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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

James and Carnap on philosophical systems and the role of temperaments

Shawn Simpson

Department of Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

Correspondence
Shawn Simpson, Department of Philosophy, The Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, 1017 Cathedral of Learning, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, USA
Email: sms461@pitt.edu

Abstract

The relationship between American pragmatism and logical empiricism is complicated at best. The received view is that by around the late 1930s or early 1940s pragmatism had been replaced, supplanted, or eclipsed by the younger and more logic-oriented form of empiricism developed in interwar Vienna. Recently, however, this picture has been challenged, and this paper offers further reasons for thinking that the received view is inadequate. Through a critical examination of William James's *Pragmatism* and "The Sentiment of Rationality" and Rudolf Carnap's "Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language" and other works, the paper builds a case for the existence of a rather striking correspondence between the work of one of pragmatism's most vaunted figures and the thought of logical empiricism's most famous advocate. Not only were both philosophers interested in what might be called metaphilosophy or the psychology of philosophy, both held very similar deflationary views.

KEYWORDS

attitude, Carnap, James, metaphilosophy, pragmatism, temperaments, theory choice

1 | THE RECEIVED VIEW

The received view of the relationship between American pragmatism and logical empiricism often appears to be that, despite John Dewey's productivity during the first half of the twentieth century, by the late 1930s or early 1940s pragmatism had been *replaced*, *supplanted*, or *eclipsed* by the younger and more logic-oriented form of empiricism developed in interwar Vienna. The terms appearing in this description—supplanted, replaced, eclipsed—suggest a lack of continuity or common purpose between the two traditions. Indeed, perhaps save for a high regard for the scientific enterprise and a shared commitment to at least some form of a verification theory of meaning, the two programs are often considered mostly disconnected philosophical endeavors. Although this characterization is in some ways apt, the two traditions have more in common than is usually thought.

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Recently work has been done revealing overlap between the two traditions later in their development, especially in the C. I. Lewis–Dewey–Ernest Nagel stage.[1] Cheryl Misak's recent book *Cambridge Pragmatism* looks at the connection between American pragmatism and the British philosopher Frank Ramsey. In this paper, I look at what I see as one area of overlap between two key exponents of the two schools: William James and Rudolf Carnap. Their views on the nature of philosophy and philosophical theorizing share some striking similarities. In the latter half of the paper, I turn my attention to possible reasons for this resemblance, sketching out the lines of mutual contact and influence.[2]

2 | JAMES

In his book *Pragmatism* and his 1879 essay "The Sentiment of Rationality," William James engages in a sort of *psychology of philosophy*; that is to say, he provides what is best described as a psychological and metaphilosophical account of the nature of philosophical practice. Either way, this was a sort of bird's-eye-view endeavor James was engaged in. He wanted to explain why it is that philosophy is marked by so much apparently intractable disagreement, why we see such a menagerie of wildly varying philosophical systems, and why philosophers end up developing and defending the metaphysical theories they do. Rather than provide a complete summary of *Pragmatism* and "Sentiment" here, I'll focus just on what James has to say about strictly metaphilosophical issues in these works.

In *Pragmatism*, James begins by describing what a philosophy is (this is his way of using the word). As James puts it, a philosophy is something each of us has, not necessarily something we learn from books.[3] Not a technical matter, our philosophy is our "more or less dumb sense of what life honestly and deeply means"; it is our unique way of just "seeing and feeling the total push and pressure of the cosmos" (1979, 6).

James then goes on to say that the great diversity of philosophical systems is a result of the diversity of what he calls individual *temperaments*.[4] As James sees it, although ideally it is perhaps empirical premises or self-evident truths that lead philosophers to their conclusions or to the acceptance of some philosophical theory, in reality it is philosophers' temperaments that convince them more than any strictly objective premises. As James puts it, a person's temperament "loads the evidence for him one way or the other" (1979, 7). Put slightly differently, we might say a person's temperament acts as his "starting premise." As if this isn't disheartening enough, James goes on to say that philosophers use solely "impersonal" premises in their arguments only because temperaments are not conventionally recognized reasons. "There arises thus a certain insincerity in our philosophic discussions: the potentest of all our premises is never mentioned" (1979, 8).

