# MISCONCEPTIONS OF JOHN DEWEY'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY BY CONTEMPORARY CRITICS

By

ROBERT LEWIS GRIFFIN

Bachelor of Arts
Olivet Nazarene College
Kankakee, Illinois
1950

Bachelor of Theology
Olivet Nazarene College
Kankakee, Illinois
1951

Master of Arts
Butler University
Indianapolis, Indiana
1959

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Thesis Approved:

John E. Sushy
Thesis Adviser

L. C. Mayberry

Robert W. Seefeld

D. Judson Milburn

J. W. Boggs
Dean of the Graduate School

# PREFACE

This thesis has been undertaken because I am of the opinion that John Dewey has been misunderstood and misinterpreted by a large segment of educators and laymen in America. While personally not a follower of Dewey, it has been my conviction that each man's thought should be viewed from the basis of the total philosophical orientation of the man. Dewey has not in many cases been accorded this right.

I became interested in what appeared to me to be misinterpretations of Deweyan thought while writing a research paper for a graduate course in "Contemporary American Philosophy." It appeared to me that criticisms of Dewey were not relevant in the light of my readings in the original source.

When the time arrived to decide on the choice of a problem worthy of a doctoral dissertation, Dr. John Susky agreed that the possibility of a false equation had been made between Deweyan thought and a system of radical progressive thought which I have termed Deweyite education philosophy. My thesis committee were unanimous in their support of my pursuing the problem.

I wish to express sincere appreciation to Dr. John E. Susky who has served as chairman of my committee. Dr. Susky has given constant guidance and offered a number of indispensable suggestions. I owe him a great

debt. Other members of my committee are: Dr. Thomas C. Mayberry, Dr. Robert W. Scofield and Dr. Judson D. Milburn. Dr. Mayberry has offered many valuable suggestions in the area of Deweyan philosophy. Dr. Scofield not only suggested the definitive title for the thesis but indicated that Freudian influence was a possible source of Deweyite thought. Dr. Milburn rendered great service in correcting punctuation throughout the dissertation.

I am grateful to the librarians at Kansas State College of Pittsburg, Kansas who were tireless in their efforts to secure needed sources for the completion of my research. Also, to colleagues Dr. John Reardon and Dr. Max Mathis who read the original manuscript, and to Dr. James Wheeler who suggested the existing confusion between Romantic Progressivism and Dewey's Instrumentalism. Professor Ima Van Natter, of the English Department at Kansas State College, read the original manuscript and made suggestions for improvement of writing style. I am indebted to Mrs. Eileen Osborne who typed the original draft from my handwritten copy. She, along with her daughter Jan, typed the final copy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

John Dewey has been called the greatest American educator and philosopher. His professional life was full and creative. Born in Burlington, Vermont, in eighteen fifty-nine, he lived to challenge the philosophical foundations of traditional education. Before his death, in nineteen fifty-two, he wrote a total of thirty-eight books and five hundred and seventeen articles.

Dewey's ideas have exerted a tremendous influence on the educational thought of America. Today, in the literature of education and in discussion groups of educators, his theories and practices are a source of intelligent reference. It is therefore worthwhile to give careful consideration to an analysis of the educational philosophy of this gifted teacher and thinker. Such a study will involve interpretations of his views by both friend and foe. It may be observed at the beginning that there is no perfect agreement in the educational discussions involving Dewey's ideas. Another evident fact that should be noted is that not only among his several critics but between his friends and interpreters there are charges of misinterpretation which have led to some confusion relative to the actual meanings Dewey endeavored to express.

John Childs and Robert Ulich, both friendly interpreters see Dewey's

development of thought in a different light. Childs contends that Dewey's thought remained fairly constant. He says, "for Dewey, the long search of man for a dependable method to control the course of his own intellectual activity has culminated in the logic of discovery and testing inherent in experimental inquiry."[1] Ulich, on the other hand, implies that Dewey wavered in his methodological emphasis after nineteen thirty and expressed faith in values and ideals lying behind experimentation. He said, "In the second period of his thought, Dewey's whole conception of values received a character of definiteness which lifts it out of mere experimentation into a sphere of persistent validity."[2] Controversy between friendly interpreters of Dewey provides a setting for the widely different interpretations of Dewey's theories by both friends and foes.

That same situation is evident in any discussion of Dewey's influence on actual schoolroom practices. It is generally accepted that Dewey has made a tremendous impact on American educational practices. However it is not so easy, as some naively believe, to pinpoint practices which logically follow specifically from his theories. It is popular today to identify everything that is new and different in twentieth-century education with Dewey's educational philosophy. Yet Dewey writing at the turn of the century contrasted his views with both the "new education" and the traditional approach. He traced the "new education" to ideas

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[1]John Childs, Education and Morals, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1950), p. 152.

[2]Robert Ulich, History of Educational Thought, (New York: American Book Co., 1945), p. 333.

found in Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel and Herbart, and while he recognized points of agreement he also was aware of fundamental differences.[3] American education has experienced a revolution in theory and practice in the twentieth century. It is difficult to ascertain the reforms which flowed from Dewey's educational philosophy and the reforms which have distinctively different sources. "Progressive education" and the "activity movement" were educational innovations influenced by Rousseau, Froebel, Herbart and Dewey. It is not clear, however, to what extent Dewey's thought prevailed. Popular press and opinion equate practically every new educational innovation with the educational philosophy of John Dewey.

The difficulty in pinpointing the sources of modern educational practice to Dewey's influence may be ascertained to some extent by the historical situation which led to educational reform. "In large measure, the early innovations were protests against the evils of the traditional school."[4] As the dissatisfaction grew there was a tendency to accept any innovation as better than the old simply because it was new. There is a sense in which this represented the influence of Dewey's experimental educational philosophy but the point which is not so obvious is the degree to which the innovations were guided by Dewey's theories. The difficulty becomes pronounced when educational "innovators experiment indiscriminately with respect to theory, yet claim that their practices are derivations

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[3]R. Freeman Butts, A Cultural History of Education, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1947), p. 525.

[4]John T. Wahlquist, Philosophy of American Education, (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1942), p. 91.

from the ideas of Dewey."[5]

It is significant that this indiscriminate equation of Dewey's educational thought with current educational practices and innovations has continued right up until the present hour. Dewey's educational philosophy is popularly considered to be the source of all the difficulties caused by new approaches to education in the second half of the twentieth century. The innovations have varied somewhat in the past fifty years and names have to some extent changed. However, one thing has remained constant, the consistent tracing of everything which reacts to traditional educational practices to the educational theories of John Dewey.

The following discussion will seek to set in proper perspective the educational philosophy of "America's greatest philosopher and educator," the late John Dewey. The presentation of Dewey's educational philosophy will be undertaken against a background of contemporary criticisms of modern American education.

The problem of the thesis is to ascertain what validity contemporary criticisms have which equate the educational philosophy of John Dewey with what will herein be called the educational philosophy of the Deweyites. The Deweyites are modern educationists whose implementation of so-called "democratic" educational techniques have been attributed to the educational philosophy of John Dewey. The Deweyite may be either an

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[5]Melvin C. Baker, Foundations of John Dewey's Educational Theory, (New York: Columbia University King's Crown Press, 1955), p. 3.

avowed follower of the Deweyan philosophy or in some cases the Deweyite may have denied affinity to Dewey's basic educational thought. The significance of the Deweyite is that he is mistakenly considered to be a representative of the position of John Dewey by the contemporary critics. Contemporary criticisms emanate from sources which decry the drift of school curriculum away from subject matter orientation to life-adjustment practices. The contemporary critic has argued that the educational philosophy of John Dewey is the source of theories of activity, interest, subject matter and democracy which have led to a lowering of educational efficiency and standards.

It will be the purpose of this thesis to defend the hypothesis that the educational methods and techniques of the Deweyites are not derived from nor consistent with the educational philosophy of John Dewey. In order to accomplish this the thesis will prove that contemporary critics have presented an erroneous image of John Dewey by equating his educational philosophy with that of the Deweyites.

# CHAPTER II

## CONTEMPORARY CRITICISMS OF AMERICAN EDUCATION

Contemporary critics are alarmed at what they consider to be the collapse of the educational system in American public schools. American education is being threatened by a spirit of anti-intellectualism and its consequent disregard for subject matter orientation; lack of educational goals beyond growth itself; a corrupted conception of democracy; emphasis on interest as an end in itself; and the activity craze. The weaknesses, as has been intimated above, are the outgrowth of the educational philosophy of John Dewey.

Each of the contemporary critics, under consideration, speaks with the same voice in regard to what he considers to be the faults and shortcomings of modern American public school education. A survey of the major themes of the critics will clearly set the stage and become a sounding board against which a subsequent appraisal of the educational philosophy of John Dewey will be presented. It will be seen that democratic education (life-adjustment), activity programs, capricious interest, and subject matter deterioration are the main themes of the critics.

# JOHN KEATS

John Keats in Schools Without Scholars, criticizes modern education on the basis of what he considers to be a complete disregard for the intellectual heritage. Modern education, he says, has renounced mental discipline and on the basis of a pragmatic philosophy substituted social life-adjustment. The person primarily responsible for this shift in educational direction was John Dewey. Keats says that the life-adjustment theory of education has a hidden meaning. He maintains that, "It is the name to call an educational philosophy now widely accepted. The philosophy is composed of the pragmatic thoughts of the late John Dewey..."[1]

On the basis of Dewey's fundamental philosophy everything in modern education is relative. There are no absolutes, no abiding values and everything takes place in the always changing continuum of experience. In this changing world of experience the mind cannot be disciplined by assigned tasks but it can and must be conditioned to meet the problems of life.[2]

Human life must have some direction and modern educators have hit upon the Deweyan conception of democracy as their ideal. Keats satirizes the position of modern educators in regard to what has elsewhere been called "democratic education."

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[1] John Keats, Schools Without Scholars, (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1958), p. 83.

[2] Ibid., p. 85.

> Believing there is nothing more important than decent human relations--the absence of which would be impossible anarchy--the educational pragmatist tries to reproduce in his school those conditions which will control human behavior along lines he thinks best. Democracy being our way of life--at least in theory--the educational pragmatist pervades his classroom with his idea of democratic processes. He regards children as people with human rights equal to those of anyone else, as people whose ideas deserve courteous attention. Thus, the children are encouraged to suggest their tasks, to do their schoolwork in committees of their formation, to elect their leaders, and to respect one another's work and opinions...Everywhere, the emphasis is on the group; the password is cooperation.[3]

The messianic aim of this type education, according to Keats, is to make all youth conform to a middle of the road standard where there is no place for individual differences. This corrupted democratic conception realizes its goal by means of the educational technique known as the core-curriculum.[4]

The criterion of the core-curriculum is activity. By activity, Keats understands the followers of Dewey to mean the doing of useful things.

> Since learning is doing, and present reality the only context, the idea in all cases, in all grades, is to bring the 'real world' into the classroom in every possible way, or--in some cases--to take the classroom out into the world.[5]

The vehicle that the modern educator uses to approach his goal of social life adjustment is student interest. Each child is assigned a committee task in which he already has an interest. Keats is of the opinion that Dewey's interest theory is predicated on something the child already

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[3]Ibid., pp. 85-86.

[4]Ibid., p. 58.

[5]Ibid., p. 86.

likes to do. The modern educator as a result of the newer methods believes that several beneficial effects follow.

> Instead of being asked to come up to some arbitrary standard of accomplishment in which some would excel and some would fail, everyone succeeded, or at least grew. Everyone realized his best self. This is just like real life...because in civil life all people do not compete at the same task. Instead, each of us chooses some area of competition from among society's more than 20,000 jobs. So in Miss Alpha's class, each child followed his interest.[6]

Since life-adjustment is the goal and student interest and activity set the pace, it is not strange, says Keats, that strong logically-arranged subject matter should be cast aside. But without solid subject matter orientation there is no school.

> A school is not a child, a teacher and a building. A school is essentially what it teaches, and the first emphasis must be on content, on purpose, on individual quality performance. If the school teaches nothing, it is nothing. No curriculum, no school. This choice of curriculum is the hub about which most of the piercingly vocal educational argument whirls...[7]

Keats is confident that Dewey was the first to advocate curriculum without strong subject matter content. As a result of this emphasis schools today are without scholars; standards are mocked and anti-intellectualism is on the throne.[8]

## Mortimer Smith

Mortimer Smith concurs with Keats in placing the blame for what he

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[6]Ibid., p. 28.

[7]Ibid., p. 8.

[8]Ibid., pp. 88, 99-100.

considers the weaknesses of modern education on the Deweyan philosophy. Smith says that the decline of learning evident in American education is the result of "...flaws in the Deweyan philosophy..."[9] Mr. Smith says that he has written:

> A book which aims to present evidence in support of the thesis that learning, in the traditional sense of disciplined knowledge, is rapidly declining in our public schools, not through fortuitous circumstances but by deliberate, and almost invariable well-intentioned, design of those responsible for setting the direction of public education.[10]

Smith assumes that Dewey's view of democratic education and life-adjustment theory of education, which seeks to undermine standards and blur every student into a dull gray, are synonymous.[11] In contrast to Smith's opinion that the primary task of the school is transmission of the intellectual and cultural heritage; modern educators appear to believe that social conformity and vocational proficiency are the goals of education.

> The controversy today is between those who continue to believe that cultivation of intelligence, moral as well as intellectual, is inextricably bound up with the cultural heritage and accumulated knowledge of mankind, and those who feel that education's primary task is to adjust the individual to the group, to see that he learns to respond 'satisfactorily' to the stresses and strains of the social order.[12]

Smith argues that in throwing out mental discipline the modern school

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[9]Mortimer Smith, The Diminished Mind: A Study of Planned Mediocrity in our Public Schools, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1954), p. 14.

[10]Ibid., p. 2.

[11]Ibid., pp. 18, 25-27.

[12]Ibid., p. 20.

has failed to see that activity guided solely by the whim of the student is inadequate. Child interest is capricious and education must give some direction to the educational pursuits of the young or it is failing in its responsibility.[13]

> One of the primary flaws in the Deweyan philosophy, its failure to set up ends, its insistence that 'the educational process has no end beyond itself' and that the essence of education is no more than 'vital energy seeking opportunity for effective exercise'--which statements seem to imply that one experience is as good as another--has undoubtedly had unfortunate classroom repercussions. As a corollary to this the progressives have often perverted the valid doctrine that the educational program ought to take account of the child's needs and interests into a mere catering to what the student thinks he wants. And the conception of the discipline all too common to progressive education has sometimes amounted to an abandonment of adult responsibility for the guidance of the young.[14]

The result, says Smith, of this inadequate view of education is lowered educational standards and anti-intellectualism. This is illustrated by the Deweyan abandonment of solid, consecutively-graded subject matter.

> I think the primary function of the school is to transmit the intellectual and cultural heritage and knowledge of the race, and in the process to teach young people to think, and to buttress moral values . . . Most professional educators do not seem to believe in this conception of the school's function, or at least they are doubtful of the ability of the majority to 'take' education and feel that the discipline of exposure to the cultural heritage is a luxury for the gifted.[15]

Life-adjustment education, originating on the highest level through a 1947 report of the United States Office of Education, has struck the

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[13] Ibid., p. 18.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

death knell to traditionally conceived education of the subject matter variety.

> The commission wants an education which will equip all American Youth to live democratically as home members, workers, and citizens; it is concerned with ethical and moral living, mental and emotional health, wholesome recreational interests; it believes in the dignity of work and the importance of personal satisfactions and achievement; it makes the regulation bow to 'the importance of fundamental skills.'[16]

Smith concludes that modern educational practices completely do away with subject matter as traditionally conceived.

> Whatever the nomenclature, these 'programs' are similar in aim in that they abandon formal subject matter in favor of integration of all subject matter towards an overall objective, towards what the educators like to call 'dynamic, functional learning.'[17]

The fundamental philosophy behind the new education is Deweyan pragmatism, sometimes called Instrumentalism. Educational practices are built on a theory of experience, and a theory of value which is completely relativistic.[18]

## Albert Lynd

Albert Lynd in Quackery in the Public Schools, asserts "progressivism is chiefly and properly associated with the name of John Dewey as founder."[19] Dewey, through the medium of progressive education has

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[16] Ibid., p. 24.

[17] Ibid., p. 21.

[18] Ibid., pp. 14-17.

[19] Albert Lynd, Quackery in the Public Schools, (New York: Grosset and Dunlap by arrangement with Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1950), p. 169.

been responsible for the anti-intellectualism in modern education. As a result teacher training colleges are equipping prospective teachers with educational techniques rather than strong content or subject matter courses.[20]

Mr. Lynd is of the opinion that today's educationists are the direct heirs of the educational philosophy of the late John Dewey. He assumes that what he considers the confused state of American education is related directly to Dewey's concept of the nature of man and the universe. Modern education is simply an implementation of Dewey's Instrumentalism. "Progressivism is logically consistent with instrumentalist philosophy right down the line."[21] Lynd concludes, "I make no apology for the inclusion of his [Dewey's] name and doctrines in the volume concerned with 'quackery in the public school.'"[22]

Lynd says that perhaps some of Dewey's followers have been confused but that Dewey himself was very clear and aware of the implications of his philosophy. Dewey's philosophy cuts the traditional foundations of objective moral and spiritual values which have been traditional in western culture.

> [Dewey's philosophy]...excludes God, the soul, and all the props of traditional religion. It excludes the possibility of immutable

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid., p. 203.

[22] Ibid., p. 208.

> truth, of fixed natural law, of permanent moral principles. It includes an attitude toward social reform which is anti-communist, but unmistakable socialist.[23]

Dewey, according to Lynd, has a completely unorthodox view of democracy. However, the continual use of the word democracy has duped many of the uninitiated. Educators have a right to their philosophical points of view but they have no right in the name of democracy to pawn off on an unsuspecting public a fundamental philosophy which most of them would whole-heartedly reject if they knew its true meaning.

> . . .it is not right. . .to slip into the schools of the community a philosophy of education which, if understood, would be rejected by the great majority of the people to whom the school belong. That is travesty of 'democracy.'[24]

Lynd says that parents of American public school children have not been advised of the implications of the Deweyan view of democracy. The vast majority would reject the shift of meaning that Dewey advocates. The modern educationists seem to be renouncing the fundamental assumptions of democratic processes.

> How many parents would agree that his ideas, if they understood them, are those which should determine the formation of their own children? How many have ever been asked? 'Democracy' is a ritual word in the New Education, but has any community ever been consulted about educational theory in any meaningful way? . . . In my experience with such discussions, this is the point at which a New Educationist may forget his theoretical devotion to democracy: he may rush in with the statement that 'ordinary people' are not competent judges of philosophical or educational theory. That may be true, but it begs the next question: if we must have one dominant philosophical influence upon the reform of our schools,

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[23] Ibid., p. 206.

[24] Ibid., p. 209.

who voted for Dewey?[25]

Lynd suggests that the New Educationists have perverted the meaning of the democratic principle to mean a conditioning process which seeks to condition pupils to the point of view of the educationists. Educationally it functions toward the goal of wiping out all individual differences through "the holding back of better-than-average boys and girls in 'the grip of a notion of 'equality' contrary to plain facts.'"[26]

In the democratic educational process advocated by the New Education the pupil becomes the center and end of thought and little attention is given to disciplined subject matter. Activity is conceived in terms of doing things.

> The bare intellectual backsides of many public school children have been remarked by parents, employers and college instructors. Their complaint is that, while neo-pedagoges palaver more and more about 'real needs' of youngsters, the pupils are learning less and less about the arts of word and number, and the rest of the painfully accumulated culture of this harassed civilization.
> The complaint is answered by the assertion that the modern 'activity' program for the schools, which may include anything from care of pets to the rites of hair-doing, is more directly related to the living problems of the children.[27]

Coupled with the activity movement in the modern school is the predominant emphasis on the necessity that the activities must be interesting. It is felt by the educationists that interest arises out of the pupil's felt-needs. There are a great many statements, Lynd says, made about

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[25]Ibid., p. 188.

[26]Ibid., p. 97.

[27]Ibid., p. 14.

the purposes of the New Education "but most of them are built around the theme of 'real' or 'felt' needs."[28] This represents not only a change in educational theory and practice but a revolution.

> In practice, the change has been from formal study in skill and abstract principles to activities arising from problems alleged to be of immediate concern to children. In the new view, learning proceeds best with 'felt needs and a present problem'; hence the switch from a direct attack on things like the three R's to such concerns as how-can-I-make-my-room-more-attractive.[29]

Lynd states that the modern educator is talking "gibberish" when he assumes that a student will make progress in fundamental learnings when all he has to guide him is native interest inspired by "felt-needs" and student interests coupled with an inherent disregard for structured subject matter courses has lead American education into a position of anti-intellectualism.[30]

Lynd asserts that illiteracy is no longer deplored in certain Educationist circles. He says that some educators suggest that "we shall some day accept the thought that it is just as illogical to assume that every boy must be able to read as it is that each one must be able to perform on the violin."[31] In the field of mathematics, Lynd contends, some educators argue that "more than 50 percent of the arithmetic...taught in our

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[28]Ibid., p. 26.

[29]Ibid., p. 19.

[30]Ibid., p. 179.

[31]Ibid., p. 46.

typical old-style schools has no practical value to the average child."[32]

Adding to the tragic state of decline in American education is the process by which teachers are trained. Lynd says Educationists not only fail to insist on children learning the fundamentals but even teachers are not offered a thorough grounding in logically arranged subject matter. He says traditionally there were three elements in the educational process: a teacher, a student, and a subject which the teacher taught to the student. Under the old system even a poor teacher could measure some objective results. But in the New Education there is no such objective base.

> Under the new dispensation the teacher's job is to help the children with the 'reconstruction of experience'...There is more wisdom in the 'subject matter' or (sic) mathematics, of literature, of history, than in any teacher or body of teachers, however wise. In depreciating 'subject matter' the Educationist is removing from the curriculum that which even the worst teacher can only partially spoil; when a poor teacher teaches without it, everything may be spoiled.[33]

## H. G. Rickover

Admiral H. G. Rickover is interested in the American school because he feels that the school possesses the tools for human survival. However, the American public school system is failing. The responsibility for the inadequate educational system is to be found in the educational philos-

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[32]Ibid., p. 48.

[33]Ibid., pp. 69-70.

ophy of John Dewey.[34] Rickover says that educators faced with growing numbers of young people to be educated found that not all students could succeed in a liberal arts curriculum. Faced with this difficulty the theories of John Dewey offered an easy escape, and our educational leaders went over to him en masse.

> His [Dewey's] emphasis on fitting curricula to the desires and interests of the children, his deprecation of absolute values, his demand for education which will be 'useful" to the child, and his revolutionary thesis that the school must 'condition behavior' ... all this offered a simple solution.[35]

Rickover asserts that through the influence of Dewey American education works on the assumption that the child should be permitted to express himself freely. He says that, "Dewey has had a profound effect on American education.... [The educational philosophy he fostered] usually calls forth a picture of teaching methods which permit the child to express himself freely."[36] Because of "his [Dewey's] hatred of school discipiline" the school is failing to discipline the new generation and consequently juvenile delinquency is on the increase.[37]

The Deweyan philosophy is also responsible for a de-emphasis on subject matter. When the interests of the child sets the curriculum and daily life is the medium of educational development it is reasonable to

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[34] H. G. Rickover, Education and Freedom, (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., 1959), pp. 136-140, 191, 198.

[35] Ibid., p. 136.

[36] Ibid., p. 137.

[37] Ibid., p. 138.

expect a lack of concern for intellectual pursuits. Dewey's concern for self expression and his emphasis on utility have aided this deterioration of solid traditional subject matter emphasis in education.

> Two of Dewey's principles have profoundly influenced curricula. The first is his insistence that teaching must begin with subjects already known to the child and in which he expresses interest. . . Dewey's insistence on making the child's interest the determining factor in planning curricula has led to substitution of know-how subjects for solid learning. . .
> The second item. . .is Dewey's insistence that each child should be taught only what will be 'useful' to him. . .In the name of making the school useful, many solid liberal arts subjects have been eliminated.[38]

This emphasis by Deweyan educationists has tended to rob the talented young people in our country of initiative and merge all students into an unchallenging middle of the road. Rickover believes that the average student could accomplish much more intellectually if adequate challenges were presented.

> Today we must have schools which develop in all children--talented, average, and below average--the highest level of intellectual competence of which they are capable. . .This means that our schools must return to the traditional task of formal education in Western civilization--transmission of the nation's cultural heritage, and preparation for life through rigorous training of young minds to think clearly, logically and independently.[39]

Rickover feels that life-adjustment education does not meet the demands of an atomic age. Such education only tends to make a dull gray mentality. There is great need he says to reverse this trend and bring out the highest potential in all young people.

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[38]Ibid., pp. 138-140.

[39]Ibid., pp. 17-18.

> Our schools are the greatest 'cultural lag' we have today. When I read the official publications put out by men who run our educational system--booklets such as 'Life Adjustment Education for Every American Youth'. . .I have a strange feeling of reading about another world,. . .I am worried about the chances which young people, so poorly equipped to deal with modern life, will have when things become more complex and difficult, as they surely will before very long.[40]

## Redden and Ryan

John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan in A Catholic Philosophy of Education express, from the perspective of professional philosophy of education, a similar equation of Dewey's educational philosophy with Deweyite educational thought and practice. Redden and Ryan make no distinction between John Dewey's educational philosophy and the practices of "progressive education" in general. They assume that progressive education adequately and consistently implement Deweyan thought. "Progressive education is the instrumentality by which the experimentalist philosophy and its consequent educational theory are implemented and actualized."[41] Redden and Ryan assume that John Dewey worked out the implications of pragmatic philosophy based on verifiability of consequences in experience, workability, and potential change within the framework of an exclusive "dynamic material nature." They assert, "These sources have been merged by Dewey and fused into

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[40] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[41] John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education. Revised Edition. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1956), p. 527.

a philosophical system which is commonly termed experimentalism, or the philosophy of change."[42]

Redden and Ryan assert that the "John Dewey Society for the Study of Education and Culture", working on the premises of John Dewey's educational philosophy, believes that democracy can be fully realized only through a complete social reconstruction. The school must be the moving force in this reconstruction. Schools for democracy must literally indoctrinate the youth of the nation in terms of democratic socialism.

> ...the school can no longer remain neutral...it must definitely attempt, through indoctrination, to capture the minds of the nation's youth and stimulate them so that the youth will strive for the creation of a collectivist...if not a communistic...society.[43]

Redden and Ryan assume that Dewey advocated an activity school based exclusively upon student interest. Student interest purportedly has had one criterion--felt-needs. On the basis of felt-needs a student was free to pursue any activity which would lead to satisfaction of the particular felt-need.

> Thus, the child is thought ready to learn only 'when the angel stirs the water,' that is, when the child experiences a 'felt-need' for a specific learning activity or situation. The only worth-while motivation, therefore are nascent interests and immediate values.[44]

According to Redden and Ryan, immediate satisfaction of felt-needs is all important. There is no place allowed in the educational philosophy

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[42]Ibid., p. 515.

[43]Ibid., p. 565.

[44]Ibid., pp. 511-512.

of John Dewey for deferred values. "Deferred values are of little or no consequence."[45] Dewey does not provide training in moral values.

> /The Deweyans/ desire to indoctrinate with their own doctrine. The values that inhere in sequential curriculums, desirable attitudes, knowledges, and skills, and all universally accepted moral values, are thrown overboard...Yet such values have behind them the weight of the centuries of race experience and tradition.[46]

Because of lack of concern for the funded values of the race and the moral values, Redden and Ryan assert that Dewey made no provision for solid subject matter offerings. The methods of Deweyan philosophy, they assert "oppose logical and sequential curriculums with their requisite teacher authority and substitute in their place free activity in response to "felt needs."[47]

## Robert M. Hutchins

Robert M. Hutchins is to a degree more guarded in his equation of Dewey's educational philosophy with the educational thought and practices of the Deweyites. Hutchins said, for example, that the leading theory of education in American education today is the theory of adjustment. The doctrine of adjustment, as implemented by modern educators, is a misconception of John Dewey's understanding of the meaning of adjustment.

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[45] Ibid., p. 512.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Ibid., p. 527.

> . . ,the doctrine of adjustment...results from a misconception of John Dewey. Since he is not a clear writer, his followers may perhaps be excused for their failure to notice that when he talked about adjustment to the environment, he meant that the environment should first be improved.[48]

However, Hutchins is in no mood to exonerate Dewey of the responsibility for what he considers to be the sad plight of American education. Dewey's emphasis on child-centered education is the real source of the present educational dilemma.

> The principle reason for the popularity in the United States of what is called Progressive Education, in which Mr. Dewey also had a hand, is that the children have a good time in school. In a child-centered society...any effort to insist on painful work in school naturally encounters resistance.[49]

The educational philosophy which stands behind the child-centered emphasis receives an even more rugged castigation by Hutchins. Hutchins is of the opinion that every valid philosophy of education has a fundamental philosophy behind it. However, he says, the confused state of American education is indicative of the fact that there is no valid fundamental philosophy from which it receives its inspiration.

> Pragmatism, the philosophy of Dewey...is not a philosophy at all, because it supplies no intelligible standard of good or bad. Pragmatism and positivism hold that the only knowledge is scientific knowledge. As Mad Hatter and the March Hare in Alice in Wonderland celebrated unbirthdays, so pragmatism and positivism are unphilosophies. They are even anti-philosophies.[50]

Hutchins asserts that the anti-intellectual tendencies of modern

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[48]Robert M. Hutchins, The Conflict in Education In a Democratic Society, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), p. 15.

[49]Ibid., p. 86.

