

EDITORIAL

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The present issue of *Pragmatism Today* gathers together essays, written by an international array of scholars, which explore various dimensions of somaesthetics—a philosophical field invented by Richard Shusterman and devoted to “the critical study and meliorative cultivation of how we experience and use the living body (or soma) as a site of sensory appreciation (aesthetics) and creative self-fashioning.”¹ The essays can be roughly divided into two sets. The articles by Salvatore Tedesco and by Zailin Zhang and Junxue Li approach somaesthetics from an evidently historical perspective, with the former locating it in the context of Western thought (with special emphasis put on the Enlightenment and philosophical anthropology), and the latter drawing striking parallels between Shusterman’s enterprise and some major East Asian philosophies. The remaining contributions, while themselves not lacking in historical depth, attempt instead to employ insights drawn from what John Protevi calls somaesthetics’ “fecund soil” in order to reflect critically on a broad range of topics. Protevi explores a somaesthetic approach to the relations between bodies and social formations, focusing especially on political affect, as exemplified, for instance, by the recent controversial cases of Anders Breivik and Trayvon Martin. Kacper Bartczak’s essay gives a somaesthetic account of three central figures in American poetry by exploring the relationship between the body and linguistic form in their work. And two essays, by Russell Pryba and Tad Bratkowski, employ somaesthetics to

¹ Richard Shusterman, *Body Consciousness: A Philosophy of A Philosophy of Mindfulness and Somaesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1. Cf. Richard Shusterman, *Thinking Through the Body: Essays in Somaesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). For a discussion of somaesthetics, see, e.g., Wojciech Mątecki, *Embodying Pragmatism: Richard Shusterman’s Philosophy and Literary Theory* (Frankfurt am Main-New York: Peter Lang, 2010).

extend the scope of philosophical aesthetics by considering cultural activities not usually included in aesthetic theories: eating (Pryba) and motion-controlled video gaming (Bratkowski).

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