Of course, this is not to say individual theories are unanswerable to arguments or the results from some or other scientific field. This is just to say that explicit argumentation can only do so much to move people's opinions or change their minds. Temperaments make people selective about how they weigh arguments and which arguments they take seriously; they also cause people to become emotionally invested in their own philosophies. To be clear, James isn't trying to say that a person's temperament *alone* determines their philosophy, or that a certain philosophy is accepted by someone *only* because it aligns or meshes with their temperament. Rather, a person's temperament might be best thought of as quite heavily "loading the dice."[5]

[1] See Richardson 2003, Limbeck-Lilienau 2012, and Pihlström, Stadler, and Weidtmann 2017.

[2] Some authors make a distinction between logical positivism and logical empiricism. Others argue that no legitimate line between supposed factions or circles can be drawn (Uebel 2013). In this paper, I use the terms interchangeably to refer to the broader movement.

[3] In fact, James says that if a philosophy is somehow received through books at all, then it is only partly so.

[4] As Godfrey-Smith (2007) notes, "temperament" is a technical term for James. And although James never provides an explicit definition of the term, what he's doing is analyzing philosophical commitment in terms of individual temperaments. See Leary 2021 for a recent look at James's use of temperaments.

[5] My thanks to an anonymous referee for suggesting this phrase and clarification.

In "Sentiment," James goes on to say what *determines* a person's temperament: it's the balance in a person between two competing "passions" or "cravings."[6] On the one hand, there's the passion for "simplification," "unity," and "parsimony"—we want ever more encompassing theories, theories reducing the number of causes and unifying disparate happenings (1897, 65). On the other hand, there's what James calls the craving for "distinguishing" and "particulars"—we want to be acquainted with the more basic elements of things, not just the abstract unity (1897, 66).

The strength of each craving differs across individuals, and a philosopher's system may do too much for one craving while doing for another too little. For example, James thinks Hume's philosophy of "looseness and separateness" overemphasizes discrete parts and simple particulars, whereas Spinoza's unity of all things in one substance places too much emphasis on unification and "harmony" (1897, 67). For someone with a more moderate mixture of these cravings, says James, neither of these systems will be temperamentally satisfactory.

In *Pragmatism*, the story is much the same, though handled slightly differently. Here again James talks about temperaments, but now about the "empiricist" temperament and the "rationalist" temperament. Among other things, the empiricist temperament is marked by "pluralistic," "materialistic," and "fatalist" "traits," the rationalist temperament by "monistic," "religious," and "optimistic" ones.

As Peter Godfrey-Smith (2007) points out, the larger story James is telling is a sort of *deflationary* account of philosophical choice and theorizing. It suggests that philosophers defend or develop the theory they do simply because it "suits" or "affirms" their particular temperament. James writes: "Idealism will be chosen by a man of one emotional constitution, materialism by another" (1897, 90). This is something most philosophers today would probably deny. Another thing philosophical systems appear to be doing here is satisfying temperamental or emotional needs and cravings. In a sense their creation might also serve as a tool for bringing about inner stability, one might say perhaps in a way similar to how scientific investigation ameliorates the "irritation of doubt" in Charles Peirce's "The Fixation of Belief" (1877, 6). Some Peirceans might, however, argue that Peirce's "irritation of doubt" does not reflect an "emotional need" and that this is simply another example of James taking one of Peirce's ideas and expanding it in a way that Peirce wouldn't have endorsed.

The foregoing seems to suggest that beyond a temperament-satisfying role, philosophical systems might also act as *expressions* or *representations* of individual temperamental idiosyncrasies. In fact, some of what James says in *Pragmatism* tends to support such an interpretation. In lecture 1, he notes that the temperaments described affect domains other than philosophy, including (but not limited to) government, literature, and art. He writes: "In manners we find formalists and free-and-easy persons. In government, authoritarians and anarchists. In literature, purists or academicals, and realists. In art, classics and romantics. You recognize these contrasts as familiar; well, in philosophy we have a very similar contrast expressed in the pair of terms 'rationalist' and 'empiricist,' 'empiricist' meaning your lover of facts in all their crude variety, 'rationalist' meaning your devotee to abstract and eternal principles" (1979, 8).

