JOHN DEWEY AND PRAGMATISM: PHILOSOPHY AS EDUCATION

"ALL PHILOSOPHY IS PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION"

by

GEORGE J.K. WHALE

Bachelor of Arts, Simon Fraser University at Burnaby, British Columbia, 1967

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (EDUCATION) for the

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE FOUNDATIONS

© GEORGE J.K. WHALE 1968

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

December, 1968.
EXAMINING COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Frederick J. Brown Ph.B.
Senior Supervisor

Thomas J. Mallinson Ph.D.
Examinig Committee

M. Patricia Hindley M.S.
Examinig Committee
PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my thesis or dissertation (the title of which is shown below) to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis/Dissertation:


Author: ________________________________

(signature)

(name)

(date)
ABSTRACT

It has often been observed that the demolition of fallacies is the necessary starting point of constructive effort. Nowhere is the truth of this observation more evident than in a comprehensive examination of Deweyan pragmatism. Indeed, to my knowledge, no philosophy has suffered such apparent misreading and conflicting analyses as has pragmatism. This thesis found its genesis in the need to restate and defend the axioms of Deweyan thought, to demolish the fallacies that have turned pragmatism from the hope for a natural teleology, based on an understanding and application of the methods of science, into a philosophic curiosity. Oddly, pragmatism is usually seen as a philosophy conjoint with American capitalism or as a rejection of Christian thought. It is a great misfortune that the epistemological and pedagogical contributions of Dewey have been allowed to slide into confusion, misunderstanding and oblivion. Dewey’s philosophy offers the possibility of a method of educating that could change the direction of pedagogy from the worried wringing of hands to a direction both intelligent and socially meaningful.

Pragmatism must be seen as a comprehensive and fully developed philosophy and not as a simple educational methodology. The first section of this thesis, therefore, will be aimed at outlining in some depth the major axioms of pragmatic epistemology, ontology and axiology. I shall deal with the concept of freedom, social and individual; the pertinent ideas on knowledge, truth and value, and the ontological assumptions that
umbrella the Deweyan world-view. Special emphasis will be placed on the notion of reality so as to explicate the social character of man's world.

The second section will serve as a means to make clearer the fallacies of common criticisms leveled against pragmatism. In short, to pull together the loose ends remaining from the previous discussion. Three questions will be more fully examined: the issue of freedom as a constantly evolving and changing state; the rejection of traditional "eternal" truth, and the use of inquiry as a method of solution in questions of value.

The third section will take up the question of the rejection or misunderstanding of Dewey's theories in education. Since such rejection has been to some extent ad hominem, I shall be obliged to exonerate Professor Dewey from his role as an educational ogre. Overall, the social role of education will be stressed, hopefully to show that contemporary educators are confused about aims rather than methods. My concluding remarks will revolve around the issue of education or drastic social change, and the pragmatic hope for the former.
# Table of Contents

**Examining Committee** ............................ ii

**Abstracts** ........................................ iii

**Introduction** ...................................... 1

## Section One

**Freedom, Reflective Thought and the Theory of Value** ............ 7

I On the Nature of Freedom .................................. 9

- Knowledge, dynamism, choice and action
- Law and custom: "the constitution of things"
- Ontology and the New cosmology

Notes to part one .................................... 23

II On Inquiry, Truth and Knowledge ............................ 26

- The knowing-doing duality
- The controlled process of knowing
- Truth and knowledge defined

Notes to part two .................................... 34

III On Value and the Criticism of Beliefs ..................... 36

- The reason-belief duality
- The genesis of value
- The identity of good

Notes to part three .................................... 41

## Section Two

**Further Observations on Freedom, Inquiry and Ontology** .......... 43

The capacity to achieve satisfaction
Instrumental universals
"The gnawing tooth of time"

Notes to Section Two .................................... 48
SECTION THREE

DEWEY: THE MOST DANGEROUS MAN SINCE HITLER . . . . 50

The charges against Dewey's pedagogy
Dewey's hopes for education
The reasons for rejection of pragmatic pedagogy
Education and social change

