A genealogy is a story of how and why x might have come about which makes sense of x in terms of human purposes and historical contingencies. Such a broad denition covers the strongly history-based Nietzschean genealogies which typically seek to subvert their object by exhibiting what we thought was normal, natural, or necessary as being in fact contingent. This form of the genealogical method has encountered little enthusiasm in Anglo-Saxon philosophy and remains largely absent from it, suggesting that genealogy is entirely alien to Anglo-Saxon philosophy. Upon closer inspection, however, the denition can be seen also to cover another, under-appreciated genealogical tradition which runs right through the heartland of Anglo-Saxon philosophy: the tradition of pragmatic genealogy running from David Hume to Bernard Williams.

This paper identies the principal features of this other genealogical tradition and investigates its relation to Nietzschean genealogy. The paper has two goals. On the one hand, by ofering a rational reconstruction of Hume's genealogy of justice, the paper seeks to identify the main methodological characteristics of pragmatic genealogy: what its aims are and how it strives to achieve them. This yields a paradigm case of a pragmatic genealogy in the light of which Edward Craig's genealogy of knowledge and Bernard Williams's genealogy of truthfulness become recognisable as heirs to the same method. On the other hand, by determining what role state-of-nature ctions and historical considerations play in pragmatic genealogy, the paper seeks to show that it would be a mistake to draw a sharp methodological distinction between those genealogies that are ctional, vindicatory, and revelatory of function, and those that are history-based, critical, and revelatory of contingency. The paper concludes that we need a richer conception of the genealogical method which neither assimilates it to the purely ctional nor to the practice of history, but views it as a *sui generis* form of philosophical explanation.