So just as a person's temperament determines what kind of philosophical system they create, so too a person's temperament determines the style of things they like, such as the art or music they prefer. The question of interest, then, is whether, just as an artist's work is in some sense an expression of her temperament, a philosophical system is in some sense a reflection or expression of the temperament of its creator. This seems to be at least *part* of what James is saying. Consider the following words from lecture 1: "What the system pretends to be is a picture of the great universe of God. What it is—and oh so flagrantly!—is the revelation of how intensely odd the personal flavor of some fellow creature is" (1979, 19).

In the third and fourth lectures of *Pragmatism*, however, James changes his tone a bit. He argues that philosophical systems have at least one other role in our lives, and a substantial one at that. One might think the "pragmatic maxim" he proposes in the second lecture rules this out. In fact,

[6]But why even think that we have these "temperaments"? Unfortunately, James doesn't say. The best response, I think, is that they're simply an inference to the best explanation. "People just have these temperaments," James might say. "What else could explain this behavior?" Unfortunately, James also neglects to say why we have the cravings that determine our temperaments.

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he concedes this would be the case in a world already completed—if there is no future to worry about, there's no practical benefit to adopting new beliefs. Of course, *our* world is unfinished, and in such a world, James writes, adopting one metaphysical system or other will have *some* practical consequence: "[I]n every genuine metaphysical debate some practical issue, however conjectural and remote, is involved. To realize this, … place yourselves this time in the world we live in, in the world that has a future, that is yet uncompleted whilst we speak. In this unfinished world the alternative of 'materialism or theism?' is intensely practical" (1979, 48–49).

The idea is that large-scale philosophical views have a sort of *forward-looking* element to them; they're "prospective"—perhaps in some sense predictive. Not only do they give structure to past experience, they give us a sense of our place in the totality of things and of how the universe is likely to unfold. Speaking of material and spiritual substance, James tells us that the former entails the "cutting off of ultimate hopes"; the latter, however, involves a "letting loose of hope" and a "more confiding outlook on the future"; if this is true, "we may reasonably *expect* better issues" (1979, 43–51; my emphasis).[7] All this is to say that accepting one metaphysical theory over another will affect what one expects, how one behaves, how one treats people, and even how one feels about life in general.

3 | CARNAP

Now let's take a look at Rudolf Carnap. In parts of *Philosophy and Logical Syntax* (first published in 1935) and "Overcoming Metaphysics" (first published in 1932), Carnap, like James, provides a sort of psychological account of traditional philosophical practice. Of course, Carnap is well known to have argued that the statements of metaphysics are cognitively meaningless, that is, that they're pseudo-assertions with no empirical or predictive content. Yet unfortunately many philosophers, after saying this, conclude their discussion of his view, perhaps saying little more than that he considered metaphysical systems and their sentences expressive of "attitudes" (whatever that means).[8] Carnap's metaphilosophy, however, is much subtler than such a simplified presentation suggests. Carnap, too, saw emotional and (for lack of better words) irrational elements working in the background of philosophical theory construction. And he maintained that metaphysical pseudo-statements do have *some* sort of content, if not literal empirical content.[9]

To illustrate Carnap's view, consider this example of what the logical empiricists considered a metaphysical pseudo-statement: "Reason is substance, as well as infinite power, its own infinite material underlying all the natural and spiritual life; as also the infinite form, that which sets the material in motion."[10] To Carnap, pseudo-statements such as these are meaningless in the typical literal sense. This isn't to deny that one of the words contained in one of these sentences might be meaningful in some contexts. For example, Carnap would accept that "substance," "material," and "motion" might have precise meanings in some theory of the physical sciences. It is just that metaphysical pseudo-statements are not that kind of linguistic object. Like lyrics or verses of a poem, metaphysical statements do not make *factual* or *theoretical* claims about the world the way claims of science do. But for Carnap, this does not rule out that they have some other sort of content.[11] In "Overcoming Metaphysics," he writes: "[M]etaphysics does indeed have a content; only it is not theoretical content.