Notes to Section Three . . . . . . . 67

BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 70
INTRODUCTION

When the identity of the moral process with the processes of specific growth is realized, the more...education of childhood will be seen to be the most economical and efficient means of social advance and reorganization, and it will also be evident that the test of all the institutions of adult life is their effect in furthering continued education. Government, business, art, religion, all social institutions have a meaning, a purpose. That purpose is to set free and to develop the capacities of human individuals without respect to race, sex, class or economic status. And this is all one with saying that the test of their value is the extent to which they educate every individual to the full stature of his possibility. Democracy has many meanings, but if it has a moral meaning, it is found in resolving that the supreme test of all political institutions and industrial arrangements shall be the contribution they make to the all-around growth to every member of society.


The principles of Deweyan pragmatism must be seen first and foremost as an indictment of traditional educational practices. By rejecting or misapplying the educational philosophy of pragmatism, the possibilities for a better, more meaningful and richer educational system have all but disappeared, and little remains save an outmoded and largely incompetent institution, a fact noted by the recent Hall Royal Commission on Education for the Province of Ontario. Linked to this failure is the outright rejection of the educational system by many of our most gifted children. The current rebellion, from simple "dropping out" to the attempts to take over the schools, is not so much a proclamation of self-expression and self-direction as it is behavior stemming from the misdirection and often non-direction, of present day educators.
Education, as Dewey so often observed, is the least understood term in all of human affairs. In its fullest possible sense education is a total process, the development of a lifestyle based on all experience, whether taught in a formal manner or learned within the socio-psycho-genic environment; only in the most limiting way can education be confined to a classroom or lecture hall. As Radhakamal Lukerjee contends in his study *The Dimensions of Human Evolution*:

Man's biological heritage is overlain and obscured by his social heritage of values and symbols in his evolutionary development. The value-and-symbol system not only determines the structure and functions of society and directs its evolution, but is itself subjected to an evolutionary process...This...socio-genic mechanism is structured and systematized into, and identified with the community's moral order and value-hierarchy, which is partly interiorised and indeed inherited as the conscience of the individual, and partly learnt, taught and transmitted as the external social heritage.

It is not too far fetched to suggest that many of our children are acting out the dilemma that is implicit in Lukerjee's statement. There is little doubt that the "interiorised" is often at odds with the "learnt;" for example, the Judeo-Christian inheritance of our society loudly proclaims "thou shalt not kill" but every evening on C.B.C. News there is an obvious and brutal rejection of that commandment. The rapid growth of free-schools, of universities divorced from traditional structures and administrations, and the all consuming desire to build "whole" societies fitting the needs of all its citizens give ample evidence that our children cannot accept the rational of a world in flames, but neither can they reject a centuries-old tradition. Consequently, since "man's biological heritage is overlain and obscured by his social heritage of values," it
becomes of paramount importance to have a method with which to constantly re-examine, and if necessary, reconstruct such values. And that, simply, must be the raison d'être for our schools.

Generally, the inequities of formal education, and its stultifying effects on the young were seen by Dewey as long ago as the 1890's. His concern was later summarized in Human Nature and Conduct where he writes:

The inert, stupid quality of current customs perverts learning into a willingness to follow where others point the way, into conformity, constriction, surrender of scepticism and experiment. When we think of the docility of the young we first think of the stocks of information adults wish to impose and the ways of acting they want to reproduce. Then we think of the insolent coercions, the insinuating briberies, and the pedagogic solemnities by which the freshness of youth can be faded and its vivid curiosities dulled. Education becomes the art of taking advantage of the helplessness of the young; the forming of habits becomes a guarantee for the maintenance of hedges of custom.2

Clearly, Dewey was aware that one of the fundamental problems confronting society was the stupid and wasteful way in which children were being moulded to "guarantee...the maintenance of hedges of custom." His many books make it abundantly clear that this applies as well to the larger picture of social growth and direction: formal education is but a part of the attempt to maintain what is thought to be "old, and therefore good."

