explore, observe, and experiment, in order to zero in on the cause or causes so that they can also explore possible solutions. These kinds of activities constitute *research*. Suppose then that the root cause is found to be malnutrition, even among the more well-to-do families, due to certain dietary customs that do not easily survive transplantation to this country and clime from other parts of the planet.

(3) The real solution to the problem would be to alter (adjust, reform) dietary practices of the community. In the short run, as a temporary measure, one might pursue direct nutritional intervention (financing school lunches, distributing food supplements, etc.). Ultimately, though, with the long term in view, the settlement house might also establish classes in nutrition for parents as a way of adjusting established dietary habits. This is an effort at *reform*—an effort to change what is normal—not merely a treatment of symptoms.

The difference between a pragmatist analysis of settlement organization and an empiricist analysis thus hinges on how we think about action. There are two kinds, two levels, of action here. The difference between the interactions required by "residence" and the adjustments that constitute "reform" are not unlike the distinction between the mechanics of operating an automobile (steering, accelerating, braking, beeping the horn, etc.) versus actually driving an automobile in the midst of changing road conditions (dealing with curves in the road, intersections, other traffic, etc.). One must be able to do the former to do the latter properly (thus the necessity of interactive "residence" in the driver's seat in a car on a road); but one could be capable of the former without a clue or any experience concerning the latter. These are two different kinds of action that should not be confused one for the other. Likewise, one may know how to move all of the pieces on a chessboard but still not be able to play chess. Peirce drew a similar distinction between playing musical notes versus playing melodies (EP 1:128). The interactions of residence and the changes brought about by reform are quite different in an analogous way. Inferentialist pragmatism tends to focus on the activities and results of "reform." Operationalist pragmatism highlights the activities and results of "residence."

It should be clear, given the previous discussion, that one cannot simply tack discussions of applications and their consequences onto presentations of existing philosophical positions (e.g., classical empiricism) as if that were all there is to embracing philosophical pragmatism. It may indeed be expedient, prudent, or otherwise useful if not financially lucrative for anyone in any profession to address real-world vital concerns in science, engineering,

politics, religion, law, medicine, economics, or wherever. This is true of academic philosophy as a profession. It would be silly to say that one cannot pursue the business of academic philosophy as usual and then simply append or superimpose concerns for real-world applications onto one's work because it is professionally expedient to do so. The point, rather, is that this strategy by itself will, in many cases, have nothing to do with philosophical pragmatism. To be philosophically pragmatist (as opposed to being merely professionally prudent), it will be necessary in many cases to start over from scratch to reformulate basic concepts and assumptions along pragmatist lines, specifically in accordance with operationalist and inferentialist readings of the pragmatic maxim.

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