[7]For another example, concerning the thesis of the Absolute, James argues that it essentially tells us we live in a world in which it *will* (notice the future tense) be fine to take a holiday; clearly this too has a future-oriented component.

[8]See, e.g., Lycan (2000), Price (1997), Murzi (2001), and Stanley (2008).

[9]Carnap's metaphilosophy is also famous for its core conception of philosophy as the "logic of science" or as "conceptual engineering." I am not looking at that aspect of Carnap's metaphilosophy here; rather, I'm looking at his other statements on the nature of philosophy, specifically those of a more psychological character.

[10]This quote is from Hegel's *Philosophy of History* (1837). Fellow logical empiricist Hans Reichenbach used the quote in *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy* (1951, 3) to illustrate the logical empiricist's position on the nature of the statements of metaphysics.

[11]In fact, even though Carnap maintained that metaphysical statements don't *literally* mean anything, he would not have denied that (for lack of better words) accepting or believing them (that is, what they *practically* mean in the Jamesian sense) was possible, or that doing so would have

The (pseudo)statements of metaphysics do not serve for the description of states of affairs.… They serve *for the expression of the general attitude of a person towards life* (*Lebenseinstellung*, *Lebensgefühl*)" (1959, 78; my emphasis). The key question that now arises is: "What is a *general attitude toward life*?"

Beginning with how someone *gets* an attitude in the first place, Carnap writes: "[I]t arises from… his emotional and volitional reaction to the environment, to society, to the tasks to which he devotes himself, [and] to the misfortunes that befall him" (1959, 79). It's hard to know what else we might call these "attitudes." One might wonder, is it something similar to what James calls a temperament? I think so. Elaborating on his idea, Carnap mentions how a metaphysician might have a "harmonious" feeling or attitude, in which case this might end up expressed in a monistic metaphysical system. The use of "harmonious" here is interesting, and apparently in line with James's description of the craving (or passion) for unity. In the same paragraph, Carnap goes on to say that a metaphysician with a "dualistic-heroic" attitude will adopt a dualistic system. The idea seems to be that attitudes more or less determine what kind of system one adopts. Already, this seems fairly similar to what James wrote.

In *Philosophy and Logical Syntax*, Carnap extends his analysis. He now suggests that whether one adopts a Realist or Idealist philosophy will be determined in part by one's "constitution"—another word in James's vocabulary.[12] Carnap even says that extroverts might be more likely to become Realists and introverts Idealists (1935, 27–30). What he is saying here does not seem totally out of line with James's *Pragmatism*. It is our "passional" natures that motivate our metaphysical philosophical tendencies. In fact, James makes a parallel move. As we saw, in "The Sentiment" he writes: "Idealism will be chosen by a man of one emotional constitution, materialism by another." For James, Idealism appeals to those who say, "Our own thoughts are what we are most at home with, what we are *least afraid of*"; for the materialist, on the other hand, "[t]here is an overpowering desire at moments to escape personality, to revel in the action of forces that have no respect for our ego, to let the tides flow, even though they flow over us" (1897, 90). This is to say, James sees the empiricist as wanting to be *thrown around by the surf* and the idealist as wanting to imagine or explain away the rest of the world as really a part or product of the self.

In any case, even if what Carnap says in these works is not completely consonant with James, certainly it is not at all far off. Both are providing a deflationary account of philosophical choice and theory building, trying to explain things from the psychological level. Why do we adopt, defend, or develop one philosophical theory rather than another? To James, it is because of our *temperament*. To Carnap, it is because of our *attitude*. And what do these theories do? On James's account, there's at least some extent to which they play the role of satisfying temperamental or emotional needs and cravings (although this is not to say it's the only role). For Carnap this seems to be the case as well, although it is not as clear. He says that people often "*feel a desire* to create … a special *expression of their attitude*, through which it might become visible in a more succinct and penetrating way" (1959, 79; my emphasis). The suggestion seems to be that people create these things in order to satisfy these attitudinal cravings and impulses, but it's never said explicitly.

