



Lecture: Thursday,
February 26, 2026, 1:30pm
(Pre-Lecture Reception, 1:00pm)



Arto Charpentier, “Metaphysics as Method: A Methodological Reading of Dewey’s Metaphysical Theory”

Whether Dewey can and should offer a metaphysics has long been a matter of intense dispute. Focusing on “The Subject-Matter of Metaphysical Inquiry” (1915), I defend two claims: 1) By advancing a science-based metaphysics, Dewey shows how metaphysics can be pursued in a pragmatist way: not as absolutist or foundationalist, but as a hypothetical, fallibilist, experimental inquiry. 2) I argue that the primary value of Dewey’s metaphysics lies less in offering an account of the “generic traits” of reality than in the methodological guidance it provides for inquiry—guidance that should be assessed in light of the consequences of its use. My aim is to elucidate Dewey’s metaphysical theorizing and demonstrate its usefulness within his broader project.

Arto Charpentier is a postdoc at Jean Moulin University Lyon 3. He earned his PhD from the École normale supérieure in 2023 with a dissertation on John Dewey’s cultural naturalism and social inquiry. His research focuses on pragmatism, social philosophy, and philosophy of science. He co-edited Repenser la nature. Dewey, Canguilhem, Plessner.

Center for Dewey Studies • Morris Library Basement, Room 0044

Center for Dewey Studies Lunchtime Talks

<http://deweycenter.siu.edu>

The Center for Dewey Studies is the home of research, publishing, and outreach focused on the life, work, and legacy of the American philosopher and educator John Dewey. Our Lunchtime Talks feature speakers researching Dewey and related thinkers, work in the pragmatist tradition, and work in a broadly Deweyan spirit.



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