This thesis found its genesis in the above concerns. The task I have set myself may be seen as an attempt to examine the ideas contained in Dewey's philosophical work in order that I might look more critically, and I hope more constructively, at the state of present day education. As opposed to the usual
commentary, which isolates Dewey's pedagogy from its proper context, I intend to look at the methods of an overall philosophy. I cannot make this point too strongly. The unfortunate truth is that many educators, when looking into Deweyan pedagogy, do not see pragmatism as a fully developed philosophy, but rather as a simple educational methodology.

Therefore, the first section of this paper shall be used to synthesize the major axioms of pragmatic thought on the nature of freedom, reflective thought as a method of critical inquiry, and the theory of value. Although ontology forms the base upon which any philosophy is built, I shall not attempt to deal with it separately, but rather make the pragmatic conception of reality explicit and comprehensible in connection with both epistemology and axiology. It should be clear that I intend to confine my explorations primarily to Dewey, with the pragmatic or instrumental philosophical position providing the central argument of this paper. I will, however, draw upon scholars such as Charles S. Peirce, William James and George H. Mead, who were instrumental in the development of pragmatism.

Following the first section I shall attempt to answer common criticisms leveled against pragmatism. To an extent section two will serve as a summary of section one, but only the more perplexing points earlier outlined will be emphasized. As to criticism, a typical comment is found in William Whyte's book *The Organization Man*. He writes:

...to this day many of the most thorough-going pragmatists in business would recoil at being grouped with the intellectuals. But the two movements were intimately related.
...they provided an intellectual framework that would complement, rather than inhibit, the further growth of big organization.  

I hope to dispel such misunderstanding by drawing heavily upon the literature of pragmatism, a literature that amply illustrates that only in the most simplistic way can pragmatism be seen as a synonym for practical. The social philosophy of Dewey was a virtual declaration of war on big organizations since he saw the age of machines, and by implication big industrial complexes, as a very great obstacle to human progress—a view hardly shared by organization men. "But without passage through a machine age," wrote Dewey, "mankind's hold upon what is needful as the precondition of a free, flexible and many colored life is so precarious...that competitive scramble for acquisition and [the] frenzied use of the results...for purposes of excitation and display will be perpetuated."  

The concluding part of this paper is aimed at explaining why Dewey has yet to find favor with educators. I do not intend to analyze in depth the pedagogy of pragmatism; the method is obvious within the philosophy. Overall, the third section will provide some of the reasons as to why Dewey has suffered the fate of oblivion. It is my hope that by bringing pragmatism into the light of day some future educator might be moved to challenge the current practices in education; and that pragmatism will provide the methodology to make the challenge meaningful.  

Clearly, new social and educational direction is needed if ever we wish to escape a world agonized by ever expanding and hideous wars, hatreds, jealousies and hunger, and move to-
ward a world that will "manifest a fullness, variety and freedom of possession [with] enjoyment of meanings and goods unknown in the contiguous associations of the past."

Introduction

NOTES


SECTION ONE

Freedom, Reflective Thought and the Theory of Value

One of the central tenets of John Dewey's philosophy is the pragmatic notion of freedom. More than any other single concept it is the touchstone of pragmatism. In the concluding pages of *Freedom in the Modern World*, he expresses the conviction that,

...the possibility of freedom is deeply grounded in our very beings. It is one with our individuality, our being uniquely what we are and not imitators and parasites of others. However, like all other possibilities, this possibility has to be actualized; and, like all others, it can only be actualized through interaction with objective conditions. The question of political and economic freedom is not an addendum or afterthought, much less a deviation or excrescence, in the problem of personal freedom. For the conditions that form political and economic liberty are required in order to realize the potentiality of freedom each of us carries with him in his very structure. Constant and uniform relations in change and a knowledge of them in 'laws,' are not a hindrance to freedom, but a necessary factor in coming to be effectively that which we have the capacity to grow into. Social conditions interact with the preferences of an individual (that are his individuality) in a way favorable to actualizing freedom only when they develop intelligence, not abstract knowledge and abstract thought, but power of vision and reflection. For these take effect in making preference, desire, and purpose more flexible, alert and resolute. Freedom has too long been thought of as an indeterminate power operating in a closed and ended world. In its reality, freedom is a resolute will operating in a world in some respects indeterminate, because it is open and moving toward a new future.¹