[50]Ibid., p. 53.

educational practices flow out of the failure of educators to form objective standards of excellence based on valid philosophical premises. Instead of developing a philosophy of education on a fundamental philosophy modern educators resort to Deweyan conceptions of need. Hutchins differs from the other contemporary critics in suggesting that immediate needs point not to the demands of human nature but to things considered pragmatically useful by society. The greatest need, he says, that modern educators seek to provide for are monetary needs and the things that money will buy. Education loses its historic function of developing the intellect to the proliferation of "ad hoc" training activities which will equip students to perform some occupation through which they may be able to earn a living. The result is expansion of educational activities and the curtailment of serious intellectual study.

> The inevitable result is that the course of study is jammed with every conceivable subject on the ground that the pupil might find that he needed to know about it, or society might need to have him know about it...the doctrine of needs, or of the ad hoc, has promoted the disintegration of the program of the schools...[51]

Traditionally American education was built on the foundation of the cultural heritage. Subjects were taught to insure that the young would be literate in the great traditions of the western world. However, Hutchins says that attending an American school or university is no guarantee of a liberal education. The pragmatic emphasis on immediate needs and student interest has undermined the meaning of the word education.

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[51]Ibid., pp. 35-36.

"Education," has meant, "the development of the intellectual powers of men."[52] But many "American educators believe that the intellectual powers of most men are so slight that it is not worthwhile to try to develop them."[53] Since modern educators do not feel students can profit from a solid subject matter orientation through which the traditions of the race are perpetuated many students are left ignorant of the heritage of western culture.

> ...graduation from an American university is not a guarantee of literacy. It is no guarantee that the American has any knowledge of the tradition in which, whether he knows it or not, he lives. This tradition is the Graeco-Hebrew tradition.[54]

Hutchins is of the opinion that this low estimate of American intellectual capacity is robbing Americans of the possibility of receiving an education which the proponents of "democratic education" have emphasized as a right. If education is intellectual in nature and the majority of Americans are intellectually incapable then education must be re-defined to insure Americans of their right. This is exactly what has happened according to Hutchins in American education.

> ...the syllogism runs like this: Everybody has a right to education. But only a few are qualified for a good education. Those who are not qualified for a good education must be given a poor education, because everybody has a right to education. Anybody who favors a good education must, therefore, be anti-democratic, because only a few are qualified for a good education, and the true democrat insists

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[52]Ibid., p. 62.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid., p. 61.

> on education for all. The consequence is that those who believe in the capacity of the people are called reactionary and anti-democratic, whereas those who doubt the capacity of the people revel in the name of democrats and liberals.[55]

Hutchins concludes that "our conception of the aims of education depend upon our philosophy in general."[56] Therefore, since American education is built on the approach of "Dewey, whose philosophy is not, as I have suggested, a philosophy at all,"[57] is it strange that content should become educationally suspect?

> There is also in America a deep underlying conviction that content of education is irrelevant.[58]

> When the doctrine of no doctrine at all is in full swing, the educational program that emerges is determined by the tension between the interests of the teachers and those of the taught. Since we do not know what to teach our students, they might as well do what interests them....In many American institutions of higher learning ...it is now popular to say that there is no curriculum.[59]

## Summary

The contemporary critics, Keats, Smith, Lynd, Rickover, Redden and Ryan and Hutchins, are unanimous in their opinion that the educational philosophy of John Dewey is responsible for what they consider to be flaws in modern American education. The particular weaknesses receiv-

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[55]Ibid., p. 63.

[56]Ibid., p. 55.

[57]Ibid.

[58]Ibid., p. 56.

[59]Ibid., pp. 58-59.

ing most attention by the critics are: a false conception of democratic education, the activity school, interest theory based on felt-needs, and the abandonment of solid consecutively arranged subject matter. Each of these weaknesses is re-inforced, according to the critics, by a monopoly-like capture of teacher training institutions by modern "educationists."

# CHAPTER III

## PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF JOHN DEWEY'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The previous discussion has provided background for an objective consideration of the educational philosophy of John Dewey. However, before attempting to ascertain Dewey's educational philosophy it will be profitable to consider the philosophical foundations of Dewey's thought. Dewey's philosophical thought is pervasive--it reaches into every consideration of life. His approach to knowledge, metaphysics and value are reflected in his views of education, politics and science. He begins his philosophy in reaction to the traditional approach of fixed essences and immediate knowledge but moves from the reaction to a positive methodology set completely within the framework of human experience. The following discussion will seek to establish the authenticity of Dewey's philosophical thought. This will be accomplished by pointing out the reason for his reaction to traditionalism and by examining the results and assumptions of his own experimental methodology.

### Nature of Philosophy

As noted above Dewey's philosophy has been called both a reaction and a reconstruction. His reaction was to fixed separations in nature and

views of knowledge based on immediate apprehension. Such views usually have led to an unnecessary "bifurcation" in nature between thought and reality. Dewey's reconstruction was in terms of a proper recognition of "facts of nature" on the one hand, and the "thought processes" on the other. He felt that man must be looked upon as a being continuous with nature if man is to dissolve the fixed separations between the "thought" and "thing" of traditional philosophy. He believed that the epistemological dead-end streets evident in the history of philosophy have been the result of building on a faulty metaphysics.

Dewey's reaction to the separation of the ideal from the real is fundamental to his positive philosophy. The traditional separation was based on an assumed reality--fixed and unchanging--more fundamental than the world encountered in everyday experience. These a priori categories which provide the separation of the world into "thought" and "things of reality" present a dilemma which has been most unproductive in the history of thought. If reality possesses a knowledgable structure independent of thought then thought is without a reason for existence. On the other hand, if reality does not possess a knowledgable structure thought being a private affair has nothing valid to say about reality.[1]

> /The difficulty with/ placing the standard of thought and knowledge in antecedent existence is that our thought makes no difference in what is significantly real. It then affects only our own attitude toward it. This constant throwing of emphasis back upon a change made in ourselves instead of one made in the world in which we live

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[1]John Dewey, Studies in Logical Theory, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1903), p. 72.

seems to me to be the essence of what is objectionable in 'subjectivism.'[2]

The way out of this unproductive dilemma is to take the world of common sense experience at face value. That is--accept it without trying to fit it into pre-conceived dualistic notions. On the basis of this approach it will be the business of thought--the task of philosophy--to make discriminations--judgments between the valid and the invalid, but the approach will be from one's own particular experiential situation and therefore the distinctions will be from one's own experience conditioned thought processes.[3]

Dewey contends that human preference for fixed reality, which transcends the processes of thought and treats the results of inquiry as some type of separate reality, is the source of metaphysical dualism. He further argues that metaphysical dualism is the foundation for the epistemological deadlocks which have characterized philosophical thought. Dewey says that it was on the basis of this strong pre-disposition for permanence that the early philosophers converted "the eventual into some kind of Being, something which is, even if it does not exist."[4] He says when one reads a defense of permanent existence "there is ground for suspecting that an artificial simplification of existence has been per-

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[2]John Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, (New York: Minton Balchand Company, 1929), p. 275.

[3]John Dewey, "Some Implications of Anti-Intellectualism," Journal of Philosophy, VII (September 1, 1910), p. 479.

[4]John Dewey, Experience and Nature, (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1925), p. 33.

formed."[5]

Philosophy down to the present century has sought to build on this erroneous static structure. Empiricism takes "what is given in the thought situation for the sake of accomplishing the aim of thought as if it were given absolutely, or apart from a particular historic context."[6] Rationalism, on the other hand, argues "that ultimate principles of a universal character are the objects of immediate knowledge and that reason is the organ of their apprehension."[7] Both the empirical and rationalistic schools build a system which separates things of everyday experience from the assumed fixed, static world of form outside experience.

Dewey denied the conception of a static world of "real form" separate from the world of common everyday experience. He attacked "supernaturalism" because he said its adherents believe in "consideration which do not follow from the course of experience as that is judged in terms of itself, but which have a significance independent of the course of experience as such."[8] Dewey's reaction to such a position is based on the "bifurcation" of reality and the notion that there are sacred precincts closed to experimental verification. He says, in such instance "men

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[5]Ibid.

[6]Dewey, Studies in Logical Theory, p. 61.

[7]John Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1938), p. 139.

[8]John Dewey, The Problems of Men, (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1946), p. 287.

/become/ careless of their inspection of existing conditions."[9]

Dewey contended that traditional philosophy offered no logical evidence from experience for judging between differing but equally coherent viewpoints. Inquiry, which is Dewey's philosophical methodological approach, must have a more significant role to play than simply to function in the capacity of agreement maker in a philosophy which disconnects thought processes from verification in experimental situations. On such a basis truth, goodness and values are "given." Philosophy, from this approach, is short-circuited and its assumptions conform exclusively to the customs and prejudices of traditional institutions. Philosophy in the traditional approach is simply a theory of recognition. But the inherent error in such philosophical thought has been its failure to see that the source of custom and tradition came out of some type of previous inquiry--worked out in the crucible of human experience and not handed down ready-made from above.[10]

Dewey was of the opinion that the task of philosophy is to rescue knowledge from the epistemological nonsense which has grown out of metaphysical dualism. He believed this could be accomplished by placing knowledge at the conclusion of experimentally based logical process of reflective thought. Logic, for Dewey, is "an account of the ways in which valid inferences or conclusions from things to other things are

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[9]John Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct, (New York: The Modern Library, 1930), p. 232.

[10]Dewey, Problems of Men, p. 213.

made."[11]

Dewey's reconstruction in philosophy would recognize the validity of the methods of science in the development of knowledge. Man in search of meaning must conceive of knowing "as active and operative, after the analogy of experiment guided hypothesis, or of invention guided by the imagination of some possibility."[12] The subject matter to which thinking man directs his attention is the gross, macroscopic, crude "non-cognitive" elements in experience. In the process of life difficulties are encountered and man must develop "instrumentalities of inquiry, measurement, symbolization, calculation and testing."[13] This is necessary to deal adequately with the problems which man faces in his environment.

The distinction between the Deweyan and the traditional approach to philosophy now stands in bold relief. Traditional philosophy assumed a metaphysics and sought to build an epistemology that would explain the dualism inherent in the system. Dewey's approach took the original elements in one's experience to be "non-cognitive." Therefore, on the basis of this approach if Dewey has a metaphysics--which some critics deny but this thesis affirms--his metaphysical assumptions will grow out of his experimental logic. In other words metaphysical viewpoints will come at the

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[11]John Dewey, Essays in Experimental Logic, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1916), p. 221.

[12]John Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, (London: University of London Press, 1921), p. 123.

[13]John Dewey, "Philosophy," Whither Mankind, ed. Charles Beard, (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1937), p. 320.

end of the process of inquiry rather than at the beginning as the traditionalists believed.

Perhaps the task of philosophy may best be defined by contrasting it with science. It will be remembered that both philosophy and science use the same methodological approach. However, there is a different motivation for each discipline. Philosophy enters the field in search of meaning in the specific area of human preference. Physical and biological sciences "deal only with what might be experienced; with the content of experience..."[14] Philosophy offers guidance and direction in the movement from hypothetical experience to meaning in individual lives. Its task is the "contribution in however humble a way to methods that will assist us in discovering the cause of humanities ills."[15] Science states its conclusions "in terms of mathematical relations which are non-qualitative."[16] Science, therefore, is a discipline which is interested primarily in the outcomes of specific relational and quantitative factors--its primary aim is knowledge. Philosophy uses the results of science but relates them to the problems and needs of human life--its primary interest is in the area of value--seeking through inquiry to ascertain guide lines to meaningful and fruitful human experience.

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[14]John Dewey, The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1910), p. 269.

[15]Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, p. 177.

[16]Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, p. 76.

## Nature of Reality

The previous discussion referred to the basic approach of Dewey in the area of metaphysics. In this section, what has already been implied will be made specific. It was suggested that John Dewey's view of reality comes not as a presupposition of fixed supra-natural structures but from intelligent assumptions growing out of man's reflective evaluation of events within the continuum of experience. Dewey, nontheless, comes up with the conclusion that nature has a certain structure. However, as noted above, he rejects structure in nature which stands outside the process of becoming. In other words, Dewey's view of nature recognizes structured change and not a structure plus change. Structure, for Dewey, is always in the context of actual features of existence. Through a process of interaction, specific existences (structure) realize particular changes.

It has also been noted that Dewey's metaphysical assumptions are an outgrowth of reflections in experience. This is another way of saying that Dewey's view of the world comes out of his experiences of the world itself. His world-view is not something given; rather it is the result of a quest. On the basis of the search for knowledge and meaning in the continuum of experience certain assumptions about the nature of the world and experience itself are made. The following discussion will seek to delineate Dewey's view of nature and experience.

### Experience

Dewey's contention that assumptions about nature must grow out of man's experience necessitates a clarification of what he means by experience. This will involve a new methodological approach to philosophy. Dewey rejected inherent nature and argued that empirical differences are discernible only through methodology. Consequently, experience is contextual and denotative in character. Experience includes the whole of encountered reality but it is always based on particular instances. The denotative character of experience implies, Dewey says, a methodological approach to things rather than the traditional technique of looking for "real" essences.

> The value of experience as method in philosophy is that it compels us to note that denotation comes first and last, so that to settle any discussion, to still any doubt, to answer any question, we must go to some thing pointed to, denoted, and find our answer there.[17]

The philosopher is in the same methodological tradition as the scientist. He must renounce "inquiry about absolute origins and absolute finalities in order to explore specific values and specific conditions that generate them."[18]

Dewey's methodological approach to experience begins with an acceptance of the common-sense world of everyday things and events. This world is the sole and determinate basis for the objectivity of thought. "Concrete experiences, not logical conceptions by themselves, warrant

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[17]Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 10.

[18]Dewey, The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy, p. 13.

statements about matters of existence."[19] Included within the dimension of experience besides physical existences are the experienced features of the human enterprise--joy, sorrow, success, failure, science, history, politics and religion. These things and events express qualitative features of the world in which man lives. In accepting the world as the foundation for the thought processes, qualitative factors must be taken into consideration as part of "reality."

> When we say that experience is one point of approach to an account of the world in which we live, we mean by experience something at least as wide and deep and full as all history on this earth, a history which, since history does not occur in the void, includes the earth and the physical relatives of man.[20]

Everything we encounter in this world must be given a hearing. Nature, including things and human events, must be allowed to speak impartially without submission to preconceived ontological structures. "Inquiry should follow the lead of its subject matter and not be subordinated to any end or motive having an external source."[21]

Dewey makes a distinction between experience and nature. Nature, as we shall see subsequently, is an element in experience. Experience may in some sense be equated with what William James called the "stream of consciousness." Dewey said simply that experience is "things inter-

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[19]John Dewey, Characters and Events, ed. Joseph Ratner, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1928), p. 64.

[20]Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 81

[21]Dewey, Problems of Men, p. 200.

acting in certain ways."[22] Such interaction involves relationship between an individual self or organism and the world. "The self, the 'subject' of action--is a factor within experience and not something outside of it to which experiences are attached as the self's private property."[23]

Growing out of this approach to experience is the Deweyan conception that experienced things and events are a product of interaction between the self and the environment. Also, implied in this approach is the idea that man, because of his interrelatedness with the world, plays a creative role in evolving experience. This approach also suggests that experience is an "active-passive" affair. As an "active-passive" affair objects of experience are a creation of the interaction of the organism and environment--a termination. On the other hand, nature absorbs the object and it becomes part of a new environment in which subsequent interactions form new objects of experience. The object of experience is immediately experienced but the experienced object in turn provides the subject-matter for further interactions and new relationships. Nature contains the capacity for creative experience and is therefore not to be viewed as static existence.

> If existence were either completely necessary or completely contingent there would be neither comedy nor tragedy in life, nor need of will to live. The significance of morals and politics, of the arts both technical and fine, of religion and of science itself as inquiry

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[22]Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 1.

[23]John Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder," The Philosophy of John Dewey, ed. by Paul Arthur Schillip, The Library of Living Philosophers, (Northwestern University Press, 1939), p. 532.

> and discovery, all have their source and meaning in the union of Nature of the settled and the unsettled...Apart from this union, there are no such things as "end," either as consummation or as those ends-in-view we call purposes. There is only a block universe...admitting of no change, or else a predestined march of events.[24]

Dewey's point is that the nature we experience is creative. Experience as an "active-passive" affair attests to the pulsating flow from static response to absorption in new situations. Such experience is the life-process: "for in the process of living both absorption in a present situation and a response that takes account of its effect upon conditions of later experiences are equally necessary."[25]

Nature

By analyzing experience on the basis of the methodological approach Dewey has been able to move from the realm of conscious personal experience to inference about nature. In doing this he has accomplished a transfer from method to metaphysics. The view of nature he assumes is a pulsating flow in which human organism use static distinctions for a purpose. Nature is the subject-matter or continuum of content. It is prior and neutral to man's distinctions which arise out of inquiry. "The stuff of the world is natural events in themselves neither physical nor mental."[26]

> Abandon completely the notion that nature ought to conform to certain definition, and nature intrinsically is neither rational nor irrational.

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[24]Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 243.

[25]Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value, A Rejoinder," p. 545.

[26]Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 220.

> Apart from the use made of it in knowing, it exists in a dimension irrelevant to either attribution, just as rivers inherently are neither located near cities nor are opposed to such location. Nature is intelligible and understandable. There are operations by means of which it becomes an object of knowledge, and is turned to human purposes, just as rivers provide conditions which may be utilized to promote human activities and to satisfy human need.[27]

Nature then from Dewey's perspective is not an entity with inherent knowledgable structure: "It is no cause or source of events or processes; no absolute monarch; no principle of explanation; no substance behind or underlying changes."[28]

Nature has within itself the principle of continuity. There is continuity between lower and higher and between the organism and the environment. "No activity...is confined to the channel which is most flagrantly involved in its execution. The whole organism is concerned in every act to some extent and in some fashion, internal organs as well as muscular, those of circulation, secretion, etc."[29] There is in other words only one sphere of existence and everything that plays a part in experience is part of nature. This means that there is no "bifurcation" in nature or gulfs fixed between various modifications of the flow of life and things. There is only a continuing flow of history. Terminations are the result of logical objectification of the flow of nature when that flow of nature interacts in conscious human experience. Terminations are the points contributed by man through his active interaction with environing conditions--through

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[28]Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 73.

[29]Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct, p. 150.

which man reaches a purpose.

Evolution, for Dewey, therefore is not simply a biological fact which is set in the past tense. It is a description of the continuing life process in both physical and human relationships.

> A belief in organic evolution which does not extend unreservedly to the way in which the subject of experience is thought of, and which does not strive to bring the entire theory of experience and knowing into line with biological and social facts, is hardly more than Pickwickian....
> If biological development be accepted, the subject of experience is at least an animal, continuous with other organic forms in a process of more complex organization. An animal in turn is at least continuous with chemico-physical processes which, in living things, are so organized as really to constitute the activities of life with all their defining traits.[30]

The human race has evolved, according to the Deweyan approach, through the interactions of human beings with their environments. This evolution through interaction has occurred because man has been able to conserve past successes in the continuum of experience by means of "habit", on the one hand, and the instrumentalities for advance crystalized by the processes of reflective thought, on the other. These useful instrumentalities or useful objects of thought may through memory be abstracted but one should never forget that they have grown out of the experience of the race. Such instrumentalities--useful objects of thought--owe their continuing existence to perpetuating successful solutions to problems arising in the continuum of experience. Dewey is simply stating

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[30] John Dewey, "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy," Creative Intelligence: Essays in the Pragmatic Attitude, John Dewey et al, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1917), pp. 35-36.

that objects of thought arise out of evolving human experience--physical and social. The race has evolved because intelligence has given man the ability to foresee new connections in novel situations.

The evolutionary process suggests then the possibility of new experiences growing out of continuing interactions between the organism and the environment. This implies the possibility of other environmental situations not yet experienced. Prior to interaction--neither the organism nor the environment is in a meaningful relationship--there is only nature. The organism finds its existence when it interacts with an environment and effects experience. Experience, therefore, is to some extent selective--taking from the total field of nature. Consequently, while experience is selective and particular it is related in context to the total dimension of nature. This means that experienced objects are the products of interaction between the organism and environment. Personally experienced objects do not exhaust nature but are selected from the total field of nature. They are in no sense absolute but relative to the instrumentalities we may make of them in the continuum of experience. Experienced objects are "taken out of the context of direct experience and placed in the context of material within discourse for the purpose of meeting the requirements of discourse."[31]

Criticisms of Dewey's philosophy have indicated that "experience" in the Deweyan use of the term is purely subjective with no objective basis

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[31] Dewey, "Experience, Knowledge and Value: A Rejoinder," p. 548.

in fact. It will be recalled that Hutchins, arguing from the assumption that objective and absolute are somehow inseparably united, asserted that Dewey's thought did not even merit the name philosophy. Such is not the case, however, because in the interaction between organism and environment Dewey does provide for objective criteria.

The failure to understand Dewey at this point grows out of inability to recognize Dewey's conception of the dual capacity of experienced objects in the continuum of experience. From one perspective, objects of experience are conclusions, but from another they are hypotheses. Nature is in the process of living continuity; consequently our experience has this double capacity: (1) to be involved in the future, and (2) to be individualized and relatively conclusive. Life moves from nature in its qualitative vitality to objects which bring equilibrium and then on to new qualitative data. Each point in the life process is the object or consummation of a previous process and in turn the material or data for the process which follows. Dewey cites the process of mining for ore as illustrative of the point he is making. During the course of the centuries nature's processes produce a completed object--for example, iron ore. However, the miner looks on the ore not as a completed object but as data or material for his object--pig iron. The manufacturer in turn does not look on the iron as a completed object but rather has in mind some type of cooking vessel. Each process has a conclusion and a beginning. What is object in one becomes the means in another process. All of life par-

ticipates in the flow of experience.[32]

Selection and discrimination are key concepts in the progressive movement from the first encountered immediate (non-cognitive) experience, to a recognition of qualitative factors in nature, to the third phase of objects of knowledge.

Is there any basis for selection of qualitative factors in nature, or is the process guided simply by subjective feeling? Dewey, contrary to some criticism, argues that there are objective criteria that transcend the simple personal feelings of the organism involved in a search for personal ends. He taught that both culture and nature have structures which either encourage or discourage certain approaches. So that besides the personal factor, there are also social and physical limitations coming from the environment. Selection, therefore, has besides the personal interest aspect of the organism--cultural conditions such as habits and customs as well as physical limitations imposed by nature. Dewey says that some have thought that his inclusion of social limitations proved his instrumentalism inconsistent but he points out that such an opinion only illustrates the failure of the critic to understand the objective basis of his philosophy.

> ...the indispensableness to the instrumentalist theories of truth, even as working empirical theories, of a recognition of the social implications of ideas and beliefs. This indispensableness appears, to Professor Royce, fatal to the instrumental conception, to me it

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[32]Dewey, Essays in Experimental Logic, pp. 35-36.

seems its essence.[33]

The objective criteria in the flow of life from initial experience, through inquiry to knowledge, are the limitations imposed on the organism by that part of nature which is antecedent to the particular process of selection. It exists prior to experience and is subject-matter for the object of knowledge. The object of knowledge does not exist prior to the experience and subsequent inquiry but the subject-matter (nature's antecedent reality) does exist. As Dewey forcefully points out, we never doubt existence of that which we experience; we simply accept it. If doubts arise, they come from later considerations of a cognitive nature when objects are checked as consequences.

> While scepticism may be in place at any time about specific intellectual belief and conclusion,...scepticism as to things which we have and are is impossible. Its pretentiousness is concealed, however, by the failure to distinguish between objects of knowledge where doubt is legitimate, since they are matters of interpretation and classification, (of theory), and things which are directly had.[34]

That which we experience directly is not subject to doubt. But when the subject matter of experience is translated by inquiry into objects of knowledge then one may legitimately question the processes of thought. Dewey reinforces the point just made when he says we should remember that we "doubt some received piece of knowledge about some specific thing of that world, and then set to work as best we can, to rectify it."[35]

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[33]John Dewey, The Philosophical Review, XXI (January 1912), p. 69.

[34]Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 21.

[35]Dewey, Essays in Experimental Logic, p. 301.

Dewey is suggesting that (1) there is a real antecedent nature to the thought process[36] and (2) this antecedent nature has objective qualities which affirm or deny the objects of knowledge produced by the process of inquiry. Looking at nature from this perspective it is proper to assert that nature has objective structure. It is this relatively stable element in nature which make both inquiry and knowledge possible. It is this aspect of nature which is the basis for the ideal logical forms which grow out of inquiry. Nature provides the subject-matter (non-cognitive but qualitative) which provide criteria against which our logical constructions or ideas may be tested.

> ...necessity implies the precarious and contingent. A world that was all necessity would not be a world of necessity; it would just be...The stable and recurrent is needed for the fulfillment of the possible; the doubtful can be settled only through adaptation to stable objects. The necessary is always necessary for, not necessary in itself; it is conditioned by the contingent, although a condition of the full determination of the latter.[37]

If it is possible to check our logical constructions (ideas) by asserting that the world resists or approves our conclusions, then Dewey is saying that nature has objective qualities which act as criteria for judging the processes of inquiry. In fact he is asserting that inquiry is reliable because it can be tested. Dewey's experimental logic has led him to a metaphysical assumption. He says, "If experienced

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[36]John Dewey, "The Realism of Pragmatism, "Journal of Philosophy, II (June 8, 1905).

[37]Dewey, Experience and Nature, pp. 64-65.

things are valid evidence, then nature in having qualities within itself has what in the literal sense must be called ends, terminals, arrests, enclosures."[38]

Dewey is careful to point out that the structure of nature is not something fixed in a realm of reality beyond change. This was the error of traditional philosophy, "The conversion of the logic of reflection into an ontology of rational being..."[39] However, structure in nature is always in the context of actual events which interact and bring about change. Any approach to the structured aspects of nature must be made from the methodological approach in the continuum of experience--never as a separate entity.

> The fact is that all structure is structure of something; anything defined as structure is a character of events, not something intrinsic and per se....Structure is constancy of means, of things used for consequences, not of things taken by themselves or absolutely.[40]

Dewey has shown that structure in nature is relational in the continuum of experience. These natural relations have objective standing. However, their objectivity is not fixed or unchanging. Rather the structure in nature is progressive and is in a means-end-means relationship; it changes from structure to function and back again. "Faculties are definite directions of development: elements are starting points for new processes; bare facts are indices of change; static conditions are modes of accom-

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[38]Ibid., p. 96.

[39]Ibid., p. 68.

[40]Ibid., p. 73.

plished adjustment."[41] In the transformation from the problematic to the resolved situation we find, according to Dewey, the only basis for the type of metaphysical objectivity that has any valid meaning in terms of human experience.

Dewey has moved from "non-cognitive" original experience--through the intellectual processes of inquiry to metaphysical assumption. The process of inquiry, leading to knowledge, will now be discussed. The purpose will be to show how "non-cognitive" experienced things are objectified via quantitative relationships into logical constructs and then when validated become objects of knowledge.

## Theory of Knowledge

The purpose of this discussion is to clarify what John Dewey means by knowledge. Three terms will be discussed: inquiry, knowledge and truth. It will be shown that Dewey conceived of inquiry as the method employed by the human organism to redirect a confused problematic state growing out of the interaction of the organism and the environment into a harmonious relationship. Inquiry is the intermediate phase between immediate experience and mediated knowledge. Knowledge, it will be seen, comes at the conclusion of inquiry. Knowledge and the things of direct experience are not identical. Things of direct experience exist prior to knowledge but knowledge "qua object of knowledge" is the result of tested and verified logical constructions which have grown out of the

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[41]Dewey, The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy, p. 259.

process of reflective inquiry. Since knowledge is the outgrowth of inquiries which have their original source in problematic situations, truth, according to Dewey, must be conceived in terms of the workability (successful verification) of the ideas which form the hypotheses in the process of inquiry. The hypothesis or idea which guides the reflective process of inquiry to satisfactory (verifiable) consequences is the true idea. The test of the truth of an idea lies in the instrumental capacity of an idea (hypothesis) to remove some specific trouble or perplexity.

Methodology

It has been established in the previous discussion that Dewey asserted that method has priority in the effort of the organism to know nature. This is based on the recognition that each reflective inquiry grows out of a particular problem with a conclusion that has validity in a specific context. If the value of our conclusions are to be perpetuated they must be involved in new problematic situations. In the new processes of inquiry, the old conclusions take on the character of categories or habits which have grown out of other situations. These categories or habits are really attitudes which represent "a point of view, a schedule, a program, a heading or caption, an orientation, a possible mode of prediction."[42] These habits or categories are the result of prior analyses and have been verified in a particular context of experience. When it was suggested

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[42]Dewey, Art as Experience. (New York: Minton, Balch and Co., 1934), p. 120.

above that nature has structure, it was pointed out that our knowledge has grown out of the results of interactions in our experience, and on this basis assumptions are always subject to revision.

The validity of our assumptions about nature lies in the recurrence of situations which are similar and which yield similar conclusions. Standardized views, categories or habits are never final. They are like bridges, intermediate in position, by which we come to a fuller meaning of life and existence. They are instrumental and functional hypotheses which have been validated in particular situations. Each inquiry has a particular referent in a unique biological or cultural situation. When we move to new situations we take our funded experiences with us but since the conclusions of prior inquiry have grown out of a particular contextual situation they must be viewed only as hypotheses in new situations. Dewey is saying simply that conclusions of particular inquiries are functional and always subject to re-appraisal.[43]

Philosophy must move out of this particular situational approach to life if it is to make meaningful connections. Dewey says that philosophical inquiry must adopt the methodology of science to accomplish this transition from individual instances of successful terminations of inquiry to inferences about relationships in general. The method of science which Dewey advocates for philosophical discussion is an extension in the domain of inquiry. Inquiry for science moves into the dimension of

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[43]Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, p. 168.

the unification of knowledge by abstracting individual qualitative features of the experiential situation into quantitative relationships. Scientific methodology, for Dewey, means "those methods of control of formation of judgment."[44] Philosophy must use such an approach if it is to deal meaningfully with the problems of human life. Otherwise, one may expect philosophy to stay in an ivory tower out of touch with real existence.