As we saw earlier, for James it seemed that perhaps philosophical systems are at least in part *expressions* or *representations* of individual temperamental idiosyncrasies. He seems to want to say that philosophical systems do play some sort of expressive role, though not *solely* an expressive one. Is there anything comparable in Carnap's account? Again, I think there is a parallel, and clearly so. In both "Overcoming Metaphysics" and *Philosophy and Logical Syntax*, Carnap explicitly claims that metaphysical systems *express* an attitude toward life—an instance of this

some behavioral consequence—certainly listening to music, reading a poem, or looking at a piece of art can have some effect on our subsequent behavior.

[12]Carnap also uses the term "constitution" in his *Aufbau* (1928). There he talks of "constitutional systems," where these are roughly interpreted languages with both syntactic and semantic components. This seems to be a different use of the term. I won't go into the similarities and dissimilarities here for reasons of space.

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can be seen in the first quote above: "The (pseudo)statements of metaphysics do not serve for the description of states of affairs.… They serve *for the expression of the general attitude of a person towards life* (*Lebenseinstellung*, *Lebensgefühl*)" (1959, 78; my emphasis). In "Overcoming Metaphysics," he even goes on to say that poetry and music are adequate, and metaphysics inadequate, mediums for such expression. Apparently Carnap held some version of this view from at least the time of his first major work, the *Aufbau* (first published in 1928). There, he writes: "We feel that there is an inner kinship between the attitude on which our philosophical work is founded and the intellectual attitude which currently *manifests* itself in entirely different walks of life; we feel this orientation in artistic movements, especially in architecture, and in movements which strive for meaningful forms of personal and collective life, of education, and of external organisations in general" (1967, 34; my emphasis). Carnap is making the same connection to art and other domains that James made in *Pragmatism*. Just as a work of art expresses the temperament of its creator, so too it expresses its creator's attitude. The concepts of attitude and temperament are looking increasingly similar.

The final question is whether Carnap, like James, seems to think that there is some "prospective" content to metaphysical systems. This question is harder to answer. But I think perhaps there is *some* sense in which the two philosophers are in agreement. Consider the following passage from Carnap:

> Perhaps we may assume that metaphysics originated from mythology.… Primitive man endeavors to conciliate the threatening demon of earthquakes, or he worships the deity of the fertile rains in gratitude. Here we confront personifications of natural phenomena, which are the quasi-poetic expression of man's emotional relationship to his environment. The heritage of mythology is bequeathed on the one hand to poetry, which produces and intensifies the effects of mythology on life in a deliberate way; on the other hand, it is handed down to theology, which develops mythology into a system. Which, now, is the historical role of metaphysics? Perhaps we may regard it as a substitute for theology on the level of systematic, conceptual thinking.… On closer inspection the same content as that of mythology is here still recognizable behind the repeatedly varied dressing. (1959, 78)

I take it for granted that most of us see mythologies as having a sort of "projective" or predictive content, that is, they give one some sort of picture of the universe, one's place within it, its tendencies, and how it will unfold. I am also inclined to think Carnap must have had similar thoughts; why would his myth-believing man "endeavor to conciliate" or "worship" if he didn't think doing so would have any effect—perhaps it just feels good? Our myth believer must think the world likely to unfold in a certain way if he does not perform such acts—that the world follows a certain pattern, perhaps, the way our scientific theories predict that things will follow a certain pattern and that certain interventions we make in the world will bring about certain results. The passage from Carnap also mentions man's "emotional relationship to his environment." As we saw earlier, James seems to think metaphysical theories tend to come with certain emotional tendencies as well. Some leave us with a "more confiding outlook on the future," others with a "sea of disappointment."