It would appear that forty years after the above was written the possibility of freedom has still to be actualized. Freedom remains an abstract, a "right," a "privilege," a bromide
reserved for political rhetoric, available only in America or the U.S.S.R., depending on one's allegiance. Indeed, the agonizing confusion over the nature of freedom is reflected in attitudes as various as the cry for "student power" to the worldwide decline of the church. That great numbers of Catholic priests would question a papal order on birth control is clearly an indication that the ancien régime no longer firmly holds the reins of authority. That men, even the most religious of men, reject the old way is evidence enough of the profound need for new individual and social freedoms. In turn, our schools and universities are disrupted by student radicals who practice what is roughly described as "confrontation politics" aimed at making our institutions "free," but as yet little has been achieved beyond the propagation of slogans and the quickening of tempers. In terms of long-range constructive change the social disruptions of today matter little; who or what is under challenge matter even less; what does matter is the impossibility of resolution so long as the priest or the student continue to seek out an abstract.

Which raises the question, is it possible that an intelligent theory and philosophy of social science, intimately related to educational practice, would make needless any such confrontations? That is, could confrontations be avoided if from the start of a child's schooling the ability to ascertain the nature of freedom and act upon it was developed as an important part of the learning process? Within the body of this paper the general issues of this question will be examined. I do not intend to argue the countless ramifications of freedom,
reflective thought and value. The first section, made up of three parts, will provide the contextual guidelines so as to make possible an understanding of pragmatism, and in turn, to make clear the major reasons for the misapplication and misunderstanding of pragmatic pedagogy.

I

On the Nature of Freedom

There are two central characteristics to the pragmatic concept of freedom. For one, freedom is always dependent upon knowledge. In Human Nature and Conduct Dewey explains that "the road to freedom may be found in the knowledge of facts which enables us to employ them in connection with desires and aims. A physician or engineer is free in his thought and his action in the degree in which he knows what he deals with. Possibly we find here the key to any freedom." And second, freedom is dynamic: "Freedom for an individual means growth, ready change when modification is required." But the operation of knowledge and dynamism is based on the pragmatic conception of reality. Knowledge and knowing are centered within the existential matrix of society, as is the examination of real things in everyday life or science, "not abstract knowledge or abstract thought." Dynamism is based on a view of the world as a constantly changing and boundless pattern. Pragmatism holds no absolutes or eternals in any traditional
sense. Nothing is fixed and final. The dynamic nature of freedom means that it is both temporal and contextual, that it must be seen as relative to a given situation.

The issue of reality, and its implications in terms of the concept of freedom, is an important point to follow. Dewey is not unaware of the major components of freedom according to the rationalist and empiricist philosophies with which his ontological position is in contrast, and he anticipates criticism from this quarter. In an essay entitled "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy," he defends the pragmatic notion of reality.

It is often said that pragmatism, unless it is content to be a contribution to mere methodology, must develop a theory of Reality. But the chief characteristic trait of the pragmatic notion of reality is precisely that no theory of Reality in general...is possible or needed... It finds that 'reality' is a denotative term, a word used to designate indifferently everything that happens. Lies, dreams, insanities, deceptions, myths, theories are all of them just the events which they specifically are. Pragmatism is content to take its stand with science; for science finds all such events to be the subject-matter for description and inquiry...It also takes its stand with daily life, which finds that such things really have to be reckoned with as they occur interwoven in the texture of events...the retention by philosophy of a notion of a Reality...superior to the events of everyday occurrence is the chief source of the increasing isolation of philosophy from common sense and science...philosophy in dealing with real difficulties finds itself still hampered by reference to realities more real, more ultimate, than those which directly happen.

