



Lecture: Friday, September 26, 2025, 12:00pm

## Joseph Urbas, “An Emersonian ‘Deposit’ in Dewey’s Philosophy? The Case of the Ethical Writings”

John Dewey held Ralph Waldo Emerson in high esteem as a moral philosopher. If Emerson may be said to have left a mark on Dewey’s moral philosophy, its precise nature and extent remain to be fully determined. A careful examination of Dewey’s ethical writings—with particular attention to the patterns that emerge from the various references to

Emerson’s essays—suggests that the Emersonian “deposit,” while neither as profound nor professorial as the Hegelian, left its own peculiar imprint on his thinking. Even in an age of professionalization, Emerson was, for Dewey, still very much a *usable* philosopher.

*Joseph Urbas is Emeritus Professor at the Université Bordeaux Maigne. He is the author of Emerson’s Metaphysics (Lexington, 2015) and The Philosophy of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Routledge, 2021). He is currently preparing a book on Emerson’s theory of justice.*



**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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