4 | LINES OF INFLUENCE

So far, I have made a case for the existence of a correspondence between the metaphilosophical views of James and Carnap. I have tried to show that their notions of temperament and attitude are fairly similar, and that their thoughts about metaphysical systems were not so unaligned. Now I would like to venture to say why the similarity we have seen between their work should perhaps not be so surprising. Of course, James and Carnap were both empiricists writing in postwar periods, and both have

a common ancestor of sorts in Ernst Mach.[13] More important, however, for their metaphilosophical views, I think, is the overlap in a different part of their intellectual heritage.

James was not the only philosopher of his time to offer a version of the temperament thesis, and in the case of Carnap, at least one famous contemporary also held the attitude view. In 1931, Wittgenstein wrote: "It is sometimes said that a man's philosophy is a matter of temperament, and there is something in this. A preference for certain similes could be called a matter of temperament and it underlies far more disagreements than you might think" (1998, 20e). This feels as though it could have come straight out of James's "Sentiment." The influence of James on Wittgenstein is well documented.[14] James's *Principles of Psychology* (1890) is said to have at one time been the *only* book on Wittgenstein's office shelf. Wittgenstein mentions James in the beginning of the *Brown Book* (1958) and in a number of places in *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). And he refers back to James a number of times in his notes (Schulte 1993, 9). Carnap, on the other hand, was very familiar with Wittgenstein, had meetings with him and the Vienna Circle, and is well known to have read and been greatly influenced by Wittgenstein's work. Worth noting also is that the quote above from Wittgenstein was written a mere year before the publication of the first of the relevant Carnap works (and few years before the second) and that during this time—at least until about 1933—the two men were occasionally meeting and discussing philosophy together.

Getting back to James, some historians have suggested he was influenced by Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814) (see Breazeale 1988; Bordogna 1998, 2001). Fichte once wrote: "The kind of philosophy one chooses … depends upon the kind of person one is.… Someone whose character is naturally slack or who has been enervated and twisted by spiritual servitude, scholarly self-indulgence, and vanity will never be able to raise himself to the level of idealism" (1994, 20). James certainly never met Fichte—Fichte died before James was born—but James was familiar with Fichte's work. We know that he read Fichte, since James's own diary corroborates this.[15]

James was also familiar with the work of Wilhelm Windelband (1848–1915), a neo-Kantian who to some extent reanimated Fichte's metaphilosophical views. Windelband writes in 1901: "There is no philosophical system that is free from the influence of the personality of its founder. Hence all philosophical systems are creations of individuality, presenting in this respect a certain resemblance with works of art, and as such are to be understood from the point of view of the personality of the founder" (1901, 14). It is not clear whether what Windelband calls "personality" is what James means by "temperament," but it's not hard to see that the two accounts are similar. Even the connection to art is present in Windelband's view.

Was Carnap familiar with Fichte or Windelband? The answer is yes. And there are two important connections here. First, it is clear that Carnap read Fichte or was at least familiar with his views. We know this because in "Overcoming Metaphysics" Carnap lists Fichte by name as an example of a metaphysician. The second connection comes from Bruno Bauch (1877–1942). Carnap was one of Bauch's students at the University of Jena. Bauch was in turn a student of Heinrich Rickert (1863–1936), who was in turn a student of Windelband. To what extent Windelband's and Fichte's views made their way to Carnap through Bauch is unclear. At present the most we can say seems to be that it is possible Bauch had some sort of influence on Carnap via Rickert.[16]

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) also made claims in line with the temperament thesis. In *The Gay Science* (1882), sections 347–49, he discusses what he sees as conditions leading some to be attracted to and others inclined away from logic. In *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), philosophical

[13]Richard Creath tells me that James read Mach and may have met him at one time. James mentions Mach in *Pragmatism*, and Mach and James have a common intellectual ancestor in Gustav Fechner, whom James greatly admired. Carnap likely read Mach (the Vienna Circle that Carnap was a part of was originally called the Ernst Mach Society), and so it appears that James and Carnap also have a common intellectual ancestor in Fechner.

[14]See Goodman 2002, Misak 2018, and Nubiola 2000 for good overviews.

[15]See the entry dated 1 January 1870, in James's Diary 1, 1868–1873, p. 77, in the Houghton Library at Harvard University. My thanks to an anonymous referee for pointing this out to me.