It follows that the concept of freedom is postulated in disregard of theological dogmas or political or moral imperatives: freedom is not given, but is achieved through intelligent observation and sceptical examination of those things "as they occur interwoven in the texture of events." Since knowledge promotes the possibility of freedom, to know our
world existentially is a first step in understanding the nature of freedom. But only a first step, for within the context of knowledge and dynamism there are other components relating to the actualization of freedom; components including "efficiency in action, ability to carry out plans, the absence of cramping and thwarting obstacles. It also includes capacity to vary plans, to change the course of action, to experience novelties. And again...it signifies the power of desire and choice to be factors in events."

Within the above quotation there are two overall assumptions, that the power to act and the ability to choose are central to a realization of freedom. In dealing with the role of choice, Dewey is careful to point out that early in the history of thought the notion of choice became involved with the ideas of responsibility and blame. This involvement clouded the issues, he claimed, since blame and responsibility were used to support certain social situations which were irrelevant to a consideration of the implications of choice. In *Freedom in the Modern World* Dewey examines the question of identifying choice with desirable social ends, and explains the results.

The theoretical formulation for the justification of choice as the heart of freedom became...involved at an early time with other interests; and they...determined the form taken by a widely prevalent philosophy of freedom...philosophy of the nature of choice as freedom developed as an apologia for an essentially legal interest: liability to punishment. The outcome was the doctrine known as freedom of will...So established did this way of viewing choice become, that it is still commonly supposed that choice and the arbitrary freedom of will are one and the same thing.7

Thus we introduce the favorite argument of freshmen and
professors of Logic: the issue of "free-will" versus "determinism." Dewey contends that the traditional argument is nothing more than an abstract word game and is therefore of no real value in terms of the solution of human problems -- in this case the achievement of freedom. The importance of the argument is in its end result. The implications of holding either free-will or determinism to be of major importance in matters of human conduct forces man into a paradox. On the one hand his destiny is controlled by some unknown power, which renders him impotent, and on the other, if he must claim responsibility for his actions, he can only be "free" to the extent that society will allow, also rendering him impotent. Dewey makes the argument concrete by shifting the emphasis of inquiry from antecedents to consequences.

The doctrine of 'free-will' is a desperate attempt to escape from the consequences of the doctrine of fixed and immutable Being. With dissipation of that dogma, the need for such a measure of desperation vanishes. Preferential activities characterize every individual as individual or unique. In themselves these are differential in a de facto sense. They become true choices under the direction of insight. Knowledge, instead of revealing a world in which preference is an illusion and does not count or make a difference, puts in our possession the instrumentality by means of which preference may be an intelligent or intentional factor in constructing a future by wary and prepared action. Knowledge of special conditions and relations is instrumental to the action which is in turn an instrument of production of situations having qualities of added significance and order. To be capable of such action is to be free.8

This, of course, opens the way for the critics of pragmatism to charge that Dewey denies free-will, and consequently is tied to a determinist philosophy. On the contrary, rather than rejecting free-will, what he does deny is the efficacy of free-will to provide any meaningful causal explanations for
human conduct. He does not deny the possibility of the existence of free-will; he just denies its utility in explaining consequences. The attempt to seek out firm, final and usable definitions of abstracts that remain abstract, like free-will or determinism, so as to answer questions of human difficulties caused by such abstracts, hardly seems a worth-while task. It is simply an exercise in asking the wrong questions. The discussion on free-will is typical of the consequences brought about by the separation of morals from human nature. The dangerous significance of the classical argument over free-will is that it reinforces this separation of moral activity from nature and public life.

Dewey could be seen as a determinist, but the term is used reluctantly, for want of a better one. His "determinism" then, must be seen only in a qualified sense. Rather than crediting unseen forces, superior orders of existence or transcendental laws of the universe, he sees the destiny of man controlled by social conditions. But since he also sees social conditions as uncertain and changing, there can be no assumptions about what a future society may bring, or the role man will play in it. In essence, Dewey's determinism is simply an awareness of the power and privilege of social authority.

