



Essays in Radical Empiricism

William James

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William James was an American psychologist and philosopher, founder of pragmatism. In his philosophical main aspects are two - radical empiricism and pragmatism.

The main assertion of radical empiricism is that sensory perception covers part of what is given to us in immediate experience.

In "Essays in radical empiricism" James makes a drastic effort to resolve the dualism. In these essays, the philosopher shows his vision of metaphysics.

Radical empiricism is not a form of modern epistemology, but postmodern epistemology that rejects both modern alternatives in exchange for a new type of empiricism. The human experience is a fundamental feature of the world. Of sensory, emotional and religious to scientific and rational. The concepts, ideas and theories are determined by their practical consequences, and in truth means success and usefulness of their application experience.

This empiricism takes us into a new, - clean world, based on experience. James tried to defend their views through their essays, the purpose of which is to show precisely clean and neutral experience: the problem in the relationship, the nature of truth, the philosophical side of things.

Each of us direct first hand experience of the world outside of us that goes beyond what is given to us through the senses. Pure experience abundance, diversity, potentiality, from which it arises and update things.

Essays of James should be read carefully to understand, because otherwise his whole work on their writing will be futile. Reading his "Essays in radical empiricism" we learn that our every theory must be empirically justified as there not something that is beyond experience.

The present volume is an attempt to carry out a plan which William James is known to have formed several years before his death. In 1907 he collected reprints in an envelope which he inscribed with the title 'Essays in Radical Empiricism'; and he also had duplicate sets of these reprints bound, under the same title, and deposited for the use of students in the general Harvard Library, and in the Philosophical Library in Emerson Hall. Two years later Professor James published *The Meaning of Truth and A Pluralistic Universe*, and inserted in these volumes several of the articles which he had intended to use in the 'Essays in Radical Empiricism.' Whether he would nevertheless have carried out his original plan, had he lived, cannot be certainly known. Several facts, however, stand out very clearly. In the first place, the articles included in the original plan but omitted from his later volumes are indispensable to the understanding of his other writings. To these articles he repeatedly alludes. Thus, in *The Meaning of Truth* (p. 127), he says: "This statement is probably excessively obscure to any one who has not read my two articles 'Does Consciousness Exist?' and 'A World of Pure Experience.'" Other allusions have been indicated in the present text. In the second place, the articles originally brought together as 'Essays in Radical Empiricism' form a connected whole. Not only were most of them written consecutively within a period of two years, but they contain numerous cross-references.

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