> If philosophy declines to observe and interpret the new and characteristic scene, it may achieve scholarship; it may erect a well equipped gymnasium wherein to engage in dialectical exercises; it may clothe itself in fine literary art. But it will not afford illumination or direction to our confused civilization.[45]

Philosophy will be beneficial if it uses the methodology of science. Such a methodology seeks out constant relationships in a changing world with a view to identifying recurrent meaningful relationships. Science collects materials of qualitative experience and then selects and modifies them so that certain relations are experienced. Science translates qualitative factors which grow out of "non-cognitive" experience (particular in nature) into quantitative factors which have inferential value.

> /The quantitative approach recognizes/ broad smooth highways by means of which we can travel from the thought of one part of nature to that of any other. In ideal, at least, we can travel from any meaning--or relation--found anywhere in nature to the meaning to be expected anywhere else.[46]

Dewey has recognized two important points in his methodology:

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[44]Dewey, Problems of Man, p. 247.

[45]Dewey, "Philosophy," Whither Mankind, p. 330.

[46]Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 94.

(1) the structure of nature has qualitative factors which may be instrumental in the formation of hypotheses about nature; (2) scientific method abstracts qualitative factors in order to provide hypotheses for the solution of new problems in the dimension of "intelligence." Science is always aware, however, that the quantitative relationship which is basic to its inference has an original qualitative reference which grew out of particular experience. Science, therefore, sees the unification as a whole in the continuum of experience. Man and nature are in a union of experience. Man and nature--the possible and actual, personal and material--are united. Science uses this approach with a view to defining desired relationships which may be tested. Scientific method is an instrument which distils the qualities found in experience into quantitative relations so that the process of inquiry can reach its goal--objects of knowledge--or the solution to the problem.

Dewey takes this scientific methodology and makes it the basis for his experimental logic. By selection, it recognizes qualitative factors in human experience and through the reflective thinking process "projects methods by which future thinking shall take advantage of the operations which lead to success and avoid those which result in failure."[47]

Knowledge

Dewey's methodology as outlined above suggests a process whereby

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[47] Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy, p. 135.

the qualitative factors in experience are given the status of quantitative relations through the extension of the process of inquiry to logical constructions and relationships. There are three major aspects in the process of inquiry, whether the organism is involved in dealing with immediate particular situations or making logical relationships: (1) there is an experienced difficulty; (2) formulation of a problem with a proposed solution; and (3) verification. The process of inquiry is not knowledge but it is instrumental in creating objects of knowledge. Knowledge is never immediate, for Dewey; rather it grows out of a completed process of inquiry on the level of intelligence. In other words, knowledge is not finding existences in nature which answer the problem but knowledge is the verified conclusion of a systematic complex set of data--ideas or hypotheses--which have instrumental value in settling experienced difficulties.

> It may be admitted that there is a real sense in which knowledge (as distinct from thinking or inquiring with a guess attached) does not come into existence till thinking has terminated in the experimental act which fulfils the specifications set forth in thinking...Now this conclusion--as the word denotes--is thinking brought to a close, done with.[48]

This statement suggests that Dewey recognized knowledge to be the end product of an experiment which has been thought through and validated. He says in fact "that all knowledge, as issuing from reflection, is experimental (in the literal sense of experimental)..."[49]

Knowledge then is not a process nor is it to be equated with think-

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[48]Dewey, Essays in Experimental Logic, p. 15.

[49]Ibid., p. 13.

ing or inquiry. It is the end of a process of reflective thinking which has been critically tested and validated by experimental procedures. Therefore, "knowledge in the emphatic sense does not exist till inference has ceased."[50] That which leads to experimentally verified knowledge is the process of critical inquiry--reflective thinking--but the process must not be confused with the conclusion.

> From this point of view, the subject-matter of knowledge is precisely that which we do not think of, or mentally refer to in any way, being that which is taken as a matter of course, but it is nevertheless knowledge in virtue of the inquiry which has led up to it.[51]

Knowledge is the outgrowth of a scientific methodology set in the framework of experience. The things we experience directly exist prior to being known in a "non-cognitive" experiential context. The experienced thing, however, is distinct from the subsequent object of knowledge. The experienced thing is subject-matter for knowledge, but the object of knowledge is the product of the process of logical scientific reconstruction of experience through inquiry.

> I, too, conceive that things had in direct experience exist prior to being known. But I deny the identity of things had in direct experience with the object of knowledge qua object of knowledge. Things had in experience exist prior to reflection and its eventualization in an object of knowledge; but the latter, as such is a deliberately effected rearrangement or re-disposition, by means of overt operation, of such antecedent existences.[52]

The thought process is the intentional direction of the organism

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[50] Ibid., p. 16.

[51] Ibid.

[52] John Dewey, "In Reply to Some Criticisms," Journal of Philosophy XXVII, (May 8, 1930), p. 273.

which guides the inquiry to anticipated consequences. Thought is the instrument which converts anticipated consequences into knowledge. The anticipated consequences are the controls which thought uses in selecting ingredients from the field of nature.

> /Thinking must/ obtain that meaning or conceptual structure which is best adapted to instigate and direct just those operations of observation that will secure as their consequences just those existential facts that are needed to solve the problem at hand.[53]

Consequences are logical directives for the experiment. These proposed consequences grow out of anticipations based on past experience. But this is only one side of the picture because consequences are also proposals for experimental verification. As proposals they are hypotheses which direct the process and as consequences they test the anticipated results.[54]

The final phase of inquiry comes into focus when we see the crude subject matter of original experience translated into a logical construction--object of knowledge. As we have seen, out of the "non-cognitive" elements in experience, the organism experiences difficulties which set the process of inquiry into motion.[55] Moving beyond particular qualitative responses, the organism may use the scientific approach to expand control. That which moves the process along is the idea or hypothesis. The idea must be formulated into propositions of the if-then variety so that the effectiveness of the hypothesis or its alternatives may be ascertained.

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[53] Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, p. 133.

[54] Ibid., p. 491.

[55] Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 158.

These universal propositions of the if-then variety are simply hypotheses; they have no existence in the nature of things.[56] The idea, which is the logical instrument by means of which an abstraction or selection of certain conditions or relations in nature, is accomplished. The idea is embodied in a proposition and then subjected to verification in experience. Dewey says, "While inquiry into inquiry is the cause cognoscendi of logical form, primary inquiry is itself cause essendi of the forms which inquiry into inquiry discloses."[57] In more simple language Dewey says, "forms regularly accrue to matter in virtue of the adaptation of materials and operations to one another in the service of specific ends."[58] Forms are represented by the propositions; matter is represented by nature, and the specific end is represented by the idea. The proposition imposes itself on nature and is subject to verification. The idea then has accomplished a re-organization from selected subject matter to logical instrumentality (idea) which may be verified. Knowledge has been crystalized into verifiable objects. The object of knowledge is a logical construction but must never be isolated from the original subject matter of experience which gave it birth because its verification depends on the existential referent.

Truth

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[56] Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, pp. 272-280, 471.

[57] Ibid., p. 3.

[58] Ibid., p. 386.

All knowledge is the result of the satisfactory culmination (consequences) of a process of inquiry. Knowledge is not in things; rather, it grows out of a functional methodology which controls a situation for the purpose of solving a problem. The consequence has practical individual significance. It is not isolated or eternally fixed.

The idea which guides the process of inquiry is originally hypothetical. It is an hypothesis until the problem is worked out and verified in an experimental situation. When the idea satisfies the natural demands of the situation--biological or cultural--which gave rise to the problem, it becomes an object of knowledge, a verified consequence of the process.

But what is truth? The idea or hypothesis which guides us to the satisfactory fulfilment of our aim is the true one. Ideas are instrumentalities to the solution of a problem situation. True ideas are those which lead to successful resolutions. They may be tested only by reference to the original problem oriented situation.

If an idea (hypothesis) succeeds in clarifying a problem situation, it is reliable, valid, good, true. If it fails to accomplish this end, it is false. The truth of any idea is related to the disturbed experiential situation and must prove its validity by reference to the situation which gave it birth. When we experience the resolved consequence, we call the idea that led to the solution a true idea. Truth and knowledge are to be distinguished; truth has reference to the successful idea while knowledge refers to the consequences--object of knowledge. Until we experience a satisfactory consequence, our proposition (idea) is hypothetical--part

of the process of inquiry. When the hypothesis (idea, proposition) is verified, it becomes true. Its truth is dependent upon the capacity of the idea to satisfy personal needs and the objective nature which made up the original experiential situation.

> ...when there is a specific need for thinking, and a specific hypothesis emerges in response to the need, it is needful that we should have some way of testing its value, of developing it to the point of being true or false. And acting upon the hypothesis to select and collect data, to predict, to guide new observations and reflections, to organize the seemingly discrepant and to illuminate the hitherto obscure in the way. The success of the hypothesis upon and along this way is its truth.[59]

Dewey's approach to knowledge has kept the continuity of experience in tact. Man in the solution of his problems never goes out of the dimension of human experience and thought to solve his problems. He abstracts qualitative factors from existent reality (nature) when problems arise in order to make quantitative relational inferences. But the inferences must always be checked for validity by observable experiments in the situation which gave it birth.

## Theory of Value

In the discussion above it was observed that truth is the effectiveness of an idea to guide a process of inquiry and that such an idea is finally verifiable with reference to an experimental situation. It would be incomplete to leave a discussion of the Deweyan viewpoint with veri-

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[59]John Dewey, "A Reply to Professor Royce's Critic of Instrumentalism," The Philosophical Review, XXI (January, 1912), p. 75.

fication in terms of material items alone. The needs and problems of man are not exhausted by biological and physical knowledge. The following discussion will seek to show that reflective thought involves verification in terms of human satisfaction, harmony, appreciation, happiness and goodness. When we understand "good" as that which ameliorates existing human problems, then the term "good" may be more appropriately applied to the successful hypotheses of inquiry than the term "true." However, the true is the good and the good is finally the true. The terms are essentially interchangable.[60]

A discussion of "value" introduces us to the moral sphere of human intercourse where the process of inquiry is viewed in the reconstruction of personal and social action. The moral problem asks whether intelligent guidance of conduct is possible. It affirms that intelligent guidance is possible but only on the basis of continual revision in accordance with changing conditions.

The term Dewey uses to identify the forward looking or future oriented inquiry is "value." Value theory looks to the future and asks what is "valuable." The terms knowledge, true, and good have reference to the end of a process of inquiry. When a transfer occurs from the present "good" to what will be "good" in the future, when reference shifts from a present valid consequence growing out of inquiry to the question of how may we apply the valid (static) consequence to new situations, then

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[60]Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct, p. 211.

Dewey changes his terminology to a consideration of "value." To apply the term value means that it "is never complete in itself, but always in behalf of determining what is to be done...Judgments of value imply that value is not anything previously given, but something to be given by future action itself conditioned upon the judgment."[61] Dewey is suggesting that values are the point at which thought and action, theory and practice meet. Conclusion of previous inquiry is the source of judgments about value but such conclusions are valuable only if they continue to be instrumental in present and future situations.

Moral Philosophy

John Dewey's approach to moral philosophy is basically the same as the philosophical orientation outlined earlier in this discussion. He is of the opinion that morals and philosophy are one in the sense that the integrity of inquiry is demanded. The moral problem begins with the question as to whether intelligent guidance in the pursuit of life with its problems is possible. The answer to the question must be approached from the point of view of a methodology consistent with inquiry in the context of human experience. Verification of proposed moral solutions must be constantly applied within the continuum of experience as both the human being involved and the particular environment undergo change.[62]

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[61] Dewey, Essays in Experimental Logic, p. 361.

[62] John Dewey, "The Objects of Valuation," Journal of Philosophy, XV, (May 9, 1918) pp. 253-258.

Dewey says conclusions must be subject to revision "as we find observational data which supply better evidence, and as growth of science provides better directive hypotheses to draw upon."[63]

The Deweyan approach to morals is clearly a reaction to traditional formulations of a fixed immutable good which has been handed down from above. Dewey suggests that the absolute criterion of "good" which gains its authority from a realm outside human experience has no basis in fact. Traditionally conceived moral systems have erred, he says, in assuming that judgment of good and bad from empirical sources are somehow "inferior" to supposed transcendental sources of value. He says that when traditional philosophy relegated the criterion of value to sources outside human experience they became academic and unrealistic.

> Unless philosophies are to be Edens of compensatory refuge, reached through an exercise of dialectic ingenuity they must face the situation which is there. It is their business to bring intellectual order out of the confusion of beliefs.[64]

The business of moral philosophy finds its referent in human experiential situations. It must use all the human disciplines of knowledge in its search for values--it must "converge all the instrumentalities of the social arts, of law, education and political science upon construction of intellectual methods of improving our common lot."[65] Moral philosophy begins then with experienced difficulties in the conduct of human life and

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[63] Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 173.

[64] Dewey, The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy, p. 17.

[65] Dewey, "Philosophy," Whither Mankind, p. 326.

brings funded human experience together into a methodological approach to the problem.

> /The task of moral philosophy is to/ become a method of locating and interpreting the more serious conflicts that occur in life, and a method of projecting ways for dealing with them: a method of moral and political diagnosis and prognosis.[66]

Such an approach will lead to a restoration of harmony between beliefs and practices. Men customarily seek empirically oriented activities in the solution to problems arising out of unrest in social and natural problems and catastrophies. Then they turn right around and suggest that somehow, they know not how, they were guided by transcendental directives. Dewey asserts, "the problem of restoration and cooperation between man's beliefs about the world in which he lives and his beliefs about the values and purposes that should direct his conduct is the deepest problem of modern life."[67]

Dewey was never content to dwell in a state of reaction. He suggested that science already possesses the methodology and means "of effecting the needed integration in the wider field of collective human experience."[68] Science revolutionized knowledge of the physical world when it extricated its discipline from ontological considerations and "when material of direct and uncontrolled experience was taken as problematic; as supplying material to be transformed by reflective operations

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[66]Dewey, The Influence of Darwin on Philosophy, p. 69.

[67]Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 256.

[68]Ibid., p. 255.

into known objects."[69] Science made significant progress when consequences of operations became the criterion of judgment rather than appeal to immediate knowledge. Likewise, Dewey argues that escape from "transcendental absolutism" in morals will come about when scientific method is put into practice. On such a basis value will not be separated from human experience. Contrary to some criticisms, Dewey never said that values are identical to immediate pleasurable experiences. Values come into focus, he said, when "enjoyments...are the consequences of intelligent action. Without the intervention of thought, enjoyments are not values but problematic goods, becoming values only when they reissue in a changed form from intelligent behavior."[70]

As indicated in the opening remarks of this section, Dewey makes a terminological distinction between "good" and "value." Good and bad are terms which refer to ideas in moral situations which have been found either satisfactory (good) or unsatisfactory (bad). Satisfactory solutions which have been designated "good" always refer to a particular process of thought. They have been found instrumental in a completed inquiry, however, they do not necessarily possess such standing in new moral situations. When attention is shifted from what has been "good" to what might be "good", Dewey uses the term "value."

> Propositions about what is or has been liked are of instrumental value in reaching judgments of value in so far as the conditions and conse-

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[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., p. 258.

> quences of the thing liked are thought about. In themselves they make no claims; they put forth no demand upon subsequent attitudes and acts; they profess no authority to direct.[71]

Dewey makes this contrast between "good" and "value" explicit. He says, "a judgment about what is to be desired and enjoyed is, on the other hand, a claim on future action; it possesses de jure and not merely de facto quality."[72]

When Dewey's moral philosophy is viewed in proper perspective, one immediately recognizes that such an approach, beginning as it does with concrete experience, is in no sense a cunningly devised plan to cast aside time tested moral principles. Dewey said that, in the framework of his methodology, many traditional values would continue to be effective and instrumental. His hope was that ethical formulations would one day be viewed from the experiential situations which gave them birth rather than ascribing them transcendental relationships which have no basis in experience. To point out the conservation of current values in the Deweyan approach, Dewey suggests that such moral qualities as truthfulness, honesty, chastity and amiability are moral in the emphatic sense. However, they are in no sense transcendental. Such traits continue to be instrumental because they are pivotal--that is, they carry other attitudes with them. They persist, not because they are inherent in the universe, but because they are related as instrumentalities in a

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[71]Ibid., p. 259.

[72]Ibid., p. 262.

variety of situations.

> They are moral in an emphatic sense not because they are isolated and exclusive, but because they are so intimately connected with thousands of other attitudes which we do not explicitly recognize--which perhaps we have not even names for.[73]

In the Deweyan approach to moral philosophy, moral laws received their significance from their effectiveness.

> A moral law...is a formula of the way to respond when specific conditions present themselves. Its soundness and pertinence are tested by what happens when specific conditions present themselves...Its claim to authority rests finally upon the meritiveness of the solution that has to be dealt with, not upon its intrinsic nature--as any tool achieves dignity in the measure of the needs served by it.[74]

Dewey's moral philosophy has as its primary aim the intelligent forecast or suggested guide-lines for moral action. Such guide-lines grow out of a reflective evaluation of past successes (good actions) but with a view to their possible instrumentality in future moral situations. Consequently, Dewey's moral philosophy moves to a consideration of "value" in the creative development which is life.

## Valuation

In the following discussion Dewey's concept of value will be analyzed. The purpose of this analysis is to show how Dewey approached the problem of human moral directives and to suggest what constitutes the nature of value. Different value systems will be contrasted with the

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[73]John Dewey, Democracy and Education, (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1922), p. 415.

[74]Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 278.

Deweyan approach. The aim is to show that valuation is built on the basis of scientific methodology. Scientific methodology must be applied to moral problems if moral concerns are to be meaningful in evolving human experience.

A survey of natural science, Dewey says, shows that value-facts or conceptions do not enter the field of discussion. However, when human conduct becomes involved and the question of "should" enters, conduct "seems to be influenced, if not controlled, by estimates of value or worth of ends to be attained."[75] Consequently, with the rise of value theory separate from the facts of natural science, the legitimacy and test of "value-facts" becomes an important phase of human inquiry.

Dewey rejects the idea that values are based simply on feelings which have no objective basis. Values arise in the continuum of experience and are observable. Since value judgments and the results which flow from such judgments are observable, Dewey concludes that values are open to public examination and test. Being public, values are therefore set in a social context. Values being observable and open to the public test of social examination take on the nature of propositions.[76]

The question is raised as to the legitimacy of calling activities by the name value when such activities are set in existential situations. It will be recalled that Dewey classifies existence under the heading of

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[75]John Dewey, "Theory of Valuation, "International Encyclopedia of Unified Science, Vol. II, Foundations of the Unity of Science, No. 4, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939), p. 2.

[76]Ibid., p. 12.

immediacy or that which is experienced directly while knowledge is taken to be mediated. Dewey's value theory recognizes the interaction between the individual and his environment. Values in the same manner as knowledge-facts arise out of a person's encounter with disturbances in his environment. Dewey says that propositions which arise out of such activities "refer directly to an existing situation which it is intended and desired to produce."[77] The designation "value" is applied to the intermediate conditions which produce a desired change in the future. It is in this context that Dewey distinguishes between scientific knowledge and value knowledge. Scientific knowledge reflects solutions to problems arising out of natural phenomena while "value-facts" refer to interpersonal goal directed desires. Scientific knowledge is pronounced valid or invalid--true or false. Values are classified as good or bad. The criterion of a "value-expression" is to be found in the consequences that follow from a given activity.

> It is 'bad' in the sense that it is objected to, while a future situation is anticipated...what emerges are propositions assigning a relatively negative value to existing conditions; a comparatively positive value to a prospective set of conditions.[78]

Two problems emerge, according to Dewey. One problem is in the area of active or behavioral attitude and involves--liking and disliking. The other problem is in "the relation of valuation to things as means-end."[79]

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[77]Ibid., p. 13.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Ibid.

Liking as a behavioral attitude involves, in contrast to wishing which occurs in the absence of effort, prizing or caring for a change strongly enough to put forth effort to realize the desired goal. Valuation in this first sense of liking, therefore, involves desiring. There is something lacking which is desirable and effort is put forth to realize it in experience.[80] "When...'valuation' is defined in terms of desiring, the prerequisite is a treatment of desire in terms of the existential context in which it arises and functions."[81] Desires, therefore, are not purely personal in the sense of fellings alone; desires are set in the framework of personal and existential encounter. It is at this point that desires as values may be checked publically, according to Dewey.

> ...valuation in its connection with desire is limited to the existential situation and...it differs with differences in its existential context ...the adequacy of a given desire can be stated in propositions. The propositions are capable of empirical test...[82]

Dewey is suggesting here that desires are like disturbances which the human organism endeavors to remedy through changing the situation to a condition which comes closer to fulfilment of proposed need. Therefore, instead of being mysterious inherent feelings, desires arise in the continuum of experience and may be checked according to the usefulness of the fulfilled desire in the situational consequence.

Dewey not only reacted to building a theory of valuation solely on

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[80]Ibid., p. 15.

[81]Ibid., p. 16.

[82]Ibid., p. 16-17.

feelings separated from the existential situation which stands behind desire, but he also criticized the view that "a desire is any object of any interest."[83] Interest is intermediate in nature for Dewey, not some quality in and of itself. He says, "The word 'interest' suggests in a forcible way the active connection between personal activity and the conditions that must be taken into account in the theory of valuation."[84] A person has an interest when something is at stake, when that person is involved to the degree that the final outcome makes a difference personally. In order to ascertain the "valuation-capacity" of interest, one must, as with desire, check the existential context in which the interest arises. Dewey concludes that both desires and interests are activities which take place in the world and have an effect on the situation which originally called forth the activity.

The first problem of valuation under consideration--that of the active or behavioral attitude of liking or disliking--has shown that desires and interests involve matter-of-value-fact propositions. Such propositions are the foundation on which the science of value theory rests. This leads to Dewey's second problem: the relation of valuation to things as "means-ends" or to the problem of the nature of appraisal or evaluation itself. Dewey says that in pursuit of a desired goal some activities are intelligently rejected (in contrast to blind trial and error), while others are

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[83]Ibid., p. 18.

[84]Ibid., p. 17.

accepted as useful in realizing the end-in-view. "Examination of ...appraisals discloses that they have to do with things as they sustain to each other the relation of means to ends or consequences."[85]

Valuation, therefore, is in a means-end relationship. He said that traditionalists argue that on the basis of this approach there is no way to point out ends which are intrinsically good or bad in themselves. Traditionalists insist that evaluation must distinguish between the intrinsic value (that which is prized) and means (that which is appraising). Dewey says the "problem as to the relation between appraisal of things as means and prizing of things as ends"[86] must ask if in the nature of things ends can really be separable from means. He concludes that the separation is falacious.

> For what is deliberation except weighing the various alternative desires (and hence end-views) in terms of the conditons that are the means of their execution and which, as means, determine the consequences actually arrived at? There can be no control of the operation of foreseeing consequences (and hence of forming ends-in-view) save in terms of conditions that operate as the causal conditions of their attainment. The proposition in which any object adopted as an end-in-view is statable (or explicitly stated) is warranted in just the degree to which existing conditions have been surveyed and appraised in their capacity as means.[87]

Dewey is here insisting that means-ends are inseparable on a cause and effect basis. He rejects ends as intrinsically good and separable from action. The notion of separation of means-ends by traditionalists, ac-

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[85]Ibid., p. 23.

[86]Ibid., p. 25.

[87]Ibid.

cording to Dewey, "does not, in any case, state a self-evident truth."[88]

If, as Dewey suggests, means-ends are inseparable and there is no intrinsic separable ends, what then becomes the basis of judgment or evaluation? Dewey says that common sense shows some things are "short-sighted, 'blind', and others, in contrast,...enlightened, farsighted."[89] He adds that the criterion of value is simply the ability of the approved course of action to be a useful "conditioning means to further consequences."[90] Common sense, he says, has always judged action on the basis of continuing usefulness. Dewey argues that the notion of the immediate, intrinsic, inherent nature of an end resulted when the end-in-view was mistakenly separated from the means which produced the original end. The same procedure has been followed when the terms "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" are used when applied to values.

> Relational properties do not lose their intrinsic quality of being just what they are because their coming into being is caused by something 'extrinsic'....The trouble, once more, is that a dialectic of concepts has taken the place of examination of actual empirical facts. The extreme instance of the view that to be intrinsic is to be out of any relation is found in those writers who hold that since values are intrinsic they cannot depend upon any relation whatever and certainly not upon a relation to human beings.[91]

Dewey suggests that the way to escape the erroneous value theories of the past and to make valuation an object of scientific knowledge lies

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[88] Ibid., p. 26.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid., p. 28.

in the recognition of two important factors: (1) value theory must involve knowledge based on "an ascertained correlation of changes...beyond the possibility of denial...";[92] (2) equally important--"anything taken as an end is in its own content or constituents a correlation of the energies, personal and extra-personal, which operate as means."[93]

> An end as an actual consequence, as an existing outcome, is, like any other occurrence which is scientifically analyzed, nothing but the interaction of the conditions that bring it to pass. Hence it follows necessarily that the idea of the object of desire and interest, the end-in-view as distinct from the end or outcome actually affected, is warranted in the precise degree in which it is formed in terms of these operating conditions.[94]

On the basis of the above criterion Dewey points out the importance of deferred values. He accomplishes this by distinguishing between "desired" and "desirable." On the basis of experience and reflective intelligence, Dewey says, the individual finds that not everything desired has the value of being desirable. That which is desirable does not come from supra-human realms but arises exclusively within the framework of human experience. Human experience is social in nature because man is a social animal.

> The 'desirable,' or the object which should be desired (valued), does not descend out of the a priori blue nor descend as an imperative from a Mount Sinai. It presents itself because past experience has shown that hasty action upon uncriticized desire leads to defeat and to catastrophe. The 'desirable' as distinct from the 'desired' does not then

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[92]Ibid., p. 29.

[93]Ibid.

[94]Ibid.

> designate something at large or a priori. It points to the difference between the operation and consequence of unexamined impulses and those desires and interests that are the product of investigation of conditions and consequences. Social conditions and pressures are part of the conditions that effect the execution of desires.[95]

Valuation is limited to goals which are set up as ends-in-view when problem situations are involved. Dewey points out that much human activity is carried on without recourse to purpose or ends-in-view. The vital impulses and habitual action are examples of unreflective action which no longer involves conscious goal seeking or value. Reflex actions and what modern psychologists call "over-learning" (walking) would be illustrations of activities minus conscious ends-in-view. Dewey says, "These rudimentary examples are typical of much human activity. Behavior is often so direct that no desires and ends intervene and no valuations take place."[96]

Dewey makes provision for changing circumstances. Desire and an end-in-view may become operative in a situation which has been based on habitual action if the common ways of acting are disturbed. In such an eventuality valuation replaces the non-intellectual forms of activity. Such activity is predicated on the need of the organism for change; "valuation takes place only when there is something the matter...there is present an intellectual factor--a factor of inquiry--whenever there is

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[95]Ibid., 32.

[96]Ibid., p. 34.

valuation."[97] The actual successful completion of an inquiry directed toward the goal of relieving a problem situation which has previously blocked the path of desire carries with it a sense of satisfaction. Satisfaction signifies that the tension has been released and the end-in-view has been reached.

> Satisfaction of desire signifies that the lack, characteristic of the situation evoking desire, has been so met that the means used make sufficient, in the most literal sense, the conditions for accomplishing-the end.[98]

Dewey reacted to subjectivistic interpretations of need-satisfactions. Valuation, he said, is always "a relation between a personal attitude and extra-personal things."[99] So-called felt-value is a contradiction to human experience. Felt-value implies an immediate, direct experience which according to the Deweyan analysis of valuation is impossible.[100]

Dewey's theory of valuation, as his theory of knowledge, makes provision for change and open-endedness on the one hand and relative stability on the other. The realized ends are warranted values as long as they maintain the characteristic of usefulness. Values which act as guides to action receive the designation "good" when successfully tested as consequences in experiential situations. Values are projections of probable satisfactory actions. Good is applied to actions already validated

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[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid., p. 36.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid., p. 37.

in experience. Neither "the good" or "the valued" may be separated from the situation which gave them birth. They are not ontological realities. Dewey in this sense objects to the notion of "finality" as such but recognizes that a value may be final in the sense of providing a legitimate solution to a particular concrete problem.

> A value is final in the sense that it represents the conclusion of a process of analytic appraisals of conditions operating in a concrete case, the conditions including impulses and desires on one side and external conditions on the other. Any conclusion reached by an inquiry that is taken to warrant the conclusion is 'final' for that case ...There is a fundamental difference between a final property or quality and the property or quality of finality.[101]

Summing up Dewey's value theory, it is important to remember that for Dewey valuation, in the same manner as inquiry in matters of fact, involves an intellectual factor which begins when a person in an environment finds the situation disturbed or troubled. Values are literally ends-in-view held as goals for the resolution of human problems set in a social context. Without tension there would be no desire, and without desire there would be no conscious effort or interest in changing the particular problem situation. The ends-in-view or potential values are appraised "good or bad on the ground of their serviceability in the direction of behavior dealing with states of affairs found to be objectionable because of some lack or conflict in them."[102] The end-in-view is good, right or proper in proportion to the ability of activities which it originates to ac-

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[101]Ibid., p. 45.

[102]Ibid., p. 47.

complish satisfactory consequences. Bad, wrong or improper are adjectives used to describe activities which fail to bring satisfactory results in the accomplishment of the proposed goal.

The end-in-view is an intellectual operation. The content of the end-in-view is set in an experiential frame-of-reference. To realize the end-in-view or satisfactory consequence, according to Dewey, one cannot separate the organization of activities from the end itself.