Dewey frequently uses the phrase "preferential selection" in connection with choice; it means simply that the varied experiences of humans provide them with preferences from which to select. "Choice...then presents itself as one preference among and out of preferences; not in the sense of one preference already made and stronger than others, but as the form-
This is an important point, not because it indicates the distinctively human ability to measure, judge and act upon the good or bad of existential circumstances, but because it brings up the question of the genesis of preference. "We don't use the present to control the future. We use the foresight of the future to refine and expand present activities. In this use of desire, deliberation and choice, freedom is actualized." Preference then, when seen within the continuum of past, present and future, is the unwritten history of an individual. The ability to choose finds its genesis in this history.

The manifestation of preferences becomes a 'function' of an entire history. To understand the action of a fellow man we have to know something of the course of his life. A man is susceptible, sensitive, to a vast variety of conditions and undergoes varied and opposed experiences -- as lower animals do not. Consequently a man in the measure of the scope and variety of his past experiences carries in his present capacity for selective response a large set of varied possibilities. That life history of which his present preference is a function is complex. Hence the possibility of continuing diversification of behavior; in short, the distinctive educability of men.

Thus the individual is placed squarely in relation to his environment. In order to act effectively, be it climbing a mountain or isolating a new bio-chemical strain, he must utilize as much of his experience as he can. The relative success, as we have noted earlier, depends upon the degree of correct information that the individual possesses, and his ability to evaluate such information. As a simple illustration, an individual may be free to walk, but if such an act held as consequence his falling off a cliff and being crushed to death, the idea of freedom through preference is simply
untenable. Unless, of course, the idea of freedom is so ab-

stract and final that it applies to the dead as well as to the living.

The Rousseauian idea that freedom prevailed before laws

and customs circumscribed it is also severely criticized by

Dewey. The consequences of such a notion would appear to be

that if present laws were lifted, freedom would be assured.

But freedom is "not obtained by mere abolition of law and in-
stitutions, but by the progressive saturation of all laws and

institutions with greater and greater acknowledgment of the

necessary laws governing the constitution of things." The

"constitutions of things" refers in this case to the social

interconnection of parts, to shared experience throughout

society, the common concerns of all citizens. The basic human

need to be protected and respected, a need stemming in part

from the shared experience of violence of all sorts, brings

laws and institutions into being, and only to the extent that

this need is met will laws remain viable. The plight of the

American negro aptly illustrates the reason why legislators

must acknowledge the "constitution of things." It is impera-
tive to the survival of America that its citizens confront the

fact that a large segment of their society has been dealt out

of the social structure. But to lift or change the laws or

institutions without changing the system cannot bring about

freedom for those outside the system. There must be an under-

standing on the part of the designers of laws and institutions

that until a way is found to be responsive to all citizens,

the black people of America will, quite understandably, burn
down the institutions and violate the laws.

Law loses its meaning when it becomes an abstract. It was originally an imminently practical means of social control and protection. Even Jefferson's phrase "Laws above men" was fundamentally practical, but when it came to mean volumes of Precedence and Torts rather than protection against social anarchy following the Revolution, the "necessary laws governing the constitution of things" fell into the judicial waste-basket.

In essence, Dewey argues that freedom is directly related to custom and tradition, that law reaches out of custom. Thus, if repression is a common heritage, it will remain part of the present social fabric. A concrete example of this assertion is seen in the development of modern nations. It is hardly probable that freedom could be assured for those saturated by a strong social tradition, and even less probable where the strength of tradition is reinforced by religious or political restrictiveness. It is no accident that the Soviet Union is lacking in freedoms as we in the western world know them. The historical shoulders upon which modern Russia rests dates from the autocratic Byzantine Empire, through the repressive Czarist times, and ends with the "dictatorship of the proletariat."

To superimpose a political philosophy upon a nation or state that is socially and psychologically unprepared for it would be difficult indeed. The Anglo-Saxon world often forgets that what freedoms we possess are based upon nine hundred years of social direction that held sacred the idea of human rights.
In his study *Freedom in the Modern World*, Dewey summarized his position on the power to act. Like choice, the power to act is cast within the social and existential matrix of law and custom.