[16]In the case of Wittgenstein, on the other hand, I can find no evidence that he was familiar with or read either Windelband or Fichte.

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systems evince the personality and psychology of the individuals who develop them. There's a chance Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil* influenced James. We know that James had a copy of it. But if there's any hard evidence of influence beyond that I'm not sure. That Carnap was familiar with Nietzsche is known. Carnap explicitly mentions *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883) in "Overcoming Metaphysics," and he read *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1887). Nietzsche's views were also a topic of discussion at times among several of Carnap's Vienna Circle contemporaries.[17]

Although it's not clear how much James was influenced by Nietzsche, it's worth noting a parallel line of influence here too. Nietzsche loved and was heavily influenced by the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson.[18] Nietzsche is also well known to have been influenced by the works of Arthur Schopenhauer.[19] James was influenced significantly by both writers as well. Emerson was a close friend of the James family, and James gave the memorial address at the 1903 Emerson Centenary. As a newborn, William was taken by his father to Emerson to get the Sage of Concord's blessing (Carpenter 1939, 40). Needless to say, James grew up with Emerson and his thought as a large part of his life. As for Schopenhauer, James mentions him in "Sentiment" several times and also mentions him in *Pragmatism*. James seems to have been interested particularly in the sort of early psychology of philosophy Schopenhauer was developing, especially as found in chapter 17, "On the Metaphysical Need of Man," in Schopenhauer's 1818 book *The World as Will and Representation*—James even quotes from this chapter in "Sentiment."[20]

Another line of influence might be found in Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), who is sometimes referred to as the German William James.[21] Dilthey is perhaps best known for his account of *Weltanschauungen*, or worldviews (see, e.g., Dilthey 1911), and in his work the expression *Lebensgefühl* (attitude toward life) was of central importance. In fact, Carnap mentions Dilthey in "Overcoming Metaphysics," remarking how Dilthey too held the idea that attitudes were expressed through works of art. Carnap, so far as I know, never met Dilthey. One of Carnap's professors at the University of Jena, however, a man named Hermann Nohl (1879–1960), was a student of Dilthey's and also happened to be known for his writings on Nietzsche. In his *Intellectual Autobiography* (1963), Carnap mentions how Nohl introduced him to the idea of using a philosopher's *Lebensgefühl* as a basis for better understanding the philosopher's work (Schilpp 1963). Later in his life, in a letter to Wilhelm and Elisabeth Flitner (from 11 December 1968), Carnap mentioned that after having read quotes from Nohl and from Dilthey included in his friend Arne Naess's book *Four Modern Philosophers* (1968), he was amazed to see how strong Dilthey's influence on him via Nohl had been, though he remarked that a difference existed in the two views, in that Carnap came to his view of metaphysics via his theory of meaning, whereas Dilthey seems to have been led to it for other reasons.[22]

James's connection to Dilthey is quite direct. Dilthey was a contemporary of James's, and apparently in 1867 the two met while attending the dinner party of a mutual friend, Nassir Ghaemi (2009). It's been reported that each man left the meeting impressed with the other. From what James later wrote in a letter about the evening, it seems that he wasn't disappointed. In the same letter, however, James couldn't remember Dilthey's name (Richardson 2006; Rickman 1979). Dilthey, too, later wrote of the experience, remarking that he thought he and James were working on parallel paths (Ermarth 1978).

Some have suggested Dilthey had an influence on James's social psychological views (Brown 2004). Unfortunately, what all James actually gained from this conversation, or any other correspondence

[17]See Vrahimis 2020 for a discussion of the influence of Nietzsche's work on the thought of members of the Vienna Circle.

[18]See Zavatta and Reynolds 2019 and Stack 1992 for good investigations into the influence of Emerson on Nietzsche.

[19]For example, in his 1874 essay "Schopenhauer as Educator" and elsewhere, Nietzsche refers to Schopenhauer as his "true educator" and the philosopher and educator he had long been looking for. See the collection edited by Janaway (1998) for a survey of Schopenhauer's influence on Nietzsche's philosophy.