> The content of the end as an object held in view is intellectual or methodological;...
> The end-in-view is that particular activity which operates as a co-ordinating factor of all other subactivities involved.[103]

The means are those activities in the continuum of experience and action which lead to the end-in-view. Consequently, it is impossible to separate means and ends, except functionally, because they stand in a cause-effect relationship.

> The attained end or consequence is always an organization of activities, where organization is a co-ordination of all activities which enter as factors. The end-in-view is that particular activity which operates as a co-ordinating factor of all other subactivities involved.[104]

Dewey's value theory is a consistent attempt to articulate a value system set in the framework of experiential considerations without reference to supra-human criteria. Dewey's naturalistic value system builds on both his naturalistic metaphysics and problem oriented theory of knowledge. Dewey's value system, therefore, accepts the non-purposeful

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[103] Ibid., p. 48-49.

[104] Ibid.

factors of human existence on the one hand, and the goal directed ends-in-view of the human organism on the other. Dewey considers man to be basically a social animal. Therefore, the problems of value for man, set in an environment of inter-personal experiential reality, are basically social in origin. Man's social evolution has resulted because of the capacity of man to project values and experimentally validate them in the progressive continuum of experience.

## Summary

The philosophy of John Dewey is set completely within the framework of human experience. He does, however, make metaphysical assumptions which have grown out of his methodological approach to experience and the problems encountered by man in his environment. The critics suggest that such an approach is somewhat less than philosophical. They react to an explanation of knowledge and value which does not necessitate reference to a realm of permanent reality which is separate from the change and flux of human experience.

Robert M. Hutchins suggests that Dewey's pragmatic philosophy "is not a philosophy at all, because it supplies no intelligible standard of good or bad."[105] Hutchins' criticism is at the heart of the entire contemporary critic's dissatisfaction with the Deweyan approach. The contemporary critics, in the traditionalist approach, are of the opinion that

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[105]Hutchins, The Conflict in Education, p. 53.

objective intellectual standards conceived in terms of fixed essences are essential to both education and philosophy. Dewey, as the foregoing analysis has shown, emphasizes that intellectual standards never stand alone. He argued that the intellectual process is part of a means-end relationship which cannot be artifically separated into a so-called fixed immutable world of "truth" separated from the world of "experience". In the following discussion the educational philosophy of John Dewey will be analyzed. The tension between Dewey and the traditionalists with respect to basic philosophy will, if possible, be even more pronounced in the area of educational philosophy.

# CHAPTER IV

## DEWEY'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY: DEMOCRACY, ACTIVITY, INTEREST AND SUBJECT MATTER

John Dewey felt that philosophy and education were two sides of the same coin. Philosophy, he felt, has played only a minor role in the course of human events because it has been looked upon as a game of words for starry-eyed dreamers. To be vital and instrumental, philosophy must get into the stream of life. The point of entrance into life for philosophy, Dewey taught, must necessarily be education. Education brings philosophy out of the ivory tower and demands that the presuppositions of the philosophy be put to the test of human experience.

> The educational point of view enables one to envisage the philosophic problems where they arise and thrive, where they are at home, and where acceptance or rejection makes a difference...philosophy may even be defined as the general theory of education. Unless philosophy is to remain symbolic--or verbal--or sentimental indulgence for a few, or else arbitrary dogma, its auditing of past experience and its program of value must take effect in conduct.[1]

Dewey suggested that education should provide educational situations in which the child and his environment are given serious consideration. One of Dewey's key conceptions is that of growth. Growth within the

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[1]Dewey, Education and Democracy, p. 383.

Deweyan philosophy of education has a specific and guarded meaning. Growth is not as the critics assume completely without adult concern or reference to the cultural heritage. Nor is undirected growth a cure all for all the ills of education as some modern educationists assume. Growth is held out as the ideal by many school people without the faintest idea of what Dewey really meant by growth.

Another key concept of Dewey which is closely associated with the idea of growth is experience. This concept will receive a fuller treatment when Dewey's view of subject matter is considered; however, it is important to recognize that Dewey has a specific meaning for the word experience. Many educators appear to assume that any educational experience is valuable just so the child is interested. Dewey repudiated the extreme progressive position which fostered this view. He said some modern educators had reacted to traditional education to the point where they had failed to recognize those enduring values in traditional education.

> ...I am sure that you will appreciate what is meant when I say that many of the newer schools tend to make little or nothing of organized subject-matter of study...as if the idea that education should be concerned with the present and future meant that acquaintance with the past has little or no role to play in education...these defects /in progressivism/ at least illustrate what is meant by a theory and practice of education which proceeds negatively...rather than by a positive...theory of experience...[2]

A positive theory of educational growth in experience is a vital part

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[2]John Dewey, Experience and Education, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1938), pp. 9-11.

of Dewey's educational philosophy. But critics have misunderstood the Deweyan viewpoint when they assume that Dewey meant by growth the accumulated experiences of undirected childhood fancies.[3] On the basis of such misconception the critics seem to have a valid question when they ask "growth toward what?" The apparently unanswerable riddle is not derived from the Deweyan position but from the failure to understand exactly what Dewey meant by educational growth.

Dewey's educational philosophy begins as a reaction to traditional approaches to education. But after the reaction Dewey erects a positive educational philosophy for dealing with the problems of education. Traditional educational philosophy had set up goals which its adherents felt were inherently valuable and unaffected by human whims and change. Dewey, on the other hand, argued that educational values are just the same as any value--ends-in-view. The particular educational value that the school wishes to make a vital part of a child's life cannot then be separated from growing developing human experience. Educational goals or values are the result of human interests and desires. The continuing validity of a goal or value educationally is its ability to produce satisfactory solutions to problems which spurred it in the first place. Those goals persist, continue to be valuable, according to Dewey, not because they are handed down from some supra-human realm but because they continue to satisfactorily fulfil the desires and interests of people. Not

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[3]Rickover, pp. 136, 137, 138.

only do they, on the basis of satisfactory consequences, meet problems from the past, but valid warranted educational goals or values provide a legitimate and valid foundation for prospective problems in the future.

Dewey means by growth the capacity of the individual to project ends-in-view (educational values in this point of reference) and then on the basis of intelligent action and reaction which results from practiced ability in the art of inquiry to reach the goal or value. While this is growth, it is not finality, because Dewey argues that reaching a goal, while it is useful and may continue to be useful, also provides for richer and more meaningful experience in other areas of understanding. The individual will be able to see other goals (ends-in-view) when he has thus grown and will reach toward new and even broader fulfilments. That there is no final end for growth is in reality the means to richer and fuller living. Therefore, Dewey says that growth is in a means-end relationship toward an increasingly more meaningful life.

The criterion of a goal--educational value or end-in-view-- is that it provides the capacity or ability for further growth. Growth, therefore, in the best Deweyan sense of the word cannot be defined as to a specific content which is universally the same for every person. There are to be sure, Dewey would say, general goals which educators must provide as challenges, but growth is a personal quality set in the framework of an individual series of fulfilments each of which leads to wider understanding and development. Dewey says that such growth builds on previously laid experiential foundations. This is his famous principle of continuity.

Growth sets up the conditions for further growth: "growth...is one exemplification of the principle of continuity."[4] On the basis of this principle of continuity Dewey suggests that only those activities which condition future successful solutions to problems leads the individual to continuing growth. Satisfactory growth then has, for Dewey, the condition of being able to produce broader continued growth.

Growth as an end of education has a specific meaning for Dewey. It does not mean, as the subsequent discussion will show, undirected activity guided solely by the whim of the child. It does not mean any activity so long as the activity in question is pleasant. Growth, for Dewey, means a developing capacity to deal successfully with richer and more meaningful areas of life. Such meaningful experiences reached through the process of growth in turn become the ground and springboard for further development.

It will be our task in the following discussion to show the educational implications of Dewey's theory of growth as a legitimate end of education. The arrangement of topics will follow the principle topics and concepts criticized by the contemporary critics in the preceding chapters.

## Democracy

John Dewey conceived of democracy in terms of the intelligent social intercourse of men. An injustice is done to his basic conception

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[4] Dewey, Experience and Education, p. 28.

of democracy when social action is limited to the special interests of any section of society. Man to be human must be social, and the most meaningful definition of social takes into consideration two significant points.

> The two points selected by which to measure the worth of a form of social life are the extent in which the interests of a group are shared by all its members, and the fullness and freedom with which it interacts with other groups. An undesirable society, in other words, is one which internally and externally sets up barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience. A society which makes provision for participation in its goods of all members on equal terms and which secures flexible adjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic.[5]

Dewey makes a distinction between the democratic community and society. He assumes that there is a unity in community that is lacking in society per se. In a pluralistic society, for example, there are special interest groups which do not fulfil the two criteria of democratic social life outlined above. They have exclusive and narrow aims and purposes which do not mix well with united community life. The aims and purposes of the thief are illustrative of this segment of society which fall short of the ideal.

On the surface it appears that Dewey is seeking to conform society. Such is not the case. It was his contention that the varied but legitimate concerns of a pluralistic society was the leaven in the lump which made growth and development possible.

Dewey argued, from an historical analysis of the present state of democratic society, for the need of the individual's rebirth to selfawareness

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[5]Ibid., p. 115.

through the finding of his true humanity in small groups. It was his contention that modern society which promised the individual so much has, through its organization of society, and by the rule of experts, made man little more than a conforming puppet. Dewey's consistent position was that society does not advance, en masse, by the handing down of crumbs from the high to the lowly. Democracy came into existence as a social force by the exact opposite means, from the low to the high. However, one of the dangers of modern life is a false social consciousness, a consciousness which is sub-human because it has lost its meaning. It has lost its meaning because of lack of communication. In order to restore the lost meaning and communication, society must re-discover man in the small group in order to get at his needs from the grass roots rather than from some expert's office.[6]

> The character of our cities, of organized business and the nature of the comprehensive associations in which individuality is lost, testify also to this fact. Yet there are contrary signs. 'Community' and community activities are becoming words to conjure with...The unanswered question is how far these tendencies will reestablish the void left by the disintegration of the family, church and neighborhood. We cannot predict the outcome. But we can assert with confidence that there is nothing intrinsic in the forces which have effected uniform standardization, mobility and remote invisible relationships that is fatally obstructive to the return movement of their consequences into the local homes of mankind.[7]
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> Unless local communal life can be restored, the public cannot adequately resolve its most urgent problem: to find and identify itself.

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[6]John Dewey, The Public and Its Problems, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1927) pp. 215-217.

[7]Ibid., p. 215.

> But if it be reestablished, it will manifest a fullness, variety and freedom of possession and enjoyment of meanings and goods unknown in the contiguous associations of the past.[8]

Dewey's insistence on a return to smaller units of social life is not only basic to his understanding of democracy but to his conception of education and life in general. Without the dynamic interaction of individuals in society we have less than democracy. Pre-digested capsules of information handed out by an authority is not communication or education; it is propaganda. Ideas have to be shared to be vital and alive. The frozen words of some written speech must be replaced by the give and take of debate.

> In a word, that expansion and reinforcement of personal understanding and judgment by the cumulative and transmitted intellectual wealth of the community which may render nugatory the indictment of democracy drawn on the basis of the ignorance, bias and levity of the masses, can be fulfilled only in relations of personal intercourse in local community.[9]

Dewey is optimistic about the role the school can play in the return to a truly intelligent democratic way of social life. This can be accomplished if the school can give its students the tools for successfully meeting and solving the problems of corporate life. Basic to this goal is an awareness that man is the product of his own decisions. He makes his own destiny. He is not the result of some divine decree or some law of nature. He is the sum of the products of his organic needs and drives plus the situations with which he finds himself faced in social life.

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[8]Ibid., p. 216.

[9]Ibid., p. 218.

Man's education and growth develop out of the solution to problems growing out of the interaction of the individual organism and his environment.[10]

> Today it is generally admitted that conduct proceeds from conditions which are largely out of focal attention, and which can be discovered and brought to light only by inquiries more exacting than those which teach us the concealed relationships involved in gross physical phenomena. What is not so generally acknowledged is that the underlying and generative conditions of concrete behavior are social as well as organic; much more social than organic as far as the manifestation of differential wants, purposes and methods of operation is concerned.[11]

The task of education is to provide situations in which the student can encounter the experiences of the ages in the shortest possible time with a view to being an effective, intelligent citizen--a citizen who is capable of meeting his own personal problems and also effective in the larger problems of social life. Such a life will require free and intelligent choice between alternatives without recourse to king or bureaucratic expert.

> Since a democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education...A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.../Education has a tremendous task in modern society because:/ A society which is mobile, which is full of channels for the distribution of a change occurring anywhere, must see to it that its members are educated to personal initiative and adaptability.[12]

Education can fulfil this responsibility by giving attention to the devel-

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[10] Ibid., p. 103.

[11] Ibid., p. 104.

[12] Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 101-102.

opment of intelligent reflective problem solving methods of inquiry in the school.

Democratic education, according to Dewey, must be as broad in the area of opportunity as in the pluralistic society which gives it birth. Democratic education will use the resources of the past but will add to these the resources of the present. Then on the basis of the dynamic interaction of students new problems and their solutions are discovered.

Democratic education is not narrowly nationalistic. To be vital it must be based, as shown above, on meanings communicated between relatively small groups. However, it must reach out into the larger sphere of international concern through "world community." "One of the fundamental problems of education in and for a democratic society is set by the conflict of nationalistic and a wider social aim."[13] The intercourse and communication, in short the social aim of love, fellowship and concern which characterize the family, must come to play a significant role both nationally and internationally.

Discussion of subsequent educational concepts will attempt to show how Dewey planned to implement his educational ideals of growth through inquiry.

## Criticisms of Dewey's Concept of Democracy

John Keats has equated Dewey's view of democracy with what has

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[13]Ibid., p. 113.

been called "Life-adjustment" education.[14] He states that "democracy being our way of life...the educational pragmatist pervades his classroom with his idea of democratic process...Everywhere, the emphasis is on the group; the password is cooperation."[15] Another critic Mortimer Smith says Dewey felt that "education's primary task is to adjust the individual to the group."[16] Life-adjustment education according to Smith, has as its goal the conditioning of school children into an uncritical conformity to the educator's philosophy of life. It has been made clear in the above discussion that this is exactly one of the dangers Dewey warned against. He said modern man must recapture the ability to think for himself. "The problem is to extract the desirable traits of forms of community life which actually exist, and employ them to criticize undesirable features and suggest improvement."[17]

Admiral Rickover assumes that Deweyan philosophy is seeking to erase individual differences as much as possible and bring everyone into a dull grey intellectual conformity. Rickover says what is needed are "schools which will develop in all children--talented average and below average--the highest level of intellectual competence of which they are capable."[18]

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[14]Keats, Schools Without Scholars, p. 83.

[15]Ibid., pp. 85-86.

[16]Smith, The Diminished Mind, p. 20.

[17]Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 96.

[18]Rickover, Education and Freedom, p. 17.

On the contrary, Dewey taught that the gifted were always out in front of the majority intellectually but that through education the insights of the gifted would be more rapidly disseminated to the masses.

> There is no limit to the liberal expansion and confirmation of limited personal intellectual endowment which may proceed from the flow of social intelligence when that circulates by word of mouth from one another in the communications of the local community.[19]

Dewey's emphasis was not on conformity of action or attainment but on freedom of opportunity. His goal for democratic education was education for all. The nation cannot reach its goal half-slave and half-free.

> In order to have a large number of values in common, all the members of the group must have an equable opportunity to receive and to take from others. There must be a large variety of shared undertakings and experiences. Otherwise, the influences which educate some into master, educate others into slaves. And the experience of each loses in meaning, when the free interchange of varying modes of life-experience is arrested. A separation into a privileged and a subject-class prevents social endosmosis.[20]

## Activity

John Dewey never extolled activity simply for the sake of activity. In fact he says that "mere activity does not constitute experience."[21] His concept of activity can be understood only in the context of the meaning of "experience." The controlling influence on activity was

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[19]Dewey, The Public and Its Problems, p. 219.

[20]Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 97-98.

[21]Ibid., p. 163.

always the problematic situation. Out of the interaction which results from attempting to relieve an imbalance in the environment there is of necessity activity.

> ...The combination of what things do to us (not in impressing qualities on a passive mind) in modifying of actions, furthering some of them and resisting and checking others, and what we can do to them in producing new changes constitutes experience.[22]

Experience, then, is the name given to the active-passive relations which subsist between a person and his social surroundings. "In just the degree in which connections are established between what he does to his environment and what it does in response to him, his acts and things about him acquire meaning."[23]

Dewey taught that purposive education should present an environment in which interaction would effect an acquisition of meanings that are so important that they in turn would become instruments of further learnings. He felt that activities out of school are sometimes important but many times ineffective. "Activity out of school is carried on under conditions which have not been deliberately adapted to promoting the function of understanding and formation of effective intellectual dispositions."[24]

> It is not the business of the school to transport youth from an environment of activity into one of cramped study of records of other men's learnings; but to transport them from an environment of relatively chance activities (accidental in relation they bear to insight and thought) into one of activities selected with reference to guid-

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[22]Ibid., p. 317.

[23]Ibid., p. 319.

[24]Ibid., pp. 319-320.

ance of learning.[25]

Dewey thought that the reasons of many educators who advocated activity in the school were too narrow. He said they advocate activity because it engages child interest and spontaneity; or it keeps the child alert and active and has some effect on preparing them for practical duties in later life. In contrast to this point of view, Dewey states:

> We must conceive of them (activities) in their social significance ...in short, as instrumentalities throught which the school itself shall be made a genuine form of active community life, instead of a place set apart in which to learn lessons...[26] In educational terms, this means that these occupations in school shall not be mere practical devices or modes of routine employment, the gaining of better technical skill...but active centers of scientific insight into natural material and processes, points of departure whence children shall be led out into a realization of the historical development of man.[27]

Dewey's goal was to make education scientific. He was fascinated by the advances of physical science and thought that education should use the methods of science. He argued that activity in the school situation should exemplify the experimental problem solving method of science.

> Physical inquiry has been taken as typical of the nature of knowing. The selection is justified because the operations of physical knowledge are so perfected and its scheme of symbols so well devised. But it would be misinterpretation if it were taken to mean that science is the only valid kind of knowledge; it is just an intensified form of knowing in which are written large the essential characters of any knowing. It is in addition the most powerful tool we possess

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[25]Ibid., p. 320.

[26]John Dewey, The School and Society, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1900), p. 14.

[27]Ibid., p. 19.

for developing other modes of knowing.[28]

Activity is not to be equated with undirected gross bodily movement. It is the organism interacting with the environment toward the solution of a problem.

> When trying, or experimenting, ceases to be blinded by impulse or custom, when it is guided by an aim and conducted by measure and method, it becomes reasonable--rational. When what we suffer from things, what we undergo at their hands, ceases to be a matter of chance circumstance, when it is transformed into a consequence of our own prior purposive endeavors, it becomes rationally significant --enlightening and instructive...Practical activities may be intellectually narrow and trivial; they will be so in so far as they are routine, carried on under the dictates of authority, and having in view merely some external result.[29]

Dewey's theory of activity does not involve taking a "known" and through use in some external activity making it become a "know how." Knowledge, as outlined under the discussion of Dewey's theory of knowledge, is always the result of the activity of the whole organism and its environment in a problem situation. He said that the two extremes of every unit of thinking are a perplexed and troubled situation at the beginning and a cleared-up resolved situation at the conclusion. The first phase is pre-reflective and sets the problem to be solved. In the final phase the doubt has been disspelled. Between these two extremes Dewey outlined five phases or aspects of reflective thought.

> (1) Suggestions, in which the mind leaps forward to a possible solution; (2) An intellectualization of the difficulty or perplexity that has

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[28]John Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, pp. 250-251.

[29]Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 319.

> been felt (directly experienced) into a problem to be solved, a question for which the answer must be sought; (3) the use of one suggestion after another as a leading idea, or hypothesis, to initiate and guide observation and other operations in collection of factual material; (4) the mental elaboration of the idea or supposition as an idea or supposition (reasoning, in the sense in which reasoning is a part, not the whole, of inference); (5) testing the hypothesis by overt or imaginative action.[30]

Dewey shows explicitly how the five steps outlined above are related to activity as he understood the term. Reasoning, he says, shows us that if the idea to be accepted is valid, then certain consequences will follow. The conditions demanded by the theory will all be fulfilled. The traits suggested by alternative hypotheses will be lacking. Consequently, there will be an irresistable tendency to believe.[31]

However, he points out, sometimes verification does not follow. Sometimes instead of corroboration there is failure. Such reflective activity, as described above, even in the face of failure, is more than failure. The reflective method, even in failure, points out to the person guided by more than blind chance what further observations may be necessary to be successful.[32]

> Nothing shows the trained thinker better than the use he makes of his errors and mistakes. What merely annoys and discourages a person not accustomed to thinking, or starts him out on a new course of aimless attack by mere cut-and-try methods, is a stimulus and a guide to the trained inquirer.[33]

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[30] John Dewey, How We Think, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1933), pp. 106-107.

[31] Ibid., p. 114.

[32] Ibid., p. 115.

[33] Ibid.

## Criticisms of Dewey's Activity Concept

Mortimer Smith has assumed Dewey advocated that any joy and liking of a situation was purposeful. Smith says that Dewey was responsible for having "...perverted the valid doctrine that the educational program ought to take account of the child's needs and interests into a mere catering to what the student thinks he wants."[34] This was not the case. Dewey never advocated that activity was good or bad on the basis of its pleasantness. His conception of activity was grounded, as has been shown, in the problematic situation of experience.

> The emotional aspect of responsive behavior is its immediate quality. When we are confronted with the precarious, and ebb and flow of emotion marks a disturbance of the even tenor of existence. Emotions are conditioned by the indeterminateness of the present situations with respect to their issue. Fear and hope, joy and sorrow, aversion and desire, as perturbations, are qualities of a divided response. They involve concern, solicitude, for what the present situation may become...Emotion is a hindrance or an aid to resolute will according as it is overwhelming in its immediacy or as it marks a gathering together of energy to deal with the situation whose issue is in doubt.[35]

Dewey warns that it is a relatively easy thing to believe an idea when one feels good about it or when there is a partial validation. Premature judgments often result when one jumps to conclusions which are in harmony with his beliefs. The difficulties "all spring from confusing the feeling of certitude with a certified situation."[36] True knowledge comes

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[34]Smith, The Diminished Mind, p. 18.

[35]Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, pp. 225-226.

[36]Ibid., p. 227.

through intelligent activity and not "fortuitous" pleasure seeking.[37]

Robert M. Hutchins, another contemporary critic, assumes that Dewey condoned the position that the school is the place where just any activity goes on. He said, "the principle reason for the popularity in the United States of what is called Progressive Education, in which Mr. Dewey also had a hand, is that the children have a good time in school...any effort to insist on painful work in school naturally encounters resistance."[38] Dewey argued, however, that the school is the place where problem solving activity should be undertaken to secure and resolve problematic situations.[39] He taught that the best solutions lead to the solutions of other problems. It was his opinion that the schools should provide for this type activity.[40]

## Interest

Dewey taught that no activity can be called forth unless the organism is interested.[41] In the school situation the child must be viewed as a living growing person. To take a living growing person out of his natural

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[37]Paul A. Schilpp, The Philosophy of John Dewey, pp. 567, 568, 579, 602.

[38]Hutchins, The Conflict in Education, p. 86.

[39]Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 225.

[40]John Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1939), p. 12.

[41]John Dewey, "Interest in Relation to the Training of the Will," Second Supplement to the Herbart Yearbook for 1895, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1903), pp. 7, 12, 16.

environment and force him into someone else's mold without showing any necessary connections is the basis of the school's disciplinary problem. The child cannot abide being a spectator; he wants to participate. The difference between a spectator and a participant is found in the fact that the former is indifferent, the latter is involved; the results make a difference. A participant has two attitudes: (1) anxiety concerning consequences; (2) a tendency to act in an effort to assure better and avert worse consequences. "Interests and aims, concern and purpose, are necessarily connected."[42]

Traditionalists, Dewey said, have failed to see the essential nature of aims. Aims are not imposed from without. Aims are intelligent personal purposes. By nature, therefore, interest is an inherent part of aim. But interest is not capricious. Interest, on the contrary, is directed toward a goal.

> It is...fatal to an aim to permit capricious or discontinuous action in the name of spontaneous self-expression. An aim implies an orderly and ordered activity...Progressive completing of a process...An aim means foresight in advance of the end or possible termination. Aim... gives direction to activity.[43]

To act with an aim is to act intelligently. To act intelligently is to act with a mind. Mind is precisely intentional purposeful activity controlled by perception of facts and their relationships to one another. Mind is capacity to refer present conditions to future results, and future

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[42]Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 119.

[43]Ibid., p. 120.

consequences to present conditions. "Mind appears in experience as ability to respond to present stimuli on the basis of anticipation of future possible consequences, and with a view to controlling the kind of consequences that are to take place."[44] In a very real sense aim and mind are two sides of the same coin because aim is to act with meaning.

The difficulty with forced interest, Dewey comments, is that there is no such thing. "Interest...means that self and world are engaged with each other in a developing situation...To be interested is to be absorbed in, wrapped up in, carried away by, some object."[45] Etymologically, interest denotes "what is between." Educationally, what is between covers the difference between the student's present powers and the teacher's aims. When interest is forced, these intermediate conditions fail to connect with what the child perceives.

> To make it interesting by leading the child to realize connections that exist is good sense, to make it interesting by extraneous and artificial inducements deserves all the bad names which have been applied to the doctrine of interest in education.[46]

Discipline, on the other hand, is "a very large part of the every-day meaning of will...the deliberate or conscious disposition to persist and endure in a planned course of action in spite of difficulties and contrary solicitations."[47] A disciplined person is one who carries out his aims.

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[44] Ibid., p. 153.

[45] Ibid., p. 148.

[46] Ibid., p. 150.

[47] Ibid., pp. 151-152.

It is not a cowing of the spirit to subdue inclination, compel obedience or make a subordinate do uncongenial tasks. Interest and discipline are the successive heartbeats of a vital, growing, planning individual.

Dewey did not accept the notion that physical activity is necessary to establish educational aims and objectives. He escaped the usual interest-effort dilemma by denying that the educational aims and ends are external to the self. Dewey taught that interest refers to the fact that the self and the proposed course of action become identified into a unity; the self and the activity become one. The self, therefore, as well as the aims and ends are not something ready-made. Both are in the process of becoming.

> We arrive at true conceptions of motivation and interest only by the recognition that selfhood (except as it has encased itself in a shell of routine) is in the process of making...There is no one ready-made self behind activities. There are complex, unstable, opposing attitudes, habits, impulses which gradually come to terms with one another, and assume a certain consistency of configuration...[48]

Dewey does not mean to indicate that the self is not in some sense a unity.[49] The self or organism is in part that which has experienced and that which continues to experience. Life moves and activities go on routinely until the balance is upset by a problem. Interest is aroused and effort is made to remove the disturbance. The end or object of interest, traditionally so called, instead of calling forth interest is itself determined only as effort brings it into being. The end is the final step

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[48]Dewey, Human Nature and Conduct, pp. 137-138.

[49]Ibid.

of the activity, and interest is simply what is meant by the process itself.[50]

The task of education is the development of serial subject matter structured in such a manner that the student recognizes the connection between the mediated subject matter and the end or object.[51] The more intrinsic the relation of means to ends in the curriculum the more likely the student will become interested in the means.[52] Interest in the means will be more meaningful if a balance can be maintained between the simple or emotional and the intellectual qualities of interest. Emotional qualities, as has been shown, are the immediate reactions, while the intellectual qualities develop out of the problem itself.

> In the degree that responses take place to the doubtful as the doubtful, they acquire mental quality. If they are such as to have a directed tendency to change the precarious and the problematic into the secure and resolved, they are intellectual as well as mental.[53]

In the educational task Dewey sees nothing wrong with using the present interests of the child as starting points.[54] However, they are merely starting points and not ends in themselves. Momentary interests are to be rejected as serious educational criteria. There is no reason to object to strong means to get the child in consecutively directed activity

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[50] Dewey, How We Think, pp. 107-118.

[51] John Dewey, Interest and Effort in Education, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913), pp. 94-95.

[52] Ibid., p. 39.

[53] Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 225.

[54] Dewey, The School and Society, p. 92.

of an intellectual nature. The only proviso is that the child must come to see the problem as his own.[55] The objectives and ends are then internalized and educational growth takes place. Dewey concludes that external restraint will usually not be needed if the child sees the ends as his own.

Dewey recognized the value of interest in terms of means for accomplishing an end. He referred to this as "mediated interest."[56] It may be illustrated by the mastering of a technique like fingering in piano playing or typing. Its purpose is the accomplishment of some specific end like playing a song or typing a letter.

Dewey's interest theory was a reaction to nineteenth century psychology and all theories which conceive of interest as being ready made. One of the most important responsibilities of the teacher is to recognize present interests in students that can be used as a means to the educational end of the school. This requires skill in understanding both the child and the subject matter.[57]

There was an attempt on the part of Dewey to relate his interest theory to the means and ends of the educational enterprise. Subject matter is not learned as a body of truth to be mastered but as an object of knowledge. Dewey reacts to the notion that subject matter is set and

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[55]Dewey, Interest and Effort in Education, p. 42.

[56]Dewey, Herbart Yearbook, 1895.

[57]Dewey, Interest and Effort in Education, pp. 43-44.

final. Subject matter is the raw material for the solution of problems. As such there is an interaction (activity) between the person and his problem. The person becomes involved (interest) and incorporates the raw material (subject matter) in the solution of his problem.[58]

The teacher can evaluate his success in terms of the engagement of student interest which leads to objects of knowledge which are instrumental in character. In the school situation the teacher seeks to guide students into use of materials that will be useful in subsequent problem situations.[59]

## Criticisms of Dewey's Interest Theory

Mortimer Smith suggests that the seeds of anarchy are in Dewey's interest theory. He says Dewey contends that education is nothing more than "vital energy seeking opportunity for effective exercise."[60] Dewey, however, never equated educationally fruitful practices with strictly personal satisfaction and pleasantness.[61] As suggested above, Dewey advocated logically organized subject matter. While he saw the value of beginning with the child's present interests and expressed great faith in the school's ability to lead students into intellectual pursuits, he still made room for benevolent coercion.

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[58] Ibid., pp. 28-29.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Smith, The Diminished Mind, p. 18.

[61] John Dewey, "What Does Pragmatism Mean by Practical," Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Method, 5:93-94, 1908.

Redden and Ryan assume that Dewey's interest theory accepts, as worthy of honoring, any interest that a child might express in the school situation. They say Dewey was of the opinion that "the only worth-while motivations...are nascent interests and immediate values."[62] Rickover says Dewey's emphasis "was on fitting curricula to the desires and interests of the children..."[63] Dewey's position, as outlined above, was that interests are never good or bad in themselves but only as points of departure.

> With the development of reflective attention comes the need and the possibility of a change in the mode of the child's instruction...(To this point) we have been concerned with the direct spontaneous attitude...This attitude is typical of what some writers call spontaneous attention...The child is simply absorbed in what he is doing...He gives himself without reserve. Hence, while there is much energy spent, there is no conscious effort; while the child is intent to the point of engrossment, there is no conscious attention. With the development of remote ends, and of the need of directing acts so as to make them means for these ends...we have the transition to what may be termed indirect, or...voluntary, attention. A result is imaged, and the child attends to what is before him or what he is immediately doing because it helps secure the result. Taken by itself the act might be indifferent or even repulsive. But because it is felt to belong to something desirable or valuable, it borrows the latter's attraction and holding power. This is the transition to 'voluntary' attention but only the transition. The latter comes fully into being only when the child entertains results in the form of problems or questions, the solution of which he is to seek for himself.[64]

Redden and Ryan argue that Dewey's interest theory gives no con-

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[62]Redden and Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education, p. 512.

[63]Rickover, Education and Freedom, p. 136.

[64]Dewey, The School and Society, pp. 145-146.

sideration to deferred values but only to immediate concerns.[65] It should be remembered that Dewey's theory must be understood from within the framework of his own basic philosophy. The traditional philosophical basis, which does not take into account the developmental concept of Dewey with its emphasis on the individual (organism) interacting with his world (environment), is easily misled at this point.

The point around which criticism has centered is the assumption that Dewey encouraged activities solely on the basis of ability to produce immediate satisfaction. From the above discussion and within the framework of his philosophy Dewey advocated only a carefully prepared and ordered content.[66]

## Subject Matter

In order to deal more adequately with Dewey's conception of subject matter it will be necessary to make explicit his view of educational experience. Some have understood Dewey to mean that all experiences are educative. However, this is contrary to Dewey's clear teaching on the matter.

> The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of

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[65] Redden and Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education, p. 513.

[66] Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 285-292.

further experience.[67]

Dewey's view was constructive. He said that experience which is truly educative is experience which is useful and possesses the capacity to control future experience toward educational goals. There are certain experiences which though they give immediate satisfaction fail to provide for continued meaningful growth in experience.

> /Dewey excludes experiences which/ produce lack of sensitivity--increase a person's skill...yet tend to land him in a groove or rut; --may be immediately enjoyable and yet promote formation of a slack and careless attitude; may be 'interesting,' and yet their disconnectedness may artificially generate dispersive, disintegrated, centrifugal habits.[68]

Dewey says, "the consequence of formation of such habits is inability to control future experience."[69]

Dewey, in his reaction to traditional education, never suggested that the traditional forms of education failed to provide for educational experience. He said the experiences of the old school were inadequate because of failure to take into consideration such psychological laws as "agreeableness and disagreeableness"[70] and failure to provide for "continuity of experience."[71] Adequate educational experience, Dewey taught

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[67] Dewey, Interest and Effort, p. 11.

[68] Dewey, Experience and Education, p. 13.

[69] Ibid., pp. 13-14.

[70] Ibid., p. 16.

[71] Ibid., p. 17.

must provide for both of these factors.

Dewey's principle of continuity involves his conception of habits. Habit, for Dewey is "deeper than the ordinary conception of habit as a more or less fixed way of doing things."[72] Habit covers attitudes that are formed both emotionally and intellectually. It involves our ways of meeting conditions which have arisen in the process of living. Habit then is vitally instrumental for Dewey in his understanding of the principle of continuity. He says, "The principle of continuity of experience means that every experience both takes up something from those (experiences) which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after."[73]

Growth is essential to Dewey's conception of experience which is genuinely educative. Dewey has often been attacked for his suggestion that the end of education is growth. Those who criticize him, as seen in the opening statement of this chapter, fail to understand that Dewey in advocating growth as the end of education is simply stating that it is impossible to separate the end from the means. He says, "The educative process can be identified with growth when that is understood in terms of the active participle, growing."[74]

Quality of growth is all important in its educational ramifications.

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[72] Ibid., p. 27.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid., p. 28.

By quality of growth Dewey means successfully dealing with all situations in the past which will not limit legitimate growth in other directions in the future. The means of growth are for Dewey universal rather than specialized in their application. He asserts, "...only when development in a particular line conduces to continuing growth does it answer to the criterion of education as growth."[75] The continuity of experience is in itself no warrant of acceptability in educational growth and experience. Continuity of experience, Dewey says, may be either positive or negative. A "spoilt child" is an example of the latter. Such a child demands that others cater to his desires and this gives the child a feeling that he should be able to do what he feels like doing without regard for others. Such an attitude "renders him averse to and comparatively incompetent in situations which require effort and perseverance in overcoming obstacles."[76] Inadequate continuity of experience, such as this, arrests development and incapacitates the child for subsequent growth. On the positive side of the continuity of experience it may be noted that valid educational experience arouses curiousity and sets up desire strong enough to enable a person to reach the envisioned goal in spite of reverses and difficulties. "Every experience is a moving force. Its value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into."[77] An educator having more

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[75] Ibid., p. 29.

[76] Ibid., p. 31.

[77] Ibid.

mature experience has a moral responsibility to guide the child into positive experiential situations and away from the negative dead-end experiences. Dewey says, "The greater maturity of experience which belongs to the adult as educator puts him in a position to evaluate each experience of the young in a way which the one having the less mature experence cannot do."[78]

Genuine experience has besides the personal inward factor an active objective aspect. Modern society, in contrast to the primitive, with its tools, roads, transportation and commerce is an illustration of the change in objective circumstances which condition present day educational values. Dewey argues in this context that experience is not completely an inward activity which occurs in a vacuum. Objective factors condition experience and in turn are conditioned by the growing developing experience of individuals.

> Every genuine experience has an active side which changes in some degree the objective conditions under which experiences are had... When this fact is ignored, experience is treated as if it were something which goes on exclusively inside an individual's body and mind. It ought not to be necessary to say that experience does not occur in a vacuum.[79]

The second factor beyond "continuity of experience" which makes experience genuinely educative is "interaction". Interaction is the factor which takes into consideration both outward and inward aspects of ex-

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[78]Ibid., pp. 31-32.

[79]Ibid., p. 34.

perience. Dewey says interaction assigns equal rights to both factors of experience--objective and internal conditions."[80] Traditional education, according to Dewey, gave exclusive attention to the objective factor and neglected the internal. Some representatives of the new school, Dewey says, having swung to the other extreme and emphasize exclusively the internal factors of experience.

> The trouble with traditional education was not that it emphasized the external conditions...but that it paid so little attention to the internal factors...But this violation is no reason why the new education should violate the principle from the other side...[81]

A valid educational experience must take into consideration the interaction between what a person is in himself and the environment external to him--whether the external environment be composed of persons or things.

> An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment...The environment...is whatever conditions interact with personal needs, desires, purposes, and capacities to create the experience which is had.[82]

The two aspects of educational experience compliment each other. Different situations follow one another but because of the continuity of experience the person brings to each succeeding experiential situation something not possessed in the former. As an individual moves from one experience to another, his appreciations, world, environment and life in

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[80]Ibid., pp. 38-39.

[81]Ibid., p. 39.

[82]Ibid., pp. 41-42.

general will expand or contract depending on the educational quality of his experiences. The individual's growth in truly educative experience will give the individual instruments to deal more satisfactorily with expanding challenges and situations.

> What he has learned in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with situations which follow. The process goes on as long as life and learning continue.[83]

The educator has the dual responsibility of providing an educational situation which will provide objective challenges with special consideration given to the particular individual who is to experience the new situation. "Continuity and interaction in their active union with each other provide the measure of educative significance and value of an experience."[84]

In the following discussion of subject-matter it will become increasingly clear that subject-matter for Dewey must take into consideration both aspects of educational experience--the individual and the environment. Dewey stated that, "There is no subject that is in and of itself, or without regard to the study of growth attained by the learner such that inherent educational value can be attributed to it."[85]

Dewey does not regard subject matter as something external to be presented to a mind, nor is it evolved out of the mind like a spider weaving a web. Traditionally, subject matter has been conceived as a dis-

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[83]Ibid., p. 42.

[84]Ibid., p. 43.

[85]Ibid., p. 45.

tinct body of truth to be mastered, and many traditionalists of the "rational" persuasion have accepted a view of "recollection" whereby the mind brings truth into focus by means of memory. He reacts to subject matter taken in the Neo-Thomist sense of being possessed with an external essence or reality which is knowable by the mind or human reason. Subject matter is an instrumental arrangement of knowledge in the historical development of the race.[86]

Subject matter is based on the assumption that knowledge is the result of the organism interacting with its environment. It is not exclusively giving attention to the outcome of inquiry. Subject matter, in Dewey's construction uses such material but in a different sense than in the traditional approach. Technically, subject matter refers to that part of existence which is undergoing inquiry.[87]

Subject matter is anything which "figures as a factor to be reckoned with in the completion of a course of events in which one is engaged and by whose outcome one is affected."[88] As such it "sets the conditions which give rise to thought. It is directly experienced in such a way as to set the conditions out of which awareness of the problem (or awareness of the nature of the problematic situation) arises."[89] Subject matter then

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[86]Dewey, Experience and Nature, pp. 73-75.

[87]Dewey, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, pp. 118-119.

[88]Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 158.

[89]Dewey, How We Think, p. 99.

is not a course of study (objectively the same for everybody which must be mastered) but rather resources available for the transforming of indeterminate situations into determinate ones.[90]

In the school situation logically organized subject matter refers to an organization of the terminations of previous inquiry. However, Dewey pointed out that the teacher's and pupil's approach to subject matter is different. The teacher has already experienced the subject matter but to the pupil it is only a potential experience. Logically organized subject matter represents the possibilities of the subject with which the learner is engaged. It does not yet refer to the learners existential status.[91]

Teachers need to have experienced logically organized subject matter to be effective. However, the subject matter is not to be looked on as a mass of knowledge to be poured into the "mind" of the student. The teacher should view subject matter as the logical organization of the experiences of others which the student needs to encounter. As such, it is the teacher's task to provide a situation conducive to such an encounter.[92]

> Or to state the same point in a somewhat different manner; the teacher should be occupied not with subject matter in itself but in its interaction with the pupil's present needs and capacities.[93]

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[90]Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 212-227.

[91]Ibid., pp. 214-215.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Ibid., p. 215.

> From the standpoint of the educator, in other words, the various studies represent working resources, available capital. Their remoteness from the experience of the young is not, however, seeming; it is real. The subject matter of the learner is not, therefore to be, identical with the formulated, the crystallized, and systematized subject matter of the adult...Failure to bear in mind the difference in subject matter from the standpoint of teacher and student is responsible for most of the mistakes made in the use of texts and other expressions of pre-existent knowledge.[94]

The subject matter must be second nature to the teacher so that his attention can be focused on the possibilities of the logically organized subject matter in the immature and fumbling impulses of the child. The teacher must provide connective links between his mature experience and the immature frame-of-reference of the student.

> The points need to be considered from the standpoint of the instructor and of student. To the former, the significance of a knowledge of subject matter, going far beyond the present knowledge of pupils is to supply definite standards and to reveal to him the possibilities of the crude activities of the immature.[95]

The best organization of subject matter is logical rather than chronological. On the basis of the logical approach a teacher can best provide for the transfer of learning. Transfer does not automatically occur; provision must be made for it. Dewey felt that scientific organization is the most fruitful. It is especially valuable because it is suited to show connections between objects in such a way that one can be seen to follow from one another and to lead to still others.[96]

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[94] Ibid., pp. 214-215.

[95] Ibid., p. 214.

[96] Ibid., pp. 214. 224.

Subject matter may be viewed both logically and psychologically. There is no contradiction between psychological and logical organization. Dewey explains the distinction by noting the difference between products of inquiry and process of inquiry. Logical arrangement, it will be noted, is significant because it gives rise to reflective thought.

> The logical forms that characterize conclusions reached and adopted cannot therefore prescribe the way in which we should attempt to arrive at a conclusion when we are still in a condition of doubt and inquiry...The distinction between process and product of reflective inquiry is thus not fixed and absolute. In calling the process 'psychological' and the product 'logical', we do not mean that only the final outcome is logical or that the activity that goes in a series of steps in time and that involves personal desire and purpose is not logical. Rather, we must distinguish between logical form, which applies to the product, and the logical method, which may and should belong to the process...[97]

It should also be noted that Dewey viewed subject matter as a means to the solution of problematic situations. The consequences of the solution are formulated as an object of knowledge having all the meanings found in means intentionally instituted in producing it. When means are selected in order to produce consequences amenable to formulation of objects of knowledge incorporating meanings indicating the connection of that object with prior experience and having a high evidential value in controlling future experience, then the object is called a valid or scientific object of knowledge.

> The organism is a part of the natural world; its interactions with it are genuine additive phenomena. When, with the development of symbols, also a natural occurrence, these interactions are directed

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[97] Dewey, How We Think, pp. 74-77.

> towards anticipated consequences, they gain the quality of intelligence, and knowledge accrues. Problematic situations when they are resolved then gain the meaning of all the relations which the operations of thought have defined. Things that were casually effective in producing experienced results became means to consequences; these consequences incorporate in themselves all the meanings found in the causes which intentionally produce them. The supposed grounds for opposing human experience to the reality of nature disappear. Situations have problematic and resolved characters in and through the actual interactions of the organism and the environment.[98]

Method refers to the sort of arrangement of subject matter which controls the development of experience in a fruitful, orderly way. The teacher's task is proper use of means.

> A primary responsibility of educators is that they not only be aware of the general principle of the shaping of actual experience by environing conditions, but that they also recognize in the concrete what surroundings are conducive to having experiences that lead to growth. Above all, they should know how to utilize the surroundings, physical and social, that exist so as to extract from them all that they have to contribute to building up experiences that are worthwhile.[99]

## Criticisms of Dewey's Subject Matter Theory

John Keats assumes that Dewey was not interested in subject matter. He says, "a school is not a child, a teacher and a building. A school is essentially what it teaches, and the first emphasis must be on content ..."[100] Albert Lynd says, "there is more wisdom in the 'subject matter'

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[98]Dewey, The Quest for Certainty, p. 234.

[99]John Dewey, Experience and Education, (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1938), p. 35.

[100]Keats, Schools Without Scholars, p. 8.

...than in any teacher or body of teachers...[101] H. G. Rickover observes that subject matter loses its meaning in the Deweyan approach and becomes based on "child interest" instead of "solid learning."[102]

Such criticisms are based on a failure to recognize Dewey's view of subject matter. The critics have assumed that any adequate treatment of subject matter must be approached from a basis in "faculty psychology." Dewey's approach based on scientific methodology recognized the valid use of subject matter.

> The net conclusion of our discussion is that the final reality of educational science is not found in books, nor in experimental laboratories, nor in class-rooms where it is taught, but in the minds of those engaged in directing educational activities. Results may be scientific, short of their operative presence in the attitudes and habits of observation, judgment and planning of those engaged in the educative art. But they are not educational science short of this point. They are psychology, sociology, statistics, or whatever.
> This is the point upon which my whole discussion turns. We must distinguish between the sources of educational science and scientific content....
> The first question which comes before us is what is the place and role of educative processes and results in school...when they are viewed as a source? The answer is (1) that educational practices provide the data, the subject-matter, which form the problems of inquiry. They are the sole source of the ultimate problem to be investigated. These educational practices are also (2) the final test of value of the conclusion of all researches.[103]

John Keats accuses Dewey of being anti-intellectual. He says mental discipline has been abandoned and that there is no content in Deweyan

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[101]Lynd, Quacker in the Public School, p. 70.

[102]Rickover, Education and Freedom, p. 138.

[103]John Dewey, The Sources of a Scientific Education, (New York: Horace Liverright, 1929), pp. 32-33.

education. "No curriculum, no school...curriculum is the hub about which most of the piercingly vocal educational argument whirls..."[104] The only way this can be done is by defining intellectual in a way which excludes Dewey's fundamental educational conceptions and then by denouncing him from a completely different set of philosophical criteria.

Mortimer Smith echoes Keats in asserting that Dewey was not interested in the transmission of the cultural heritage. He says, "The controversy today is between those who continue to believe that cultivation of intelligence, moral as well as intellectual, is inextricably bound up with the cultural heritage...and those who feel that education's primary task is to adjust the individual to the group..." [105] However, Dewey would agree that this is exactly the task of the educational enterprise. Social worth is the criterion of what should be transmitted to future generations.

> With the wide range of possible material to select from, it is important that education (especially in all its phases short of the most specialized) should use a criterion of social worth.
> All information and systematized scientific subject matter have been worked out under the conditions of social life and have been transmitted by social. But this does not prove that all is of equal value for the purposes of forming the disposition and supplying the equipment of members of present society. The scheme of a curriculum must take account of the adaptation of studies to the needs of the existing community life; it must select with the intention of improving the life we live in common so that the future shall be better than the past. Moreover, the curriculum must be planned with reference to placing essentials first and refinements second.[106]

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[104]Keats, p. 8.

[105]Smith, The Diminished Mind., p. 20.

[106]Dewey, How We Think, pp. 83-84.

Robert M. Hutchins is especially critical of Dewey in the area of practical and vocational studies being introduced into the school. On the basis of the philosophical orientation of his educational philosophy he considers knowledge of particular subjects to have a strengthening effect upon the mind. He says, "...the philosophy of Dewey is no philosophy at all, because it supplies no intelligible standard of good or bad."[107] Subject matter that is of a practical or vocational variety fails to meet the test of being intellectual. It is true that Dewey's philosophical orientation did not so limit the curriculum. He did not feel that any particular subject has a corner on intellectual processes.

> Any subject, from Greek to cooking and from drawing to mathematics, is intellectual, if intellectual at all, not in its fixed inner structure but in its function - in its power to start and direct significant inquiry and reflection. What geometry does for one, the manipulation of laboratory aparatus, the mastery of a musical composition, or the conduct of a business affair, does for another.[108]

Albert Lynd argues that Dewey's teachings are responsible for what he considers to be a lack of scholarship among teachers. He asserts that Deweyan philosophy does not advocate thorough grounding in subject matter fields. He says "the persons who have worked most effectively to isolate educationism from genuine scholarship...are those whose progressivist theories of education have freed them (in their opinion) from dependence upon traditional learning."[109] Lynd has confused Dewey's

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[107]Hutchins, The Conflict in Education, p. 53.

[108]Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 225.

[109]Lynd, pp. 168-169.

emphasis on method and psychological understanding of the child with lack of concern for logically arranged subject matter. Dewey emphasizes the need for both:

> The practically important question concerns the condition under which the teacher can really be the intellectual leader of a social group. The first condition goes back to his own intellectual preparation in subject matter. This should be abundant to the point of overflow...It must be accompanied by a genuine enthusiasm for the subject that will communicate itself contagiously to pupils...The central reason (why a teacher must have excessive foundation in subject-matter) is possibly not always recognized. The teacher must have his mind free to observe the mental responses and movements of the student...The problem of the pupils is found in subject-matter; the problem of teachers is what the minds of pupils are doing with this subject matter.[110]

> The problem of teaching is to keep the experience of the student moving the direction of what the expert already knows. Hence the need that the teacher know both subject matter and characteristic needs and capacities of the student.[111]

The crux of the problem between Dewey and the contemporary critics is in the meaning and acquisition of knowledge. The critics, in traditional fashion, view knowledge as an objective clearly defined body of subject matter. Knowledge from this approach is independent of individual experience. Dewey, on the other hand, argues that intellectual quality is not in the inner nature of subject matter per se but in the function of subject matter as an aspect in human experience.

## Summary

On the basis of the analysis in this chapter the following conclu-

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[110] Dewey, How We Think, pp. 274-275.

[111] Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 216.

sions appear to be warranted. Dewey has:

(1) Championed democracy because only in the free intercourse of a free society can an individual gain the intellectual resources necessary to deal adequately with the problems he must face.

(2) Emphasized activity because doing is involved in knowing.

(3) Emphasized child-interest because it indicates the present powers and tendencies of the child which are capable of engagement in subject matter.

(4) Emphasized interest as an integral part of learning process.

(5) Emphasized both inner and outer experience to be important in the educational process.

# CHAPTER V

## SOURCES OF THE CONTEMPORARY CRITICISMS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF WILLIAM HEARD KILPATRICK

In the preceding chapter the educational philosophy of John Dewey has been outlined. On the basis of the discussion it is clear that many of the criticisms are based on generalizations from isolated concepts or misinterpretations of Dewey's basic philosophy. It is possible, on the basis of such a procedure, to quote Dewey on either side of an issue to establish a particular point of view. Dewey used the concepts for which he is criticized but often times his meaning was different than that contained in the critic's interpretation.

If the educational philosophy of John Dewey is not to be equated with the Deweyite practices which have been criticized by the contemporary critics, then it will be necessary to discover sources from which these criticisms emanate. Possibly some of the misunderstandings of Dewey's educational philosophy can be traced to the implementation of Deweyan thought by William Heard Kilpatrick. Kilpatrick was a student of Dewey; however, in his own approach to the problems of education he added some ingredients not found in the basic approach of Dewey. A sum-

mary of Kilpatrick's views based on the educational concepts criticized by the contemporary critics will serve to point out the areas where Kilpatrick is in agreement with Dewey and where he goes beyond his teacher. It is in the implementation of these purely Kilpatrickan views by some modern educators that has led to some of the criticisms which have been discussed. In the next chapter an attempt will be made to ascertain other sources of criticisms erroneously attributed to John Dewey.

## Democracy

William Heard Kilpatrick has had a share in the responsibility for the life-adjustment movement in American public education. Many of the objections raised by the contemporary critics, while directed to Dewey, would more appropriately be directed to Kilpatrick in their understanding of what constitutes a democratic education. However, Kilpatrick is responsible for the implementation of some irresponsible and radical practices which have on occasions plagued American public school education.

Kilpatrick assumes that Abraham Lincoln's American dream of an individual's ability to rise from poverty to wealth is largely a thing of the past. This dream was based on an individual's initiative, on the one hand, and the super abundance of free farm land on the other. Today, however, there is no longer a large undeveloped frontier with free land for the asking. America has become an industrialized society. "The present system pits man against man to the hurt of all in almost every way."[1]

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[1]William Heard Kilpatrick, Remaking the Curriculum, (New York: Newson and Co., 1936), p. 20.

It is the responsibility of the American public school, Kilpatrick taught, to train the young in a spirit of social concern for others instead of participating in a "dog eat dog" attitude. "Civiliation actually depends on cooperation."[2] Such cooperation can only be learned in a school situation where the young are taught to appreciate the likes and dislikes of others.

> Where men in fact co-operate, each must understand what others are doing and fit his movements into the common process. There must then be exchange of common understandings, and common ways of acting together. It is the aggregate body of such common aims, common language, and common ways of co-operating with reference to common ends that constitutes the customs and institutions of any group. When the culture of any group is thoroughly unified, the young are molded unquestioningly to its model and men use their institutions with no more questioning criticism than we question the pressure of the atmosphere or the beating of a healthy heart.[3]

It is out of the historical change from an agrarian society to a highly industrialized economy that Kilpatrick sees the need for democratic education which will enable the child not only to get along with others but learn to make decisions on his own. A democratic society, he said, that is intelligent in a time of rapid change must make conscious provision to improve its institutions and educate its citizens for intelligent action.

> A public system of education for a democracy exists, largely at least, to serve just these two ends; to foster (especially through higher education) the criticism of our institutional life and to cultivate an intelligent citizenship to act accordingly.[4]

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[2]Ibid., p. 43.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 44.

Kilpatrick considered the essence of democracy to be respect for personality.[5] However, he would use social pressure and group consensus to erase the unharmonious social prejudices which children bring with them to school. He would not be against punishment in the most extreme cases, but he felt that in a democratic society most of the conforming could be brought about through group approval or disapprovel.

> Only by mingling with people under normal conditions can one learn to 'get on' with them. The stimuli of social approval or disapproval are, after all, about the strongest spurs for directing conduct aright that we know. Child and adult alike, yield to the demand of their fellows.[6]

John Dewey was interested in the school's providing social settings, because only in this way could a child be placed in situations that would lead to possible solutions to the problems that the child would face. It has been suggested that Kilpatrick accepted this basic insight of democratic education but that he made some significant additions to it. Dewey's emphasis was on the intellectual factors of interaction whereas Kilpatrick stresses conformity.

A contemporary critic John Keats objects to child manipulation in the school through conformity to the group. His objection is based on both intellectual and social grounds. Dewey is accused of developing social

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[5]William Heard Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, (New York: The MacMillian Co., 1951), p. 138.

[6]William Heard Kilpatrick, The Montessori System Examined, (Boston: Houghton Miffin Co., 1914), p. 25.

learning through group pressure.[7] However, it may be clearly seen that Kilpatrick, in a discussion of the Montessori system, advocated conditioned learning through group pressure. He said, "What we wish, then, is to put the children into such socially conditioned environment that they will of themselves spontaneously unite into larger or smaller groups to work out their life impulses, as these exist on their childish plane."[8]

Dewey never objected to teacher guidance. His concern was that the child be able to understand the situation for himself. He accepted the value of the group interaction, but only because through the interaction the child could see more clearly the issues involved, and because he felt that learning was basically a social thing. The inconsistency between refusing teacher guidance and conforming to social pressure that one sees in Kilpatrick does not appear in Dewey's system.

## Activity

Kilpatrick, not Dewey, asserted that the inner nature of the child fixes the aim of education, guides the process, and furnishes drive and inner motivation.[9] The criticisms of activity are leveled at the "hands off" policy of this view of child nature which stresses the inner urge of

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[7]Keats, Schools Without Scholars, pp. 85-100.

[8]Kilpatrick, The Montessori System Examined, p. 20.

[9]William Heard Kilpatrick, "Dangers and Difficulties of the Project Method, and How to Overcome Them--A Symposium," Teacher's College Record, 72:283 September 1926, p. 228.

the child to the point of failure to recognize the importance of environment. Kilpatrick appears to draw inspiration for this point of view from the Italian educator Montessori rather than from Dewey. He asserts that he and Montessori are in essential agreement "that the relatively free expression of the child's natural impulses...is the efficient plan for proper rearing."[10]

On the other hand Kilpatrick is in the tradition of Dewey in his emphasis on making school experiences meaningful. He emphasizes the necessity of the student becoming involved personally in the task he is performing. Life to be meaningful must be lived out, Kilpatrick says, it can never be handed down as a dictum to be mastered in some rote manner. He says, "We learn what we live...If we wish our pupils to build the kind of character.../desired/ they must live what they learn so as to build it into character."[11]

## Interest

Dewey is criticized for stressing personal satisfaction as a sole condition of learning. The Deweyan theory of interest is much too complex for such an over-simplification. Interest, for Dewey, involved discipline which carries with it the idea of conserted effort even in the face of intervening difficulties. Kilpatrick gives little or no attention to effort in the face of obstacles. He feels that a psychological law of human na-

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[10]Kilpatrick, The Montessori System Examined, p. 25.

[11]William Heard Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1951), p. 296.

ture is involved which makes positive re-inforcement the exclusive ingredient in learning. Dewey, as suggested in the chapter dealing with his philosophy, recognized the superior value of satisfying and successful experimentation but, on the other hand, considered negative results and re-inforcement as also truly educative. Kilpatrick does not apparently accept the Deweyan recognition of educational value derived from both positive and negative re-inforcement.

> We are ready now to state the Law of Satisfaction and Annoyance... A modifiable bond is strengthened or weakened according as satisfaction or annoyance attends its exercise...Satisfaction strengthens; annoyance weakens.[12]

Kilpatrick states that if a child feels interest in a broad area that the interest will be transferred automatically to small details. He suggests for example that interest in a play will lead to interest in the lighting necessary to the production of a play. Dewey does not entertain such a naive interest theory. Interest for Dewey never separates the knower and interest. But this is exactly what Kilpatrick does.

> Suppose these children have decided to put on a play of their own, then each thing felt to be necessary for the success of the play will take on, in good measure, the same interest they feel in the play itself and its success.[13]

## Subject Matter

Kilpatrick's treatment of curriculum content is quite largely a con-

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[12]William Heard Kilpatrick, Foundations of Method: Informal Talks on Teaching, (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1926), p. 30.