[20]The relevant Schopenhauer quote here is "The uneasiness which keeps the never-resting clock of metaphysics in motion, is the consciousness that the non-existence of this world is just as possible as its existence." The original quote can be found on page 374 of the 1886 Haldane and Kemp translation. Also see Leary 2015 for a look into Schopenhauer's broader influence on James's thought.

[21]Dilthey's influence on Carnap's intellectual development is discussed in Gabriel 2004, Dahms 2004, and Damböck 2012.

[22]For a more detailed look at the Dilthey-Carnap connection see Nelson 2018.

with Dilthey for that matter, is unclear. Probably at least one of them left having gained some sort of insight from the other.[23]

A final line of influence from James to Carnap, if that's the right word in this instance, might be drawn to Carnap himself. Early on in logical positivism, Philipp Frank noticed an affinity between American pragmatism and the Viennese movement in their common empiricism and reliance on science. This similarity wasn't lost on Otto Neurath either, who writes in 1937: "[I]t is understandable that in a country in which Peirce, James, Dewey and others have created a general atmosphere that is empiricist … the attempts of the Vienna Circle and related groups [he is referring to the Berlin Group] are given a friendly welcome" (1983, 90). Hans Hahn even defended the pragmatist theory of truth (mainly James's representation) in 1933 (around the time of Carnap's relevant publications). But a key point of history worth emphasizing is Frank's remarks on Carnap's *Aufbau*: "When I read this book it reminded me of James's pragmatic requirement.… I wrote immediately to Carnap 'What you advocate is pragmatism.' We noticed that our group … had eventually reached conclusions by which we could find kindred spirits beyond the Atlantic in the United States" (Frank, 1949, 33). Carnap was being exposed to pragmatism and related ideas not only perhaps from Wittgenstein and the other connections we've seen but also perhaps from his friends in the Vienna Circle who recognized the similarity of his early work—apparently not inspired directly by James—to the work of James. It would be nice to know if any of this caused Carnap to look at some of James's work, especially on metaphilosophical issues like the ones we've discussed here. The only reference to James in Carnap's works I've found is on page 260 of the 1967 translation of his *Aufbau*, where he mentions that Bertrand Russell's account of mind is derived from James.

In summary, it appears there are many relevant lines leading to James, and many of those may also lead to Carnap. In the case of James, Wittgenstein, and Carnap, the connection is fairly strong and possibly runs in several directions, though probably mostly in a sort of from-left-to-right way (with no backward influence to James). In the case of Fichte and Nietzsche, the connection is a bit weaker and the direction of influence obvious—Fichte and Nietzsche influenced Carnap and James, and the relationship is not symmetric. In the case of Dilthey, we have a connection, but the direction of influence is partially lost. Of course, in Carnap's case, the influence flows from Dilthey and not backward. But in the case of James, this is not so clear. Did Dilthey influence James, or was it the other way around? Or did each perhaps influence the other? Maybe they were just two lines running parallel. In any case, depending on how the story goes, it could be that James had an indirect influence on Carnap. It would be nice to have a full story here, but unfortunately, as so often happens, history hasn't been that amenable.

5 | CONCLUSION

In this essay, I've made a case for the existence of a correspondence between the philosophies of William James and Rudolf Carnap, arguing that there is a deeper similarity between parts of their works than is typically thought. I've tried to show that their notions of temperament and attitude boiled down to roughly the same idea, and that their thoughts about metaphysical systems and how they are chosen are not so totally unaligned. In the latter half of the paper, I turned my attention to possible reasons for the similarities, sketching an account of the lines of influence and contact that may have produced this result. It turns out that there are many lines possibly connecting the two philosophers—from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Cambridge, England, and from Germany to Vienna.

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[23] We also have evidence that Dilthey read James's *Principles of Psychology* (1890). Dilthey approvingly cites a number of passages from the work in his 1894 article "Ideas Concerning a Descriptive and Analytic Psychology." See Leary 2007 for more discussion of the James-Dilthey connection.

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