[13]Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, p. 279.

sistent interpretation of Dewey's concept of subject matter. Kilpatrick added his own unique twist in the development of the "project method." The following quotation suggests the parallel fundamental approach to subject matter contained in the philosophies of Dewey and Kilpatrick:

> This older curriculum was supported by a psychology that stressed even drill, and minimized creative thinking. It even doubted that most people can think anyhow. 'Motivation' (odious word, which starts with subject matter that this may get mastered) was to make the repetition palatable. The newer education finds its unit in terms of the newer psychology which starts with life as the pursuit of ends or purposes. A desirable educative experience is present then wherever a person faces a challenging situation and undertakes responsibility to deal with it. Such an experience will have in it elements new to him. He must deal creatively with them. He will learn, all over and all through, as he puts himself wholeheartedly into what he does. Our part is to guide our pupils so that they become ever better self-directing in facing life's situations. This is the conception of recent psychology which must remake the curriculum.[14]

Kilpatrick is in agreement with Dewey in his conception that life, experience, or growth is not something that takes place in a vacuum. Therefore, subject matter in the view of both thinkers is not something separated from life. Subject matter is not a course of study to be learned by rote by everyone in the same way.

> Life is the continual interaction between the organism and its environment. Something happens either within or without the organism, or between the organism and its environment, which stirs the organism to action. Whether that action be to seek or to avoid, either is goal seeking. The organism thus responds to the situation it confronts and...it responds as a whole.[15]

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[14]Kilpatrick, Remaking the Curriculum, p. 33.

[15]William Heard Kilpatrick, Group Education For a Democracy, (New York: Association Press, 1940), p. 77.

Kilpatrick's summary of the curriculum is Deweyan.

> By contrasting the two italicized definitions of the old and the new curriculums we see the essential difference. The old consists of a systematically arranged content of formulated knowledge which the learner is to acquire. The new consists of the total living of the child so far as the school can affect it, living of a kind to build the desired all-round character. The old seeks knowledge and vaguely hopes that somehow from this the good life will ultimately follow; the new seeks as its immediate aim the highest and finest quality of living that it can help effect, relying on the fact that if children do really live this quality of life they will in that degree build the same quality of character; for they do learn what they live and what is truly learned is therein built into character.[16]

There is one area where Kilpatrick and Dewey develop tension. There is an emphasis on felt needs in Kilpatrick that is lacking in Dewey. Some modern educators who have gone to extremes (these will be discussed in the next chapter) in the area of fulfilment of "felt needs" may have their source in this emphasis of Kilpatrick.

> Learning is increasingly seen as creative of its own subject matter, not simply an acquisition of what was already there. Education thus becomes primarily the conscious pursuit of personally felt purposes with ever more adequate self-direction as the goal. The unit of curriculum construction likewise becomes an instance of self-directed purposive living, not as formerly a selected portion of subject-matter-set-out-to-be-learned.[17]

Kilpatrick's instructions to teachers summarize his distinctive interpretation of interest and activity in education. He advocates that since the educational process should be as natural as possible ordinary subjects at all levels are to be done away with and that grade cards be discarded as a means of ascertaining student accomplishment.

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[16]Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, p. 314.

[17]Kilpatrick, Remaking the Curriculum, p. 18.

> This means that the curriculum is this fine quality of living as chosen by the pupils under teacher guidance...that in the elementary school and in the 'general' education of the high school ordinary school subjects as such are not taught; that marks are not kept nor formal report cards given.[18]

John Keats, it will be recalled, equated Dewey's philosophy with the view that students be permitted, in the name of democratic education, any activity that caught their imagination.[19] In the discussion of Dewey's educational philosophy it was shown that Dewey advocated no such position. However, Kilpatrick indicates that student interest should be the first and last concern and that unpleasant demands should never be placed upon the child. By unpleasant, Kilpatrick means, requiring the student to perform tasks which he does not care to perform. He says, "Let the principles of interest and purposeful activity set the predominant pattern... As a rule no compulsion and no punishment..."[20]

Kilpatrick's emphasis on "felt-needs," mediated interest and activity are often more nearly equated with the contemporary criticisms of modern education than with the educational philosophy of John Dewey. Contemporary critics recognize Kilpatrick only as an interpreter of Dewey. They fail to see the differences between Dewey and Kilpatrick. In reality it is the position of Kilpatrick (not Dewey) which is being criticized in reference to radical (distorted) views of "felt-needs."

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[18]Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, p. 428.

[19]Keats, Schools Without Scholars, pp. 85-86.

[20]Kilpatrick, Philosophy of Education, p. 429.

Kilpatrick's own enlargement of Dewey's educational philosophy in the areas of "activity" and "interest" and "felt-needs" is the source of some Deweyite educational practices. It would, however, be grossly unfair to assume that Kilpatrick is responsible for all that the contemporary critics suggest is wrong with the public school in these areas. The following survey will seek to discover other sources of the false equation made by contemporary critics between Dewey and the Deweyites.

# CHAPTER VI

## DEWEYITE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY: DEMOCRACY, ACTIVITY, INTEREST AND SUBJECT MATTER

The preceding chapters have presented the claims of contemporary critics of modern public school education. The criticisms have equated the purported weaknesses in modern education in a causal manner to the educational philosophy of the late John Dewey. Following the presentation of allegations, an attempt was made to set out the basic philosophical assumptions of Dewey and the educational theories which are related to his philosophical orientation. It was the purpose of this discussion to show that there is no causal relationship between Dewey's educational philosophy and what the critics call democratic education--stressing "life adjustment education;" school activity--emphasizing gross bodily movement; interest--doing what the child wants to do when he wants to do it; and an anti-intellectualism--bringing subject matter into disrepute.

There has been no attempt to deny the existence of the educational practices described by the contemporary critics. Moreover, the degree to which the purported weaknesses have influenced educational thought and practice in America is a subject that is outside the scope of this dissertation. Perhaps others will attempt an empirical study to ascertain the in-

fluence of the educational practices which have in this discussion been designated Deweyite educational philosophy. Since the preceding analysis of the educational philosophy of John Dewey clearly exonerates him of the equation made by contemporary critics, it will be necessary to complete the task begun in the last chapter by tracing the causal relationships of Deweyite educational thought and practice.

Before proceeding, a clarification of the meaning of special terms is indicated. Deweyite educational philosophy is the name arbitrarily assigned in this thesis to educational thought and practice--considered to be Deweyan in nature and origin by the contemporary critics--but as herein indicated not consistent with the educational philosophy of John Dewey. Deweyite thought uses many of the same words and expressions of Dewey but with different meaning attached. Progressivism refers to the movement in American education which emphasized the necessity of giving consideration to the child--his needs and interests--in the school. The history of the progressive movement reveals that some educators became so reactionary that they emphasized child need and interest to the complete exclusion of the intellectual heritage. John Dewey repudiated this radical wing of progressivism. He said,

> You will appreciate what is meant when I say that many of the newer schools tend to make little or nothing of organized subject matter... as if the idea that education should be concerned with the present and future meant that acquaintance with the past has little or no role to play in education.[1]

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[1]Dewey, Experience and Education, pp. 9-10.

The contemporary critics instead of attacking Dewey have in reality been criticizing the position Dewey repudiated. It is to this general radical progressive emphasis that the name Deweyite has been attached. Romanticism, in this thesis, refers to the view of human nature which conceives of child nature as capable of unfolding completely from within without external restraint or interference. Dewey criticized romanticism specifically. He argued that growth comes only as the result of a dynamic interaction between the individual and the environment. As such, educational growth and experience cannot be defined in some nebulus romanticist metaphysics of inherent energy seeking expression.

> Romanticism is an evangel in the garb of metaphysics...Flux is made something to revere, something profoundly akin to what is best within ourselves, will and creative energy. It is not as it is experience, a call to effort, a challenge to investigation, a potential doom of disaster and death.[2]

Psychoanalytics refers to that view of human nature, growing out of the Freudian analysis of human nature, which believes that behavior originates from instinctual energy and inhibition leads to personality difficulties. Freud said that psychoanalysis is "a dynamic conception which reduces mental life to the interplay of reciprocally urging and checking forces."[3]

> The displacement of energy from one object to another is the most important feature of personality dynamics. It accounts for the plasticity of human nature...Practically all of the adult person's interests, preferences, tastes, habits, and attitudes represent the displacements

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[2] Dewey, Experience and Nature, p. 51.

[3] Freud, Sigmund, "Psychogenic Visual Disturbance According to Psycho-Analytical Conceptions," Collected Papers, Vo. II, (London: Hogarth Press, 1925), p. 107.

> of energy from original instinctual object-choices. They are almost all instinct-derivatives. Freud's theory of motivation was based solidly on the assumption that the instincts are the sole energy sources for man's behavior.[4]

Psychoanalytics therefore is harmonious with romanticism in its emphasis on inherent instinctual energy as the sole cause for human behavior.

With the meaning of terms clarified there will be an attempt to show the tension which existed historically between Dewey and the radical progressives. Margaret Naumberg, who founded an extremely progressive school in New York City, points out clearly the difference she had with Dewey. She maintained that Dewey did not give enough place to the individual and that Freud and the psychoanalists are much closer to the truth than Dewey.

> Trotter and Freud are nearer the truth than Dewey when it comes to dealing with the relation of the group and individual psychology. They know that at present individuals are pulled down to the lowest common denominator of groups or crowds.[5]

The tension between Dewey's basic concept of reflective thinking and the radical progressive, strongly influenced by romanticism is pointed out in Naumberg's attack on Dewey's approach to intuition. She disagreed with Dewey's interpretation of intuition and reason. The reaction indicates the fundamental difference between Dewey and radical romantic progressives with regard to mental operations. The contrast is evident

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[4]Calvin S. Hall and Gardner Lindzey, "Freud's Psychoanalytic," Theories of Personality, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1957), p. 39.

[5]Margaret Naumberg, The Child and the World, (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1928), p. 59.

as is illustrated in the following exchange.

> The difference /Dewey says/ between an 'intuitive' and an analytic person is at most a matter of degree, a relative emphasis. The 'reasoning' person is one who makes his 'intuitions' more articulate, more deliverable in speech, as explicit sequence of initial premises, jointures and conclusion.[6]

Naumberg's opinion of this statement is one of shocked amazement. She says, "How strange! Imagine any truly intuitive person agreeing to that definition! Who ever heard of calling intuition and reason the same thing? Not if you've had any profound experience of intuition as such."[7]

It is clear that the radical progressives of which Naumberg was a vocal part did not agree with Dewey's interpretation of the emotional aspects of behavior. She attacks the Deweyan position directly by asserting that Dewey gave more attention to objective factors than to the subjective.

> Dewey says here that emotions are the reflex of actions...Nobody can but agree with Dewey and the Behaviorists as if it were so. But how about the effect of emotion or action? Emotion does not apparently take care of itself in our human lives. Dewey suggests that if right habits of action could be developed, the emotions would take care of themselves. Is it because no such perfect habits have ever been established that emotions have to take care of themselves? But there is implicit in this what he directly states in later books, that the objective (the non-emotional) is prior to the subjective (the emotional).[8]

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[6]Ibid., p. 153.
John Dewey, Education and Nature, p. 300.

[7]Ibid., p. 153.

[8]Naumberg, The Child and the World, p. 114.

## Deweyite Theories of Activity

There is a definite affinity and historical connection between the radical progressives of the early progressive movement in American Education and the Deweyites whose practices have come under the contemporary critics' penetrating analysis. Dewey's basic position in the important dimension of activity was different from that of the Deweyites who were to be equated in basic orientation with the radical progressives of the earlier historical period.

Dewey, as has been shown, held that activity is involved in the very process of knowing. Deweyites, on the other hand, have maintained that through activity the "essential nature" of the child is unfolding and consequently should not be supressed. Gustav G. Schoenchen in his book, The Activity School, asserts that man has three natures and that activity is essential to all. Margaret Naumberg takes the same view of activity but follows the analysts by insisting that to supress activity means to repress the child's natural urges which are seeking expression. In response to the question as to how psychoanalytic technique enters the modern school, Naumberg says,

> The practical problem, from the analytic viewpoint, in all human lives, is the adequate channeling of this energy into positive forms of work and personal expression. Civilization, for the analyst, is the result of infinite transformations of our personal energies in higher forms of cultural expression. This is called 'sublimation.' Education becomes in civilization a practical means to such change. But analysis concerns itself with the individuals as well as the social group who make up society. And one of its most important efforts in releasing the personality of children depends on freeing them from the excessive bonds of parental attachment...
> I ought here to include the teacher among those who may not regulate

> emotional reactions in a way that is appropriate to the needs of her various pupils. My point is that blocked, unsatisfied, or misdirected emotion in adults inevitably interferes with the normal development of children to whom they are related. So that the great problem in education is to help those who have this responsibility to become more aware of themselves. Only then can they begin to deal consciously with education.[9]

The romantic, radical, progressive, Deweyite approach was committed to a view of child nature which demanded absolutely free self-expression. However, before the child could be assured of gaining his freedom for expression of "felt-needs," the teacher must herself be free. This freedom could not come through any scientific approach to education as that proposed by Dewey. Science approaches the field from a single problem rather than from the unity of the field.

> Even though a cure of one symptom may give rise to others, they usually continue to treat our organism as a series of loosely associated parts, and not as a single unit in which every individual disposition relates to every other part of the bodily state....The difficulty in the transmission of these techniques for education lies in the fact that oral methods of theoretical teaching don't transform organic maladjustments. You can't teach teachers how to apply the principles of physical coordination or technique of psycho-analysis by classroom lectures. No. Teachers themselves have to go through the experience of being co-ordinated...[10]

This Freudian emphasis of letting the child do what he wants to do, so as not to damage his emotional nature, has been an integral part of the philosophy of the activity movement in education. Alexander S. Neill shows one of the most recent implementation of this approach in England.

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[9]Margaret Naumberg, The Child and the World, pp. 208-209.

[10]Ibid., p. 262.

At Summerhill the child is permitted to do or say whatever comes into his mind. Never is the child scolded or shamed. If the child uses foul or abusive language it is the philosophy of the school to accept this as the child's way of releasing inner tensions. It is felt that inhibition at this point would in some sense damage the child's personality development. All activities are entered into by the child freely. He may or may not attend classes. It is entirely up to the child whether he attempts any of the activities provided by the school. Also, it is the child who directs what is accomplished if and when he attends classes.[11]

Inherent in the doctrine of the Deweyite "Activity Movement" is the notion that feeling is a surer guide to grasp reality than the intellectual processes. Calvin Cady argues that the child must direct himself. In response to the traditional argument that the child does not have capacity to direct himself, Cady says,

> Are they really deficient in capacity...or has the process of awakening been wrong. Being of that philosophical persuasion which rejects the dictum that all knowledge is derived from without and through the physical sense, it accurred to me that the failure to reach the child might lie in the process; that the appeals had not touched the intuitional power of mind....
> Fortunately, not a part, but the whole of the kingdom of intelligence, knowledge, power of knowing, understanding, and expressing, is the lordly heritage of every being. Not by external means, therefore, but by touching the hidden springs of intuition, is it possible to lead the child to discover and organize himself--the prime aim of education.[12]

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[11]Alexander S. Neill, Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing, (New York: Hart Publishing Co., Inc., 1960), pp. 3-55.

[12]Calvin B. Cady, "Functions of the Creative Principles in Education," Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, editors, Creative Expression, (New York: The John Day Co., 1932), p. 133.

It should be pointed out that Dewey never once said that the aim of education was to discover one's inner nature and build on one's inner self alone. Growth, to Dewey, involved the interaction of the organism with the environment. As a result of the interaction growth, experience and knowledge resulted which could never have been realized simply by whimsical self-activity.

In contrast to this interactionism of Dewey, Cady in the romanticism which so often characterizes Deweyite educational technique says,

> For real and effective work it is absolutely necessary that the child be left unqualifiedly to himself...It is not imitation that should be sought from the child...but spontaneous expression...of an inner urge that may be awakened...The teacher must not tamper with the fruit of the child's imagination...The teacher should not make his cultural experience the criterion for the primitive ideas of the child...[13]

Francis D. Dugan suggested that the method of teaching is not at all important. The creative urge is so natural, she said, that the teacher should never suggest activities but simply step aside and watch the uninhibited expression of the child's desires.

> It seems so presumptuous to imply that any method of teaching has as much to do with that natural and strange force, the creative urge of the child. In so far as the creative spirit is simply one which sees the world in a new way, that spirit is an integral part of any childhood that is natural--not inhibited too soon by conventions...Too much interference with the manipulations of the tools in the process will inevitably make the child disconnect what has just been seen or felt vividly and freshly from the expression of it. We have all seen the great danger in making skill in expression seem to be something valuable in itself. It seems much safer to let expression fumble and

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[13]Ibid., p. 134.

fumble rather than interfere too soon and break the connection.[14]

Jean Piaget and F. G. Macomber argue that the child must be allowed to develop and learn naturally without adult interference. Adults do not think like children because they are on a different level. Human nature develops through a series of levels. The stages or levels are fixed to such a degree that great harm may be done to the child by forcing attention to pursuits for which he is not adapted as yet.[15] Piaget is in the same tradition of romanticism which suggests that the inner nature of the child determines the activities which the child must freely follow. Dewey objected to adult activities for children, but, as indicated above, his reaction was from a completely different philosophical orientation.

Deweyite educators have emphasized "know-how" in learning to a degree which excludes Dewey's basic concept of doing as being involved in the very process of knowing. Stanwood Cobb argued that "know-how" results from activity.[16] Carolyn Pratt develops the thesis that "knowing-how" is essentially an activity in process of development.[17] Margaret

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[14]Francis D. Dugan, "Nurturing the Creative Spirit, A Symposium of Teachers," Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, editors, Creative Expression, (New York: The John Day Co., 1932), p. 198.

[15]Jean Piaget, The Child's Conception of the World, (London: Kegan Paul, French, Trubner and Co., Ltd. 1929), pp. 1, 19, 30-31.

[16]F. G. Macomber, "Best Teachers Don't Maintain Discipline," Sierre Educational News, XXXII, September 1936.

Stanwood Cobb, New Horizons for the Child, (Washington: The Avalon Press, 1934), pp. 100-103, 144-145.

[17]Caroline Pratt, I Learn From Children, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948), pp. 6-7.

Johnson expresses dissatisfaction with discussions relative to the nature of knowledge and epistemological pursuits. She asserts that children fulfil their spiritual end when they are active. Play, which is essentially learning by doing, is the proper means of education.[18]

The Deweyites advance a theory of activity far different from that of John Dewey. It is the unanimous opinion of the Deweyites that school should provide an environment where activity is encouraged because only in the free expressive activity of childhood's fancy does nature unfold. Activity unguided and undirected is the method; unfolding of inherent nature is the goal. Thus, Deweyites do not agree with Dewey that intelligent, problem-solving activity is a necessary part of the interaction of the organism and its environment in the learning process.

## Contemporary Critics' Criticism of Activity

One of the criticisms which was leveled at the educational philosophy of John Dewey was the accusation that Dewey advocated undisciplined growth. The sources advocating undisciplined growth may be found in a variety of places but never does Dewey advocate such a position.

Hughes Mearns states,

> The newer education is learning the uses of the mysterious forces of the spirit through which one may literally educate oneself for all the important needs of living. It is like a heart beat; no one has found the source of its power but no one doubts that the source is within us. The creative spirit is another heart; it will keep us

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[18]Margaret Johnson, Some Adventures With a School, (London: Jarrolds Publishers, Ltd., 1934), pp. 94-95, 117.

> alive if we give it a chance to beat for us; it may be stilled, but but there is then no more life.[19]

Harriet Ayer Seymour is even more explicit in her espousal of undisciplined growth. She seeks to allay the fears of those who are disturbed by the apparent lack of order and discipline.

> Sometimes friends of progressive education are fearful of too much freedom which may develop into license. It is true that a certain lack of order and discipline is often apparent in experimental education, but in classes of the children learning music 'the new way' the learning is in itself a discipline.[20]

Robert M. Hutchins claims that Dewey is responsible for lack of sequential study because he made a place for activity. Hutchins assumes that "having a good time"[21] is incompatible with sequential study. Dewey was of the opinion that sequential study to be effective must involve activity in the early grades. Hutchins confuses Dewey's position with a group of educators who made activity an end in itself. In the section immediately preceding this there was a quotation from Cady in which this very process was advocated. It will be recalled that effective work, according to Cady, could only be accomplished when the child was left "unqualifiedly to himself" and the teacher must not suggest the cultural heritage as a guide to learning. The point has already been clarified

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[19] Hughes Mearns, "Childhood's Own Literature," Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, editors, Creative Expression, (New York: The John Day Co., 1932), pp. 17-18.

[20] Harriet A. Seymour, "Creative Expression in Music," Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, editors, Creative Expression, (New York: The John Day Co., 1932), p. 82.

[21] Hutchins, The Conflict in Education, p. 86.

sufficiently showing that John Dewey recognized the vital part which the cultural heritage plays in the education of the young.

Redden and Ryan assume that Dewey is responsible for placing the immediate "felt-needs" of the child in an all important educational position. They assume that Dewey taught learning should only take place "when the child experiences a 'felt need' for a specific learning activity or situation."[22] It must be recognized that Dewey did place great stress on the child. He reacted to making the child the pawn of adult interests. However, Dewey never advocated placing the immediate desires of the child in an exclusive determinitive educational position. He saw clearly that the child must be directed and guided into the processes of reflective thinking. The Deweyites, on the other hand, emphasize the necessity of fulfilment of immediate needs guided exclusively by concrete experiences. Ferriere insists that the child be guided exclusively by concrete experiences and that abstraction is useless until a certain stage is reached. Perhaps the most obvious movement away from Dewey is the insistance that the immediate needs of the child are all important in the educational process. Ferriere states,

> We must, then, see that the child lives in the concrete, that his reason awakens slowly through a constant contact with things, that he reacts ceaselessly on visible and tangible objects. His need for activity will thus find satisfaction. And this activity will carry with it actions and reactions out of which grow the natural sanctions which alone form the mind and bring out progress.../It is essential to recognize that for/ children of seven to twelve years of age, manual

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[22]Redden and Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education, p. 512.

> work must remain the cornerstone of education. If this conforms to the child's ancestral needs, it will equally meet his psychological needs; his mind will proceed from the concrete to the abstract by slow stages without the hasty premature intervention of the reflective thinking of the adult.[23]

H. G. Rickover equates Dewey's educational philosophy with the Deweyite "hands off" activity policy. He says Dewey's educational philosophy "usually calls forth a picture of teaching methods which permit the child to express himself freely."[24] Rickover fails to take into account the fundamental difference between the two positions relative to human nature. The Deweyite theory of activity is based on the developmental potentials exclusively within the child himself. According to this position the end or level of development is built into child nature, therefore absolute freedom with no control will assure attainment of the goal. Education is based on the inherent needs of the child.[25] This position is not in harmony with Dewey's educational philosophy. Dewey points out that the concept of human nature as the unfolding of inherent powers and which suggests that attempts at modification will inevitable lead to frustration, may be traced to the climate of thought in romanticism. Dewey was a firm believer in the modifiability of human nature. He said that "the essential fixity of human nature" is not a valid concept.

The supposition that there is such a thing as a purely native original

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[23]Ferriere, The Activity School, p. 13.

[24]Rickover, Education and Freedom, p. 137.

[25]Ulich, History of Educational Thought, pp. 33-335.

> constitution of man which can be distinguished from everything acquired and learned cannot be justified by appeal to the facts. (For practical purposes the distinction between the native and the acquired is valuable). Included in this native stock is, however, the tendency to learn and acquire...The capacity for modification is part of the natural make up of every human tendency; it belongs to an unlearned equipment (as that is defined at a particular time) for learning, in which process it is itself changed.[26]

The crux of the tension between Dewey and the Deweyites which apparently has not been recognized by the contemporary critics, is in the nature of educational growth and development. Dewey says a situation must be provided for intellectual growth. Deweyites contend that intellectual growth is built in or provided for internally. Deweyites believe that a priori categories develop regardless of interaction. Dewey maintains that there is no such thing as fixed, immutable human nature.

## Deweyite Theories of Interest

Deweyite "Interest Theory," in much the same manner as "Activity Theory," grows out of sources in early radical progressivism based on a philosophical orientation arising out of romanticism. Romanticism as indicated above is to be contrasted with Dewey's view because of Dewey's recognition of objective factors. With Dewey's theory of interest as a sounding board, the differences between Dewey and the Deweyites may be presented. The Deweyites separate the object of interest from the individual self or organism. They assume that since it is psychologically

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[26]John Dewey, "Human Nature," E.R.A. Seligman, editor, Selections from the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1945), p. 533.

impossible for a person to give attention to that in which he has no interest, then interests of the child are the only fundamental interests of educational significance.

It is assumed, on the basis of the Deweyites view of human nature, that the child's interest at a given stage gives insight into the child's view of reality at a given level of development. The Deweyite theory of interest argues that it is harmful to force subject matter on a child in which he expresses no interest. It asserts that if a child is inhibited, that child's moral development suffers a tremendous set back.[27] Subject matter is conceived of as something that is objective to the child. In the discussion of Dewey's theory it was pointed out that Dewey conceived of subject matter as growing out of the interaction of the individual and his environment. In some sense both the traditional school and the Deweyites are a distance from Dewey in this matter.

Junius L. Meriam argues that child interest internally motivated should govern the choice of subject matter. He goes so far as to assume that subject matter is not needed, provided the activities of the child meet the immediate and personal demands of the child. The Deweyite is saying in effect that the immediate interests of the child are the sole criterion for the selection of subject matter.[28]

Margaret Naumberg in her portrayal of practices and theory at "The

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[27]Cady, "Functions of the Creative Principles in Education," pp. 133-134.

[28]Junius L. Meriam, Child Life and the Curriculum, (Yonkers-on Hudson: World Book Co., 1921), pp. 382, 415, 436-437.

Walden School," asserts that the child's personality will be harmed if not given "adequate expression at every age period."[29] She is of the opinion that the school should cater to the interests of the child.[30] This is essential because release of spontaneous feelings is essential if the child is to find fulfilment. Consequently, there should be no norms set up as goals toward which children should reach.[31] Jean Piaget, following a similar point of view, suggests that the curriculum be built (if at all) on the basis of the interests found in children.[32]

Naumberg indicates her affinity to Freudian thought when she suggests that self-activity motivated by pupil-directed interest can be completely trusted when it is guided by a teacher trained in psycho-analysis. Unless the child is permitted freedom, the deterioration of the mind which is now in progress will be continued.[33]

Adolph Ferriere emphasizes that it is the useful and not the verbal that is important in education. This is a basic concept in the Deweyite philosophy of education. He says, "It will be noted that two traits

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[29]Margaret Naumberg, "The Walden School," National Society for the Study of Education, 26th Yearbook, Part I, Curriculum Making: Past and Present, (Bloomington: Public School Publishing Co., 1926), pp. 335-339.

[30]Ibid., pp. 333-334.

[31]Naumberg, The Child and the World, pp. 250-251.

[32]Piaget, The Child's Conception of the World, pp. 11-30.

[33]Naumberg, The Child and the World, pp. 211-214.

characterize the Activity School as I have set it forth: the absence of verbalism and the presence in every thought and act of an element of usefulness."[34]

Ferriere wants the teacher to be very reticent in the matter of guidance. If the teacher leads the child the child should not be aware that he is being led.

> First, remember that it is seldom your place to suggest to him what he shall learn; it is for him to desire it, to seek for it, to find it, it is for you to bring it within his reach, skillfully to awaken this desire, and provide him the means of satisfying it.[35]

Ferriere wants it made clear that it does not matter what the child learns just so the child is interested in what he is doing and understands it. He says, "Moreover, as it little matters what he learns, provided he thoroughly understands it and what use it is to be put to, the minute you can give him nothing further in the way of real enlightenment, give him nothing at all."[36] In order that the child understand what he is doing it is necessary that the work be a concrete experiential project of doing something. Ferriere instructs teachers, "Do as much as possible of your teaching by doing, and fall back on words only when doing is out of the question."[37]

Ferriere is definite as to the basis of this learning by doing cur-

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[34]Ferriere, p. 191.

[35]Ibid., p. 25.

[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid.

riculum. Child interest is to be the criterion of school activity. The "program will be adapted to the dominant interests of children and adolescents."[38] If the child is not immediately interested, then the teacher must recognize that the child is too young. Spontaneous desire should be the criterion of educational readiness.

> At the very beginning the technique must be understood and wanted by the child; if he does not want it he is still too young to understand the necessity for it, and if at that time it is imposed on him, he will infallibly take a dislike to it.[39]

If the child is interested in the task he is doing and understands it, there will be a sense of happiness. Joy and happiness will be the credentials of a satisfactory curriculum.

> The child's own character finds expression above all in drawing. He loves to work in accord with his imagination and his nature, and to produce beautiful forms, agreeable figures. He produces them by a free impulse of his will; he enjoys everything he does; he experiences an inner satisfaction. He has imitated God, for he has, so to speak, created; he is well pleased with his handiwork...The teacher is here simply a witness, and can only at times serve as guide; the pupil, free to go his own pace, in his own way, consults his powers, follows his inclinations, obeys his nature.[40]

Regardless of the age of the child, it is the contention of the Deweyite, the child's essential nature is the moving force. Dewey, it will be recalled recognized a need for balance between the organism and its environment.

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[38]Ibid., p. 196.

[39]Ibid., p. 136.

[40]Ibid., pp. 130-131.

## Contemporary Critics' Criticism of Interest

The Deweyite theory of interest is much less complex than Dewey's theory. They stress the inner springs of action and talk about child nature. Dewey is not unmindful of the child's basic drives but also emphasizes that educational growth and experience are the result of an interaction with the environment.

The contemporary critics have not noticed this vital distinction. They accuse Dewey of advocating an interest theory based on spontaneous expression which leads to absolute anarchy. From the above study it is clear that the critics are reacting to an educational philosophy which has received articulate expression. However, the critics have failed to see that the Deweyite, unlike Dewey, is building his educational philosophy on the foundation of a romantic view of human nature which places exclusive emphasis on subjective factors to the neglect of objective considerations.

John Dewey uses terms such as "activity" and "spontaneous interest," but the context makes it clear that Dewey does not use the words with the same meanings attached to them as in Deweyite interpretations. The meaning applied to these terms by the Deweyites are explicitly denied by Dewey. It is difficult, he says, to build walls around philosophical and educational concepts in order to insure the integrity of meaning.

> The difficulty is particularly great in the discussion of interest. Interest is in the closest relation to the emotional life, on the one side, and through its close relation, if not identity, with attention, to the intellectual life, on the other side. Any adequate explanation ...would require the development of the complete psychology both

> of feeling and of knowledge, and of the relations to each other, and of the discussion of their connection or lack of connection with volition.[41]

Dewey goes on to say that it is impossible to call forth any activity without interest. He then characterizes two interest theories which he points out are not in harmony with his own. The traditional effort theory which just substitutes one interest for another and holds out remote goals as a reason for the effort. The other notion is that of distracting the child and thereby creating interest.

> The principle of interest is eternally to excite, that is, distract the child. Continuity of activity is destroyed. Everything is made play, amusement. This means over-stimulation; it means dissipation of energy. Will is never called into action at all. The reliance is upon external attractions and amusements. Everything is sugar coated for the child, and he soon learns to turn from everything which is not artificially surrounded with diverting circumstances. The spoiled child who does only what he likes is the inevitable outcome of this theory of interest in education.[42]

Both theories, Dewey says, have the same ultimate goal, mastery of an existent objectified knowledge.

> This identical assumption is the externality of the object or idea to be mastered; the end to be reached, the act to be performed to the self. It is because the object or end is assumed to be outside self that it has to be made interesting; that it has to be surrounded with artificial stimuli and with fictitious inducements attention. It is equally because the object lies outside the sphere of self that the sheer power of 'will,' the putting forth of effort without interest, has to be appealed to.[43]

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[41] John Dewey, "Interest in Relation to the Training of the Will," Second Supplement to Herbart Yearbook for 1895. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1905), p. 5.

[42] Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[43] Ibid., p. 9.

Dewey's theory of interest, as shown above, is from a completely different orientation.

> The genuine principle of interest is the principle of the recognized identity of the fact or proposed line of action with the self; that it lies in the direction of the agents own growth, and is, therefore, imperiously demanded, if the agent is to be himself.[44]

If one would recognize the concept of identification there would be no need, Dewey says, for "appeal to sheer strength of will," or to the "making of things interesting to the child."[45]

Mortimer Smith claims that Dewey is responsible for the exclusive emphasis on forming the curriculum around the immediate interests of the child. He says the Deweyan emphasis leads to "a mere catering to what the student thinks he wants."[46] The discussion of Dewey's theory of interest in the previous chapter has destroyed this indictment. It was shown at that point that Dewey advocated enduring in a course of action in spite of contrary solicitations when that course of action led to the solution of a problem or the reaching of a goal. However, the Deweyites are frank to admit that the child's immediate interests are the only important factors in the curriculum.

The discussion of Deweyite theory of interest and the contemporary critics assumption that Dewey advocated the Deweyite philosophy of interest has shown that there has been a false equation made between

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[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Smith, The Diminished Mind, p. 18.

Dewey and the Deweyites at this point. Therefore, since the criticisms are leveled at a theory which are not consistent with Dewey's interest theory it appears safe to conclude that they are not criticisms of Dewey.

## Deweyite Theories of Subject Matter

The discussion of Deweyite theories of activity and interest are correlated with a particular view of subject matter. To a large extent everything that has been said in these areas applies to curriculum development. Gustav Schoenchen speaks of the three fold nature of the child; mental, physical and social.[47] Recognizing these distinct but interrelated aspects and the development within each phase of human nature, Schoenchen asserts that there must be an attempt to synthesize and correlate subject matter. All knowledge is based on sense impressions and it is the teachers responsibility to furnish the impressions. However, even without a teacher human nature is so constituted that powers can be developed even when the individual is isolated from society. Schoenchen is tremendously influenced by Rousseau's high regard for the inherent development as depicted by Robinson Crusoe while separated from society. Therefore, the aim of education is not to be found in society but in the individual child. Basically, the individual and society have opposing aims. The good individual must precede the good society.[48] It should

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[47]Gustav G. Schoenchen, The Activity School: A Basic Philosophy for Teachers, (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1940), p. 60.

[48]Ibid., pp. 65, 138, 283, 285.

be observed that to Dewey education and man's social relationships are inseparable.

Most Deweyite literature reveals the assumption that the spontaneous active interest of the child should be the sole guide in curriculum formulation. Most of the spokesman assume the necessity of this position on the basis of child nature. This in turn is posited because there is a predisposition to believe in the culture epoch theory as indicated previously.[49] A host of Deweyites may be cited who ascribe to this view of human nature which is in contrast with that proposed by John Dewey. Hughes Mearns points out the determinative effect this view of human nature has on subject matter.

> The child is a genuine primitive. He needs little or no instruction, but he must have materials and his surroundings must be such as to call his effort worthy; he is susceptible to condemnation and will give up all his precious art and lose one of the most gracious of nature's gifts-for, alas, it may be easily lost-if his overlords command.[50]

The inter-relatedness between child nature and educational philosophy for the Deweyite is obvious. The child must not be forced to pursue a logical consecutive subject matter because his militates against his private interests and encroaches upon his free activity. As a result subject matter traditionally conceived is to be discarded because it does not square with the Deweyites' romantic view of human nature.

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[49]Ferriere, The Activity School, pp. 76-78.

[50]Hughes Mearns, "Childhood's Own Literature," Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, editors, Creative Expression, (New York: The John Day Co., 1932), p. 17.

Peppino Mongravite says,

> My idea of a teacher...is a person who is clairvoyant, who is able to penetrate the mind and soul of a child. A teacher must comprehend what the child wants to do. He must never interfere with the child's mental image by telling him how to begin.[51]

Adolph Ferriere argues that the child must be free to externalize instincts. Children, he says should be twelve to fourteen years of age before they are ever faced with any subject matter other than the child's own immediate interests. Ferriere's rule is no subject matter, by which he means the traditional subject, before adolescence. Prior to adolescence there should be no encroachment on the liberty of the child. Spontaneous expression, child interest, immediate needs, and the "play way" are the important criteria of curriculum building.[52]

Deweyites indicate in all their writings that feeling is a surer guide to understanding reality than is intellect.[53] This position is to be contrasted with that of John Dewey. Dewey, while he recognized modes of awareness other than the cognitive, taught that every child is capable of genuine cognitive experience. He said that only through intelligent action can American democratic culture reach the ideal. The school is the place for training the pupil in intelligent action.

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[51]Peppino Mongravite, "The Artist and the Child," Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, editors, Creative Expression, (New York: The John Day Co., 1932), pp. 31-33.

[52]Ferriere, The Activity School, pp. 84, 121.
Adolph Ferriere, "What is the New School," Progressive Education, 63:123-125, June 18, 1930.

[53]Ferriere, The Activity School, p. 103.

> To bring to consciousness of the coming generation something of the potential significance of the life of today, to transmute it from outward fact into intelligent perception, is the first step in the creation of a culture...Teachers...are sharing in the act of creation...Not chiding but the sympathy and direction of understanding are the harsh utilitarian and prosaic tendencies (that) present education require.[54]

The Deweyite who gives exclusive attention to child development on the basis of free expression differs from Dewey in that Dewey emphasized thorough study of subject matter materials. Dewey's view of subject matter, however, is different than that of the traditionalist. The chief difference is in the structure of knowledge as pointed out in the discussion of Dewey's theory of knowledge and educational philosophy. From that discussion it was shown that Dewey believed that subject matter is simply raw material which must undergo certain transformations, as it is internalized by the individual, before it may be described as having been a part of cognitive experience.

The Deweyite does not hold this view of subject matter. Some Deweyites differ among themselves in varying degrees but they are consistent in that they hold that when the material of learning is encountered, it is encountered directly. Know how comes with use but things are known for what they are directly. Dewey, it has been shown, emphasized the instrumental character of objects of knowledge. Knowledge is never immediate. It is always at the conclusion of a successful process of reflective inquiry.

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[54]John Dewey, "Education and American Culture," Joseph Ratner, editor, John Dewey's Philosophy, (New York: The Modern Library, 1939), p. 728.

Summarizing the position of Dewey it may be clearly indicated that Dewey called for a carefully developed subject matter leading to sequential activities on the part of the child. Content is determined by experience taking place interactively between: (1) the child as experiencer, and (2) the object or thing in the environment. Subject matter is the careful sequential organization of materials leading to these experiences.

## Contemporary Critics' Criticism of Subject Matter

Admiral Rickover has accused Dewey of denying a legitimate place for content in the educational process. He has equated Dewey's position with the Deweyite who just wants the child to express himself.[55] It has been established that this is not the position of John Dewey. It is the Deweyite educational philosophy deeply rooted in romanticism which conceives the end of education to be the unfolding of the nature of the child. Elizabeth Ferm epitimizes this position,

> We believe that man, to know himself, was necessitated to objectify his inner life in the very outermost, that that outermost might serve as a mirror to reflect his image. This belief made us zealously guard the outposts of the child's life. So many good people are always ready to do things for children.[56]

> An unhampered child is always self-active and creative. He is absorbed in his own interests and is therefore reluctant to receive suggestion or direction from outside. He needs no encouragement to do things. His own impulses and desires are so alive and urgent they keep him busy fulfilling the promptings of his own being. Outside

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[55]Rickover, pp. 138-140.

[56]Elizabeth Byrne Ferm, "Creative Work at the Modern School," Gertrude Hartman and Ann Shumaker, editors, Creative Expression, (New York: The John Day Co., 1932), p. 36.

> suggestion or direction only serves to interrupt and retard the work of the self active child.[57]

Mortimer Smith asserts that Dewey is responsible for the movement which neglects the cultural tradition. He says, "The controversy today is between those who continue to believe that cultivation of intelligence, moral as well as intellectual, is inextricably bound up with the cultural heritage and accumulated knowledge of mankind..."[58] Again, it must be understood that Dewey does not conceive of the cultural tradition as an objective body of knowledge to be learned in a rote manner by every child who enters the school. Failure to understand Dewey's philosophy of education at this point will continue to bring this allegation from traditionally oriented critics. Dewey says we must use the cultural heritage as raw material to connect the child with the past but this is not the end of the process. Out of the interaction of the child with the raw material--the child, on the basis of intelligence, sees new connections and as a consequence novel experiences result.[59]

## Democratic Education (Life Adjustment)

The contemporary critics have been vocal in their equation of democratic education, conceived in terms of life adjustment, with the educa-

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[57] Ibid., p. 37.

[58] Smith, p. 20.

[59] Dewey, Democracy and Education, pp. 177-178.

tional philosophy of John Dewey.[60] It will become increasingly clear that there are developments growing out of "Life Adjustment Theory" which would be applauded by Dewey: the emphasis on education for all American youth; the recognition of the practical arts as truly educative; and the emphasis on expansion of the curriculum to meet the needs of a changing society. However, to equate "Life-Adjustment Education" as the critics interpret it with the educational philosophy of John Dewey is to fail to take into consideration irreconcilable differences in fundamental approach.

"Life Adjustment Education For Every Youth," became the avowed policy of the United States Office of Education, in a Bulletin release Number 22, in 1951.[61] John W. Studebaker, in the introduction to the bulletin, points out the leading spirit in the life adjustment movement,

> The office of education is indebted to the large number of educational leaders who participated in the conferences...Gratitude is extended to those who rendered services as officers of several committees and to persons who, through their writing and other labors, contributed to this project. Foremost among those is Charles A. Prosser, author of the resolution, and a never-ending source of inspiration.[62]

The man who led the committee in its report which stated the need for "Life

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[60]Keats, Schools Without Scholars, pp. 83-86; Smith, The Diminished Mind, pp. 83-86; Lynd, Quackery in the Public Schools, pp. 169-209; Rickover, Education and Freedom, pp. 23-24; Redden and Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education, p. 565; Hutchins, The Conflict in Education, p. 55.

[61]United States Office of Education, Life Adjustment Education for Every Youth, (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, Bulletin No. 22, 1951).

[62]Ibid., p. 3.

Adjustment Education" was Charles A. Prosser.[63] John Dewey's name does not appear in the list of distinguished educators who attended the conference,[64] (in fact he was ill and died the next year), nor does his name appear among the educators who had been working on this report as early as January, 1944. The fact that Dewey had no vital connection with the development and implementation of the program which began as early as 1944 would indicate that Dewey had no direct bearing on the program in a formitive manner.

The contemporary critics attack the life adjustment education philosophy primarily because it presents, in terms of democratic right, an educational pattern which would insure training through the secondary level for all American youth. The criticism arises because the educational patterns,

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[63]Ibid., p. 16. Original form of Prosser Resolution: It is the belief of this conference that, with the aid of this report in final form, the vocational school of a community will be able better to prepare 20 percent of the youth of secondary-school age for entrance upon desirable skilled occupations; and that the high school will continue to prepare another 20 percent for entrance to college. We do not believe that the remaining 60 percent of our youth of secondary school age will receive the life-adjustment training they need and to which they are entitled as American citizens --unless and until the administrators of Public education with the assistance of the vocational education leaders formulate a similar program for this group.

We therefore request the U. S. Commissioner of Education and the assistant commissioner for Vocational Education to call at some early date a conference or a series of regional conferences between an equal number of representatives of general and of vocational education to consider this problem and to take such initial steps as may be found advisable for its solution.

[64]Ibid., p. 105.

techniques and aims of the life adjustment approach are, it is felt by the critics, in opposition to that which truly represents education. Education, according to contemporary critics, is sound grounding in the 3 R's on the elementary level, and beyond these rudiments, disciplined grasp of the cultural tradition through rigid study of traditional liberal arts subject matter.

The Prosser report on life adjustment education denies the adequacy of traditional secondary school education. The report asserts that secondary schools have been oriented to preparing students for college. This approach, the report states, is legitimate for those who plan to attend college and may even be acceptable to others who have the capacity for liberal arts education. However, the majority of American high school students do not go to college and the report contends that they have little or no interest in the subject matter of the college preparatory high school. As a result students are dropping out of high school in alarming numbers. If the American democratic ideal of education for all youth is to be realized, the secondary school must change its approach and provide educational opportunities of a quality and kind that is appropriate to the needs of the 30 percent of American youth who do not enter high school and the additional 30 percent who do not complete the work begun.[65]

The emphasis of life adjustment education is a movement away from college preparation as the sole curriculum criterion for the modern American

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[65]Ibid., p. 15.

high school to a diversified curriculum which takes into account the needs of pupils not college bound. Life adjustment education expands the curriculum to include vocational interests, family relationships and citizenship.

> The Commission defines Life Adjustment Education as that which better equips all American youth to live democratically with satisfaction to themselves and profit to society as home members, workers, and citizens. It is concerned with ethical and moral living and with physical, mental, and emotional health.[66]

Life adjustment education assumes that it is the school's responsibility in a democratic society, to provide a school environment where each student may develop his own abilities and potentials. It is the opinion of life adjustment educators that, although a child is not gifted in the pursuit of traditional school subjects, and may be incapable of such educational pursuit, there are practical educational pursuits which will bring challenge to such a child. The report asserts, "These youth are educable, but they are different in abilities to learn and in types of educational needs...teachers need to provide for them a wide variety of learning activities."[67] Modern educational psychology concurs with this point of view and nothing in the educational philosophy of Dewey would oppose the expansion of the curriculum in an effort to meet student's individual needs.

The original report on life adjustment education was focused on secondary school education. Since the report a number of educators have

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[66]Ibid., pp. 9-10.

[67]Ibid., p. 48.

advocated life adjustment education for all levels in the educative process including the college curriculum. Florence Stratemeyer advocates such a position. She says,"It seems to me that the life adjustment concept applies equally well to elementary, to secondary and even to college education."[68] Stratemeyer is of the opinion that life adjustment practices in vocational education might prove beneficial even to the "gifted" in pursuit of professions as well as the more menial occupations.[69]

## Contemporary Critics' Criticism of Democratic Education

The contemporary critics object to the concept of life-adjustment education because they feel that life adjustment is not the task of the school. Organizations in society, it is argued, are better equipped to teach social graces, manual occupations and a multitude of practical things. The school should be the school; and a school is a place where subjects in the liberal arts are taught. In a democracy every child should have an opportunity to go to school and take as much education as his capacity permits. When a child is no longer capable of successfully engaging in the pursuit of an education he should be permitted to find useful employment.

Dewey's educational philosophy provides for a conception of education which would recognize the genuine educational value of practical pur-

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[68]Florence B. Stratemeyer, "Education for Life Adjustment," edited by Phillip H. Phenix, Philosophies of Education, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1961), p. 29.

[69]Ibid., p. 30.

suits. The basic approach of his philosophy in this regard was doubtless a strong support to the basic assumption of life adjustment education which attempts to reorganize the curriculum of the high school in an effort to provide vocational education for those individuals who do not plan to attend college. However, Dewey was not concerned with "vocational" education per se, but with the intellectual quality of all learning. So that while it might be possible to confuse Dewey's expansion of intellectual pursuits to practical studies with a suggestion that he advocated vocational education--such an assumption is false and a confusion of the issues.

> Any scheme for vocational education which takes its point of departure from the industrial regime that now exists is likely to assume and to perpetuate its divisions and weaknesses,...Such a vocational education inevitably discounts the scientific and historic human connections...To include such things in narrow trade education would be to waste time...[70]

Life adjustment education with its concern for vocational education fails to recognize the Deweyan meaning of adjustment. Dewey's theory of adjustment is not satisfied with adjustment to existing conditions by narrow specialized vocationalism but seeks to creatively open new horizons through reflective thought.

Admiral Rickover talks about the "bare intellectual backsides" of the Deweyan approach.[71] The critics assert that Dewey is responsible for anti-intellectualism. If the critics define intellectualism as the successful passing of the traditional subject matter course then Dewey stands

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[70] Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 372.

[71] Rickover, p. 14.

condemned. However, Dewey's educational philosophy plainly shows that within the framework of his philosophy disciplined intellectual growth would result in the traditional curriculum as well as in the practical pursuits. The critics are attacking the Deweyite when they assume Dewey had little interest in advancement toward goals and standards. There is some evidence of the lack of standards in the life adjustment bulletin statement which may be the source of the contemporary critics attack.

> The demands for technical knowledge of the language which life will make on the educationally neglected student will be practically nonexistent. These students will never to any great extent transfer the rules of grammar to the small amount of writing they will have to do. It seems far more likely that improvement in their written expression will result from practice in functional situations than from drill on technical rules of grammar. With oral expression, the same is true. It will be desirable to attempt to develop correct and concise usage, but the method will have to be chiefly practice in real situations.[72]

The critics equate Dewey's educational philosophy with life adjustment education. The life adjustment view of interest as stated in the bulletin has some flavor of the Deweyite in that it views subject matter as something external to the individual which must be made interesting. The life adjustment report by Prosser and Stratemeyer's statement both consider educational interests as in some sense external to the person. Interest, according to Dewey it will be recalled, is inherently involved in the interactive process.[73]

The life adjustment report in the implementation of its program considers the "project method" to be a vital tool in making life adjustment

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[72] Life Adjustment Education Bulletin, p. 83.

[73] Dewey, Democracy and Education, p. 362.

education meaningful.[74] In the previous chapter certain differences between the educational philosophies of John Dewey and William Heard Kilpatrick were observed. It will be remembered that the "project method" is an innovation of Kilpatrick not Dewey.

From the foregoing analysis of life adjustment education and the contemporary critics insistance that Dewey bears major responsibility for the movement; it is apparent that Dewey's involvement must be clarified. To what extent Dewey's philosophy is related becomes an important question in the light of this thesis. It has already been recognized that Dewey would not condone narrow vocational studies as a consistent implementation of his intellectual interest in practical pursuits. He would approve practical pursuits only as they become involved in a connected intellectual problem solving situation. Dewey's consistent approach to educational problems would react to the narrow interests of life adjustment education and to the inherent separations in the system between vocational and intellectual studies.

Perhaps the problem can be dealt with more adequately under the heading of the critics over-enthusiastic generalizations. They assume that because Dewey advocated an expanded curriculum that he must have been the father of life adjustment education. The facts clearly indicate that the actual father of life adjustment education was Charles Prosser. The critics assert that Dewey and the life adjusters in general are attempt-

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[74] Life Adjustment Education Bulletin, pp. 1-39.

ing to tear down the intellectual standards not only of students but of teachers as well. In the discussion of Dewey's educational philosophy documentary evidence was presented showing the importance of teachers being soundly grounded in the intellectual disciplines. Moreover, in the only record available of Dewey's encounter with college curriculum planning, Dewey gives every evidence of advocating a very strong logically organized subject matter for colleges. The report states:

> Changes in the educational system should come, not by surrendering the peculiar values of the liberal arts college, but by suffusing through the whole educational structure the liberalizing spirit and outlook that have characterized the liberal arts college at its best.[75]

John Keats pinpoints what he considers to the continuing power of life-adjustment education--the teacher training colleges which hold subject matter orientation in disrepute. He considers Dewey to be causually responsible for the modern pragmatic school and the teacher training college which sustains it. In any event the modern school, according to Keats, is without intellectual standards.

> Mastery is not the goal in pragmatic high schools. Like other teachers - college - trained - pragmatists, they do not consider mastery of any subject matter to be the primary goal of education, but believe that primary goal to be manufacture of life-adjustment citizens.[76]

Dewey would accept Keats' suggestion that he believed that subject matter

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[75]Rollins College Bulletin, "The Curriculum for the College of Liberal Arts," John Dewey Chairman, (Winter Park, Florida: Rollins College, 1931), p. 10.

[76]Keats, p. 63.

per se is not the primary end of education. However, Dewey clearly emphasized the great importance of sequential subject matter for both student and teacher. In the report of the committee study on curriculum in the liberal arts college Dewey's committee statement clearly decries the lack of preparation of many students entering college.

> It is regrettable, but nevertheless a fact, that the college must waste a great deal of time and energy in doing what should have been but was not done earlier, in overcoming, antidating, correcting, supplanting, the results of ignorance...long accumulations during the formitive years in home and school...[77]

Not only did the Dewey-sponsored committee report emphasize the need for adequate preparation for those entering college but the actual curriculum suggestions indicate a solid foundation in the liberal arts. The curriculum suggestions were not exclusive for those taking a particular degree but for all college graduates.

> a. English competence /should include ability to write and speak with/ confidence, appeal, interest, accuracy and effectiveness. /Details have been eliminated in this outline/
> b. At least one foreign language...
> c. Mathematics through solid geometry and plane trigonometry...
> d. History: The student should have a comprehensive and general understanding of the development of institutions and of international relationships...
> e. Physics
> f. Chemistry
> g. Biology
> h. Social and Economic institutions...
> i. Physical fitness...[78]

Robert M. Hutchins considers life-adjustment education to be in-

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[77]Rollins Report, pp. 10-11.

[78]Ibid., pp. 15-16.

adequate because to him education should not only give the individual the ability to adjust to the present environment but to change the environment. He says, "It is far more urgent that we notice that our mission here on earth is to change our environment, not to adjust to it."[79] Hutchins argues that life-adjustment education has led to a curriculum over-loaded with vocational specializations to the point where no time is available for serious study and a reasonable degree of thoroughness.

> The process of specialization has therefore turned out to be a process of inhibition. The traditional definition of a specialist is that he is a man who learns more and more about less and less. In the United States we have discovered that he can be a man who learns less and less about less and less.[80]

The degree to which Hutchins' criticism affects higher education is a matter of conjecture. There are any number of books on the market today which seek to substantiate his claims.[81] However, it is a completely different thing to say that John Dewey advocated adjusting the individual into existing environmental conditions without providing for developing capacities for changing both the individual and the environment. Hutchins says, "...Mr. Dewey also had a hand..."[82] in the educational process which lead up to current life adjustment concepts. Concepts which load down the curriculum with so many activities that it is impossible to master

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[79]Hutchins, The Conflict in Education, p. 19.

[80]Ibid., p. 39.

[81] See Bibliography under Bestor, Conant and Koerner.

[82]Hutchins, The Conflict in Education, p. 86.

anything. Dewey speaking through his committee report on curriculum for liberal arts education in college shows the error of equating him with positions which advocate anything less than mastery.

> Time must be allowed in the educational process for a reasonable degree of thoroughness in dealing with problems. Quality of educational experience must not suffer for the sake of added quantities of information.[83]

The Dewey committee study on college curriculum for a liberal arts college at Winter Park, Florida, had some interesting things to say in an anticipatory manner which cuts the heart out of equation of Dewey with "quackery" in American education particularily on the college level. The committee reported that teacher certification should never limit the qualified teacher simply because he had not met some procedural requirement.

> The training and certification of teachers for school and college should not be so completely as at present controlled by law and bureaucratic regulations, under which some of the best qualified teachers are often debarred because of failure to comply with some quantitative regulation.[84]

The Dewey sponsored report, contrary to the critics view of Dewey's democratic equalitarianism, suggests that standards of admission and attrition at college should be closely guarded. There is no indication in this report that just any student be either admitted or retained in college without meeting the intellectual requirement.

> ...the college should select with extreme care these students best fitted for it. Within the college, appraisals should be frequent in

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[83] Rollins Report, p. 13.

[84] Ibid., p. 14.

the first part of the work so that necessary adjustments and eliminations should not be too long deferred.[85]

## Summary

To what extent is Dewey involved in life-adjustment education? The discussion has indicated that a man by the name of John Prosser is the recognized father of the life-adjustment theory of education. Life-adjustment education originally sought to provide secondary school vocational training for students unequipped for college preparatory courses. There was no indication in the "Prosser Report" that college preparatory courses per se should be altered or diluted in any manner. Since the original report there has been an expansion of life-adjustment conception downward into the grades and upward into the college. The expansion of life-adjustment education, according to the critics, has threatened the whole system of American education with intellectual suicide. The person responsible for life adjustment education, according to the contemporary critics, is John Dewey. It has been shown that the critics' equation of Dewey's educational philosophy with radical progressive practices including life adjustment education is not warranted by the facts. Life adjustment education is a narrow utilitarian emphasis which seeks to implement its aim by a shallow vocationalism which Dewey rejected. Dewey's approach provided for the expansion of the processes of intelligence into every area

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[85]Ibid.

of life; however, he never advocated separating the cultural aims of education from a vocational training approach which played down the intellectual capacities of large numbers of students.

## Chapter VII

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The preceding discussion has been undertaken with the conviction that a careful analysis of the patterns of thought which characterize the philosophy of John Dewey would tend to exonerate him of the many careless charges of anti-intellectualism. This study has not attempted to be an apology or defense of "Instrumentalism" per se. There has been no effort to suggest that the philosophy of John Dewey is either superior or inferior to other current philosophical approaches. Such an effort is beyond the scope of this presentation. However, there has been an attempt to show clearly that John Dewey has been falsely equated with philosophical thought and educational practices which are not conducive to intellectual excellence or educational efficiency.

The material presented will be summarized with a view to crystallizing the arguments. Finally, the conclusions which have been stated or implied will be made explicit.

## Summary

The first chapter began with a recognition of the difficulty faced in attempting to assess the influence of John Dewey on current educational

thought and practice. This problem has been increased by the fact that many educational innovators have claimed Dewey as their source without respect to harmonizing their practices with his educational philosophy.

Critics who have reacted to these unwarranted educational innovations have assumed that because Dewey advocated certain educational reforms and because Dewey's reforms had semantic similarities to the unwarranted innovations--therefore, Dewey must be considered the source of these illicit practices. Such an equation has been facilitated by the tension in basic philosophy between Dewey and the contemporary critics.

The problem of this thesis has been to ascertain what validity contemporary criticisms have which equate the educational philosophy of John Dewey with unwarranted educational innovations. The educators who advocated these radical views have been labeled Deweyites. It has been noted that while some Deweyites were followers of Dewey--a second group were naive innovators who failed to see the discontinuity between their position and that of Dewey--and a third group who were fully aware of the fundamental differences between their approach and that of Dewey.

The contemporary critics are alarmed at what they consider to be a drift away from subject matter orientation to life adjustment practices in American education. They argue that the structure of Dewey's philosophy is the responsible source for theories of activity, interest, subject matter and democracy which have led to a lowering of educational

efficiency and intellectual standards.

The purpose of the thesis has been to defend the hypothesis that educational methods and techniques of the Deweyites are not derived from or consistent with the educational philosophy of John Dewey.

In the second chapter the views of six representative contemporary critics were presented. John Keats argued that Dewey abandoned mental discipline and intellectual responsibility by his substitution of life adjustment educational practices. Dewey's theory, according to Keats, trains the student to meet the problems of life by conditioning him in proper social attitudes and providing vocational training. In the early phases of education, Keats argued that Dewey emphasized letting the child's interest and active nature set the pattern of learning. Democratic education is the conforming of students into a dull grey intellectual and moral middle of the road standard through group pressure.

Mortimer Smith said Dewey was responsible for current weaknesses in American public school practices. The disregard for intellectual standards, life adjustment education, moral decay, curriculum set by student whim, projects and narrow vocational preparation, conformity to group values--each of these educationally questionable approaches are the result of the Deweyan pragmatic philosophy.

Albert Lynd said Dewey was the founder of progressive education and that all progressive innovations flow out of the basic Deweyan educational philosophy. Anti-intellectualism, disregard for subject matter, democracy which emphasizes equality without regard for individual

differences or capacities, narrow vocational concerns, grade school curriculum based on the felt-needs of the child, and a philosophy lacking in moral and intellectual values--all these approaches to educational thought and practice grow out of Dewey's philosophical orientation.

H. G. Rickover said that human survival is in the hands of the educational enterprise but the public school is in a sad state of cultural lag due to the pervasive influence of the educational philosophy of John Dewey. As a result of the Deweyan philosophy "real education" has been replaced by a curriculum where childhood's free expression is the rule, activity in terms of gross bodily movement is the norm, narrow vocational preparation is the means of providing training for everyone, mediocrity is the standard, and the pursuit of excellence has been completely disregarded in the life adjustment program of conditioning.

Redden and Ryan asserted that progressive education is simply the implementation of John Dewey's "Instrumentalism." They suggested that Dewey is responsible for emphasis on curriculum development based on "felt-needs" of the student, personal interests, and immediate satisfaction with the consequent disregard for subject matter and deferred values.

Robert M. Hutchins said that Dewey is responsible for child-centered education and narrow utilitarian vocational concerns which have resulted in proliferation of the curriculum. This has been done, said Hutchins, on the pretext of providing democratic education for the masses. These unwarranted educational innovations, which have made a wasteland

of public school education, are the direct result of the failure of progressivism to provide a solid fundamental philosophy. Because Dewey's thought stands behind progressivism and Dewey does not have an authentic basic philosophy, progressivism is left without a foundation. The anti-intellectualism in American education is the outgrowth of a philosophy of education without intellectual support from a sound fundamental philosophy.

The contemporary critics in their attack on American public school education and their equation of Dewey with unwarranted educational innovation criticized four basic areas--democratic education, activity, interest and subject matter.

In the third chapter an attempt was made to ascertain the reliability of the critics' assertion that John Dewey's educational philosophy had no foundation in an authentic fundamental philosophy. The critics assumed that Dewey's view of reality was inadequate because it was set in the framework of constantly changing experience centered process. Such a process, they said, was without form or structure.

An analysis of Deweyan philosophy, contrary to the critics allegation, revealed that Dewey does indeed present an authentic basic philosophical orientation. His metaphysical views, it was seen, grew out of his methodological approach. Reflective inquiry, necessitated by problem situations, culminate in objects of knowledge. On the basis of examination of the process of reflective thought and the objects of knowledge produced by quantitative relational implementation of the process--Dewey made some assumptions about reality or nature.

Dewey approached the problem of philosophy and life from a common-sense view of experience. Experience is the active-passive encounter which the organism faces in environmental situations. Experience of things and events are immediate and non-cognitive. In experience difficulties develop when the harmonious relations between an organism and its environment is broken. Reflective thinking--through the process of inquiry --pinpoints the problem, projects possible solution, hypothesizes answers and checks for experimental verification. Successful solutions are habitually used in similar instances. However, when man is challenged by novel situations which move beyond the particular situation to more general ones--there is a need for a scientific methodology. Scientific methodology abstracts qualitative factors from nature and sets them in quantitative relationships which form the basis for objects of knowledge. Objects of knowledge are logical constructs distinct from the original subject matter of experience but verifiable by recourse to experimental examination in the experiential situation.

Dewey pointed out that the ends of inquiry reveal terminal points from which qualitatively distinctive elements may be ascertained. On the basis of these distinctive qualitative elements which reveal certain structural elements in nature--Dewey makes a metaphysical assumption. The gross (non-cognitive) subject matter of experience (nature) possesses qualities which are in any given process of inquiry terminal or structured in such a way as to be amenable to quantitative relational abstraction. Nature may change but it is not a fluid unstructured change. In the con-

tinuum of experience, Dewey says, there are points which are relatively fixed at a given moment. This permanence provides the basis for verification, on the one hand, and by a process of interaction provides the content which undergoes transformation, on the other.

The discussion of Dewey's value theory pointed out that his moral philosophy, contrary to the critic's charge, provides for deferred values. The meaning of value, for Dewey, was seen to be in terms of guidelines or projections for future moral choices. A value is a proposed activity (end-in-view) which will lead to a good action. A good action is the satisfactory termination to a moral problem oriented situation. Values, in contrast to goods which are already completed, are estimates of what will be good in the future.

The nature of philosophy, for Dewey, is to provide for use of scientific method and data--via the process of inquiry--to deal with the problems of human preference. Philosophy is a value oriented discipline in contrast to science which is fact oriented.

In chapter four the discussion of John Dewey's educational philosophy established the contention that Dewey was no radical innovator in educational practices. He made no attempt to cast aside the cultural heritage or disciplined study. However, while recognizing the value of funded human experience and the necessity of its transmission--Dewey reacted to what he considered the unrealistic manner in which traditional educators separated subject matter from student life. Education, he said, must be lived to be vital. Not all education is equally valid. The criterion of educational efficiency is the capacity of educational experience to produce

growth. Educational growth is the living out, in a dynamic experiential situation, of various aspects of the funded experience of the race. Educational growth takes place only through the dynamic interaction between student and environment. On the basis of this approach, contrary to the critic's assertion, Dewey said that not just any experience produces educational growth. Efficiency in transmission of the cultural heritage comes about when a teacher--thoroughly in command of the intellectual heritage of the race--guides the young through patterns of growth in self-realized experiential situations. Dewey means by growth--the capacity of the individual to project ends-in-view, and then on the basis of intelligent action and reaction, resulting from practiced ability in the art of reflective inquiry, to reach the goal or educational value. Such growth does not mean undirected activity but a developing capacity to deal successfully with richer and more meaningful areas of life both now and in the future.

Dewey's view of Democracy is not naively equalitarian--nor does it advocate narrow vacationalism to insure education for the masses. Man, to Dewey, is a social being who realizes himself most fully when the interests of the groups are shared by all its members. Ideas in society must be shared to be vital. Dewey felt that democracy could best be realized if people, in small groups, interacted with each other for the purpose of communicating their thoughts and feelings. Problems of society are amenable to intellectual procedures just the same as problems of any individual person. Interaction of the group is impeded when its members are isolated according to so-called intellectual capacities into labor forces (vocational

job training) and intellectual professions (via liberal arts).

Critics equate Dewey with pictures of school room practices where children are running about doing whatever strikes their fancy. Dewey never advocated activity simply for the sake of gross bodily movement. Merely being actively engaged in pleasant pastime does not necessarily constitute valid educational experience. Experience is the key concept in an attempt to understand what Dewey means by activity. The controlling influence on activity is always the problematic situation. Out of interaction which results from attempting to relieve an imbalance in the environment --there is of necessity activity. Activity is educationally meaningful only when it connects the individual to factors in his environment which lead to resolution of experienced difficulties. Activity is the intellectual involvement of the organism in the pursuit of solution to experienced problems.

The original experience is non-cognitive but when in the course of living customary responses do not resolve encountered difficulties-- the organism actively engages the experienced difficulty through inquiry. In the process of inquiry the problem is crystalized, hypotheses (ideas) are formulated and tested intellectually through projection and finally tested for validity in experimental examination. It is clear that Dewey never meant activity to mean pleasant pastime--although the activity of inquiry may itself be pleasant. Nor did Dewey suggest that the school is the place where just any activity goes on. School activity is always problem oriented with a purpose or goal-in-view, in the Dewey educational philosophy.

Dewey reacted to theories of interest which separated the organism from the thing which supposedly possesses interest. Interest is not external--it is an inherent part of what we call aim or purpose. Interest is not capricious--it is goal directed. Interest, involved as it is with goal directed activity, is equivalent to acting with a mind. Acting with a mind is the capacity of the organism to refer present conditions to future consequences. Interest is that which moves the organism along to the fulfilment of its aims. Dewey says that in a real sense aim and mind are two sides of the same coin because aim is to act with meaning.

Forced interest, for Dewey, is a contradiction. Interest means that the self and world are engaged in a developing situation. To be interested is to absorbed in a situation. Discipline is that capacity of interest to persist toward a goal in spite of intervening obstacles. Dewey escaped the interest-effort dilemma by identifying the self with the developing growing organism in search of fulfilment through goal directed activity. Educational aims are not separate from the individual but part of the developing process. The self is a unity to the extent that the organism incorporates and relates previous meanings, but it is in the process of becoming in the sense that ends are anticipated beyond the present experienced terminals. The educators task is to guide the student into an involvement with the ends of previous inquiry (the cultural heritage) in such a way that the student sees the aim as his own.

Dewey's view of subject matter reacts to traditional views which approached subject matter as something external which is presented to the

"mind" of man to be mastered because it is the intelligible essence of the world. The Deweyan approach to subject matter is based on the assumption that knowledge is the result of the organism interacting through inquiry with the environment. In this approach subject matter and method are separable only in classification for convenience. Therefore, for Dewey, attention is not exclusively given to the outcome of inquiry but the approach is made from significant experiential situations which will draw the student intelligently into a quest for knowledge.

Dewey's view of subject matter revolves around his conception of growth and educational experience. Growth means the successful involvement of the organism in a problem situation which in turn becomes a means to further growth. Valid educational experience sets the pattern by preparing situations in which growth toward the fulfilment of educational ends may be realized. Logically arranged subject matter is the teachers organization of terminations of previous inquiry which represents potential experience for the student. Logically arranged subject matter is the teacher's orientation--it is not yet the experiential status of the student until the pupil becomes involved in the processes of thought which call for implementation of the subject matter.

The critics have been unfair in their suggestion that Dewey gives no consideration to subject matter. The tension between Dewey and the critics is in the area of emphasis. Traditionalists place emphasis on content to be mastered. Dewey felt that content becomes meaningful only when experienced. Such experience involves the dynamic interation between stu-

dent and environment. Both aspects are important in the Deweyan approach.

In the fifth chapter the educational philosophy of William Heard Kilpatrick was considered as a possible source of Deweyite practices. Kilpatrick was a noted student and interpreter of John Dewey. In some of his interpretations Kilpatrick went beyond the pronouncements of Dewey and developed his own unique philosophy of education. It was in the area of purely Kilpatrickan views that the source of some erroneous Deweyite practices were discovered.

Kilpatrick felt that social pressure is essential to conform the student into the values of democratic society. Dewey recognized the value of social institutions but in contrast to Kilpatrick's emphasis on conformity to existing institutions--Dewey argued that society is a forum in which intelligent interactions leads to patterns of creative development. Dewey considered the institutions of society to be environmental factors which interact with individuals in problems of a social nature. Criticisms of practices advocating social pressure is clearly a view of Kilpatrick.

Kilpatrick is close to the Italian educator Montessori--not Dewey--in his view of activity which asserts that the inner nature of the child fixes the aim of education and furnishes the inner motivation. Criticisms of the hands-off policy of the schools finds a source in Kilpatrick.

Dewey recognized interest to be an integral aspect of the educational aim. On this basis discipline was seen to be the organisms persistent effort to reach its goal in spite of intervening difficulties. Kilpatrick felt that interest was in the child or that the child had an interest in things.

Such interest, he said was transferable. Dewey never placed interest in things. Interest was always, for Dewey, an integral part of the aim of a person which grows out of the interaction between the organism and the environment.

Kilpatrick emphasized "felt needs" of the child as legitimate factors in curriculum development. Dewey had said that the individual integrates data (subject matter) as a means to the solution of problems growing out of the interactive process. Kilpatrick said the inner nature or desires of the child should set the pattern for the educational enterprise. The tension between Dewey and Kilpatrick is clear--Dewey pointed out that educational problems grow out of encountered difficulties artfully instigated by the school--Kilpatrick suggests that "felt needs" of the student sets the goal. Criticisms directed at formulating the curriculum on the basis of childish whim is clearly a position advocated by Kilpatrick.

The discussion in chapter six revealed that there is no causal relationship between Dewey's educational philosophy and what the critics call democratic education--stressing life adjustment education; school activity--emphasizing gross bodily movement; interest--in terms of doing what the child thinks he wants to do; and anti-intellectualism-unconcern over subject matter.

Besides William Heard Kilpatrick there was a group of radical progressives who denied any affinity to Dewey but whose views were equated with him. These radical progressives share responsibility for the extreme educational innovations considered in this discussion.

In attempting to delineate these sources of Deweyite educational philosophy the meaning of several terms was defined. Progressivism was seen to be a movement in American education where the child and his interests were given emphasis. Some progressives became extremely radical and denied the importance of the cultural heritage--they assumed that child nature set the exclusive aim of education. Romanticism was defined in terms of a view of child nature which states that the child is capable of unfolding completely from within without external guidance or control. Psychoanalytics has reference to views of human nature (Freudian in source) which suggests that behavior originates from instinctual energy and that inhibition of such energy leads to personality difficulty.

There was tension between Dewey and the radical progressives. Margaret Naumberg said the psychoanalists, with their subjective explanation of behavior, were closer to the truth than Dewey, who had explained behavior in terms of an interaction between subjective (organism) and objective (environment) factors. The tension between Dewey and the radical progressives was evident in the views of activity which each advocated. Dewey had said that activity is an integral part of the process of reflective thinking which leads to knowledge. The radical progressives (Deweyites) said the child's essential nature is brought to fruition through activity. Inhibition of felt needs (which demand free expression) leads to damage of the child's emotional nature. Feeling for the Deweyite is a surer guide to reality than the intellectual process outlined by Dewey.

Growth for Dewey was seen to be in terms of satisfactory solutions

to problem oriented situations which bring meaningful connections to the inquiring student. Growth for the radical progressive (Deweyite) was seen to be the uninhibited flowering of the child's inherent nature. This flowering proceeds naturally when not disturbed by outside interference. When such interference occurs, before the child has reached a pre-ordained level, great harm may be done to the delicate flower of nature. Consequently, activity--for the Deweyite--must be undirected if nature's goal is to be fulfilled. Dewey, by way of contrast, said the task of the school is to bring the cultural heritage into meaningful situations in which (through interaction) the child integrates and makes the meanings of past experience his own. Robert M. Hutchins, H. G. Rickover, and Redden and Ryan, misinterpreted Dewey's view of activity to mean gross bodily movement. They assumed that Dewey conceived of such gross activity as being essential to the child's inherent nature without respect to objective (outside) forces.

Deweyite theories of interest grew out of sources in early radical progressivism based on a philosophical orientation arising out of romanticism. The Deweyite separated the object of interest from the individual self or organism. Interest is inherent and ready made in the organism at the various levels of development, according to the Deweyites. Therefore child interest exclusively motivated from within should govern the educator's choice of subject matter. Some of the Deweyites argued that subject matter, beyond the personal demands of the child is not needed. Child interest should set the complete content of the activities of the school. Naum-

berg, said child interest can be completely trusted. Adolph Ferriere discouraged teacher guidance. He said the school program must follow the dominant interests of the child. The child's essential nature should always be the moving force in the development of the curriculum.

In contrast to the exclusive stress on inner springs of action and child nature--Dewey, while not unmindful of the child's basic drives, emphasized that educational growth is not exclusively the subjective unfolding of inherent nature but intellectual progress in terms of the cultural aims being incorporated by the student (through teacher guidance) into his own aims and interests. Mortimer Smith erroneously claimed that Dewey is responsible for trends in public school education which have attempted to form the curriculum around the immediate interests of the child--catering to what the student thinks he wants.

The Deweyite theories of activity and interest are correlated with a particular view of subject matter. It is based on an assumption of human nature which stresses the inherent powers of the individual. Such inherent powers are capable of full development even when the individual is isolated from society. The aim of education is inherent in the child. Therefore, the spontaneous active interest of the child should be the sole guide in curriculum formulation. Hughes Mearns says subject matter has had a detrimental effect on child nature. Logical consecutively arranged subject matter militates, he says, against the free expression of the child's own interests. Mangravite and Ferriere said the child must be absolutely free to externalize instincts. Dewey, in contrast to the Deweyite approach,

said every child is capable of genuine cognitive experience. Subject matter for Dewey, in contrast to the Deweyite, is the necessary raw material for learning which the student uses in the process of reflective thought. The contract between Dewey and the Deweyites view of subject matter has as its basic source of tension the fundamental difference in philosophical orientation. The Deweyite assumes that knowledge is grasped intuitively and immediately. Dewey says knowledge, in the emphatic sense, is always at the conclusion of a process of reflective inquiry.

H. G. Rickover said Dewey made no place for logically arranged subject matter in the content of education. He said Dewey just wanted the child to express itself freely. Mortimer Smith also equated Dewey with the Deweyites when he said Dewey neglected the cultural tradition.

The contemporary critics were vocal in their equation of democratic education, conceived in terms of the life adjustment education, with the education philosophy of John Dewey. However, it was seen that life adjustment education came as a result of the work of an educator named Charles Prosser. Life adjustment education was inaugerated for those students who supposedly lacked mental capacity to profit from the college preparatory course of the traditional secondary school. The curriculum of life adjustment education has been in terms of narrow utilitarian vocational training. Dewey, by way of contrast, recognized the intellectual aspects of practical pursuits. He felt strongly that narrow vocational training militated against studies which involved the student in an appreciation for the cultural heritage and perpetuated the false dicotemy between

the practical and intellectual.

The critics said Dewey was responsible for what they considered to be inadequate teacher training schools. Such schools, they said, major in methods and neglect content. It was observed that in a committee report on higher education at Rollins College (John Dewey as Chairman) great stress was laid on thorough comprehension of the disciplines of the culture as expressed in the so-called "liberal arts."

H. G. Rickover talked about the "bare intellectual backsides" of life adjustment education which he said was the child of Deweyan philosophy of education. However, Dewey's philosophy of education calls for vigorous intellectual pursuit within the framework of the reflective process of inquiry.

## Conclusions

Without attempting to suggest the extent to which radical progressive innovations in American public school education has influenced the schools--this analysis has accepted the contemporary critics assertion that such innovation have to some extent been practiced in some American schools. However, there has been a denial of the contemporary critics' unfair equation of John Dewey's educational philosophy with these innovations. There has also been a denial of the assertion that Dewey fails to present an authentic basic philosophy. On the basis of the evidence presented the following conclusions appear warranted.

### Fundamental Philosophy

The contemporary critics have alleged that John Dewey does not present a valid fundamental philosophy. The evidence presented clearly shows that such an assertion is possible only if metaphysical, epistemological and axiological considerations are defined in such a limited way as to exclude the Deweyan approach and then suggest, as does Hutchins, that Dewey's orientation does not warrant the name philosophy. The basis for criticism of Dewey, from this approach, is intellectually suspect. A system of thought should be judged and criticized by attacking its basic assumptions--not by assigning it to limbo because it fails to satisfy the criterion of a rival philosophical approach. Dewey presents an authentic theory of reality, knowledge and value.

(1) Dewey's metaphysical assumptions present a world view set within the framework of human experience. His view of reality develops out of an acceptance of an environment where the common sense observations are taken at face value and where the organism and the environment interact dynamically. Contrary to traditional philosophy, Dewey attempted to build his world view on the basis of assumptions exclusively related to man's experience. "Experience" is his fundamental metaphysical conception. His view of experience is not a fact--it is an assumption--therefore metaphysical in the sense that it is beyond validation in terms of scientific proof. Dewey's metaphysical assumption of "experience" involves a methodological approach to that which is experienced. The experienced nature is non-cognitive but possesses qualitative features. The experience of an organism is in its original state non-cognitive--it just is.

However, when experiences of an organism in its interaction with its environment becomes confused and difficulties arise--the human organism, possessed with intelligence, uses the techniques of reflective inquiry to resolve the situation. The solution becomes the habitual response of the organism in similar situations.

Two metaphysical points have emerged from Dewey's world view (a) the non-cognitive but qualitative elements of nature are experienced by the organism in the flow of experience; (b) the active-passive interaction (experience) between the organism and its environment provides the basis for the processes of inquiry.

(2) Dewey's view of knowledge is set within the framework of the experience continuum. Knowledge is never immediate or given. Knowledge is the result of a quest. It grows out of a problem situation which has been mediated by inquiry and verified in experience. Habitual solutions are satisfactory in specific situations. However, in order to move beyond isolated solutions to answers of a scientific nature--man abstracts the qualitative factors from nature and forms quantitative relational concepts which become objects of knowledge. Objects of knowledge based on quantitative relational factors have a more universal application to novel problems arising in experience than does habitual response based on isolated solutions.

Knowledge for Dewey is never immediate--it grows out of the process of inquiry when this process is used as a scientific methodology--via quantitative relational generalization. The proposed object of knowledge

becomes knowledge when it yields and continues to yield satisfactory consequences to problems in various experiential situations.

(3) Dewey presents an objective theory of knowledge and value. He defines the true and/or good in terms of ideas which have been tested and have yielded satisfactory consequences. The term true is used to describe satisfactory ideas. The term good has reference to ideas which have been tested in moral and human problems. Good actions are those which have already led to satisfactory consequences. Values are projections of what will be good or preferable in the future. Values are ends-in-view. Therefore, contrary to the critics assertion that Dewey neglected consideration of deferred values--future preference based on intelligent projected satisfactory consequences is the very heart of Dewey's value theory. The allegation that Dewey does not present an authentic fundamental philosophy is not warranted by the facts. Such an assertion is possible only if philosophy is defined in terms which exclude the Deweyan approach.

Philosophy of Education

Four areas have been discussed in which Dewey's educational philosophy has been equated, by the critics, with Deweyite practices--democratic education, activity, interest and subject matter. Evidence has been presented in each case which shows clearly that this has been a false equation.

(1) Democratic Education

The contemporary critics allege that John Dewey's educational philosophy is the source of life adjustment education and that Dewey's view of democratic education may be equated with the narrow utilitarian vocational aims of the life adjustment approach. Evidence has been clearly presented which exonerates Dewey of this charge.

Charles Prosser was the father of life adjustment education. Prosser and his associates were of the opinion that the majority of the school population could not profit from secondary school curriculum which has been primarily adapted to preparation for college. Prosser and the life adjustment movement perpetuated the traditional dicotomy, or as Dewey said the false dualism, between the practial arts and intellectual pursuits. Life adjustment educators argued that since the majority of secondary school students could not profit from intellectual pursuits--and in a democracy everyone has a right to education--then the curriculum should be expanded to meet the needs of these students. The expansion was based on the most obvious need--that of making a livelihood and with it was coupled a conditioning program in which attitudes necessary to democratic life were to be developed.

John Dewey's view of democratic education does not fit in the narrow patterns of vocational training or attitude conditioning. He reacted to the false division between practical and intellectual pursuits. He said there is no intellectual discontinuity between producing commodities and significant knowledge of a cultural variety. He said we perpetuate the false dualism when we separate those who do menial tasks in industry

(prepared in vocational trade schools) from the scientists and intelligensia who deal with ideas (educated in the traditional knowledge disciplines). Modern educators (life adjustment people) fail to see, Dewey argues, that changing the public sentiment to a feeling that labor is dignified does not bridge the traditional gap between the practical and liberal pursuits. The idea is still current that a truly liberal education cannot be on a common footing with industrial affairs. Vocational training with the consequent doing of useful things is thought to be a second-best-undertaking for inferior minds. This is clearly the approach of life adjustment education which Dewey denies. Dewey argued that intelligence is the bringing to bear of the reflective process of inquiry on any type of problem. The solution of any problem is intellectually oriented. And since man is a social being--his problems are socially conditioned. True democratic education, for Dewey, is the involvement of the masses in problems which have signigicant meaning for the group at large. Dewey thought that students--regardless of native intellectual capacity--must have the opportunity to make connections with the past (cultural heritage) in order to make meaningful connections and solve new problems in the future.

The critics are wrong in equating life adjustment education with John Dewey. His entire philosophy of education militates against narrow utilitarian vocationalism in the name of democratic education.

(2) Activity

The contemporary critics assumed that because Dewey talked about children being active creatures that he advocated uninhibited self-expres-

sion.' It has been observed that this is the view of the Deweyites. Deweyites, as previously considered, are educators imbued with an educational philosophy inspired by romanticism. A philosophy which, as defined in this presentation, suggests that the inner nature of the child sets the patterns of uninhibited growth. Educational growth to the Deweyite comes through the flowering of inherent nature which is realized when the child is free and active.

Growth is a key concept in the educational philosophy of John Dewey but it does not mean undirected activity. Growth, for Dewey, is predicated on the involvement and satisfactory solution of problems (directed by the teacher)--in which the student recognizes an experienced difficulty in his personal fulfilment. Such a view of growth demands a special kind of educational experience. An experience in which the student can see the difficulty for himself, formulate it into a problem, propose solutions and validate the idea. The criterion of growth--developing out of a problem situation--is the capacity of the solution to provide satisfactory consequences which will be both immediately applicable and provide adequate means to deal successfully with future difficulties. Growth is not a dead-end but that which provides a foundation for more growth or fulfilment of purposeful activity.

Not just any activity is purposeful or conducive to growth. Much activity, in and out of school, is mis-educative because it is not conducive to broader fulfilment--meaningful experiences or growth--in the future.

The critics are wrong in equating Dewey with a view of activity which

fosters gross bodily movement and provides for undirected growth. Activity is an integral part, for Dewey, of meaningful problem solving and knowledge.

(3) Interest

The contemporary critics assume that Dewey's theory of interest states that the interests of the child are fixed and final within the framework of a pre-ordained level of natural development. On this bases, the child is the sole guide to the educational process. They further assume that because child interest is the criterion of the curriculum, in Deweyite educational philosophy, that Dewey was not interested in the intellectual heritage of the race. It has been shown that each of these assumptions were not Dewey's but the result of Deweyite educational thought.

Dewey never placed interest exclusively in either objects or persons. Interest, for Dewey, is essentially what we mean when we say a person has an aim. An aim is that which holds a person steady in the face of opposition or difficulties. Difficulties intervene as the person seeks the fulfilment of his goal in the process of inquiry. Interest or aim provides the needed discipline which leads through difficulty to fulfilment.

The critics claimed that Dewey advocated the necessity of catering to any childish whim or supposed interest. This is not consistent with Dewey's interest theory. His interest theory is set in the framework of the organism involved in an interaction with the environment where a problem has developed. The organism has set a goal or solution and through the process of reflective inquiry is involved in the fulfilment of

the goal or solution of the problem. Satisfactory consequences which bring fulfilment of purposes and aims--not immediate satisfaction--is the criterion of the Deweyan interest theory.

(4) Subject-Matter

The contemporary critics claimed that Dewey's philosophy of education failed to provide intelligent standards because Dewey disregarded the value of subject matter. The critics meant by subject matter--mastery of a body of "objective truth" not necessarily related to the present life of the student.

Dewey, contrary to the allegation, placed strong emphasis on meaningful subject matter. He advocated a firm grounding in the intellectual heritage of race. But Dewey did not believe that the wisdom of the ages could be taken in capsule form (subjects)--disassociated from the life of the student--and immediately transferable to the problems of adult life when the child grew up.

Knowledge, for Dewey, like life is the result of a quest and must be lived to be effective. Knowledge, therefore, is not a body of truth objectively discovered or immediately apprehended by the mind. Scientific knowledge came into existence as the verified solution to a problem oriented process of inquiry. Such knowledge may be crystallized into various subject matter disciplines for classification purposes. However, such knowledge is meaningless to the student unless he becomes involved in an experiential--problem oriented--situation where the need and purpose for the knowledge is connected to him in a personal manner--and it becomes

his problem.

This is the basis of Dewey's reaction to traditional approaches to subject matter. He did not deny knowledge or the cultural heritage but the thing he objected to was the fruitless orientation through which the student was introduced to knowledge.

The student, Dewey said, must experience the subject matter--the perplexity which originally led to inquiry must in some sense challenge the student. Then formulating the problem as his own--and directed by a teacher with a rich background in the field--the student is led through the intellecutal processes to a meaningful solution--a fulfilment or growth. The subject matter is the raw material used intelligently by the student in the solution of his problems--problematic situations set up by the teacher for the express purpose of guiding the student into the knowledge of the race. Such an approach equips the student with disciplined use of the process of inquiry which will enable the student to deal creatively with problems in the future wherever they might arise.

Subject matter and method are inseparably related in the Deweyan approach. Method is simply the manner in which subject matter is used in the experiential situation. Subject matter is not, for Dewey, a body of truth to be mastered and filed for future reference. Subject matter is the data used by the student--but logically arranged and put at his disposal by the teacher--in the quest for solutions of problems in educational situations set up by the school. Subject matter is the material or data used as a means to build a purpose or goal. Each facet in the process of

inquiry is so entwined as to present a unity of growth and fulfilment.

The critic is wrong in his equation of Dewey with views of the cirriculum set by the whim of the child and the consequent allegation that Dewey was anti-intellectual. Dewey's philosophy of education provided for a logically organized subject matter which could be drawn upon by the student in the pursuit of meaningful problem-oriented experiences.

The evidence presented in his dissertation has shown that there is no validity in the contemporary critics' equation of John Dewey's educational philosophy with the unwarranted educational innovations of the Deweyites. Dewey's educational philosophy is an intellectually responsible attempt to provide a rationale for the educational enterprise. It has an authentic fundamental source in the philosophy of "Instrumentalism," and deals in a creative manner with the pervasive educational problems of our time.

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VITA

Robert Lewis Griffin

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: MISCONCEPTIONS OF JOHN DEWEY'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY BY CONTEMPORARY CRITICS

Major Field: Higher Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born near Washington, Georgia, February 1, 1926, the son of Edward M. and Linnie Ruth Griffin.

Education: Attended grade school in Warren, Michigan; graduated from Lincoln High School, Warren, Michigan, 1944, received the Bachelor of Arts degree from Olivet Nazarene College, with a major in Philosophy, August 1950; received the Bachelor of Theology degree from Olivet Nazarene College, with a major in Church History, June 1951; received the Master of Arts degree from Butler University, with a major in Philosophy of Religion, June 1959, completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree August 7, 1965.

Professional experience: Entered the United States Army Air Corp in 1944, and was honorably discharged in 1946; since graduation from college, 1950, has served as pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in Logansport, Highland, and Crawfordsville, Indiana,--Cushing, and Bartlesville, Oklahoma; served as part-time professor of Philosophy at Central Pilgrim College, Bartlesville, Oklahoma, during the 1962 academic year; has been serving, beginning with the 1963 academic year as part-time instructor in Philosophy at the Kansas State College of Pittsburg, Kansas.