The notion that men are equally free to act if only the same legal arrangements apply equally to all — irrespective of differences in education, in command of capital, and the control of the social environment which is furnished by the institution of property — is a pure absurdity, as facts have demonstrated. Since actual, that is, effective, rights and demands are products of interactions, and are not found in the original and isolated constitution of human nature, whether moral or psychological, mere elimination of obstructions is not enough. The latter merely liberates force and ability as that happens to be distributed by past accidents of history. This 'free' action operates disastrously as far as the many are concerned. The only possible conclusion, both intellectually and practically, is that the attainment of freedom conceived as power to act in accord with choice depends upon positive and constructive changes in social arrangements.15

Clearly, to bring about the possibility of freedom, both choice and action must be combined. And although the best combination of the two depends upon constructive social change, the emphasis must be placed on individual choice and action, so that such changes can be actualized. In other words, it requires individual understanding of the nature of freedom to bring about social freedoms.

The central problem in understanding the nature of freedom is the relationship between choice and action: "There is an intrinsic connection between choice as freedom and power of action as freedom. A choice which intelligently manifests individuality enlarges the range of action, and this enlargement in turn confers upon our desires greater insight and foresight, and makes choice more intelligent." To choose and act
with intelligent temporal authority, however, requires interaction with objective conditions, and since Dewey's definition of what constitutes "objective conditions" is to be found within the pragmatic concept of reality, the ontological question must be examined. Dewey's assertions on the nature of objective conditions also involves the inter-related cosmological question, in order then, to avoid excessive qualifications, I will refer to the overall concern as cosmo-ontological.

This classical pre-occupation of the philosophers, the speculation on the relationship between the nature of the universe and man's place in it, is gaining new interest today. For many years the question seemed to be ignored or thought worthless of investigation, but with the wide advances in science, particularly biological science, the question has again gained currency. The problem only began to have genuine force when Darwin put man back into nature as a part of its continuum. Man lost his superior and independent role when he could no longer claim a special status removed from nature. Obviously the question seeking an answer is whether natural laws, now applicable to man, are the result of determined origin beyond man's control, or whether such laws depend upon an essentially unplanned universe where man's intelligence imposes order?

The first part of the question hinges on the Darwinian contention that man is an integral part of nature. Dewey would reject the notion that natural law is determined by forces beyond our control. To accept such a theory is, in effect, to accept a notion that places man in a paradox. He is forced to live a dual role, since the force in control is "spirit" outside
of nature. "When the hierarchical ascent of nature to mind and to ideal forms was disturbed by the conviction that the subject-matter of natural science is exclusively physical and mechanistic, there arose the dualistic opposition of matter and spirit, of nature and ultimate ends and goods...[and]... Since man was on the one hand a part of nature and on the other hand a member of the realm of spirit, all problems came to a focus in his double nature." Any fixed cosmological notion denies the existential nature of human discovery. In his book The Quest for Certainty Dewey explains the need to transcend the fixed and limiting concepts of nature.

The conditions and processes of nature generate uncertainty and its risks as truly as nature affords security and means of insurance against perils. Nature is characterized by a constant mixture of the precarious and the stable. This mixture gives poignancy to existence. If existence were either completely necessary or completely contingent, there would be neither comedy nor tragedy in life, nor need of the will to live. The significance of morals and politics, of the arts both technical and fine, of religion and of science itself as inquiry and discovery, all have their source and meaning in the union in Nature of the settled and the unsettled, the stable and the hazardous. Apart from this union, there are no such things as 'ends' either as consummations or as those ends-in-view we call purposes. There is only a block universe, either something ended and admitting of no change, or else a predestined march of events. There is no such thing as fulfillment where there is no risk of failure, and no defeat where there is no promise of possible achievement.

It is apparent within the above quotation that the idea of man imposing order is equally troublesome. Such a notion finds its beginning in the attempt to explain men and the affairs of men in terms of science. As the argument goes, if we can explain all of nature by reduction to physical laws, we can surely understand man, since he too must conform to the same laws. This curious quest for a new kind of certainty was ini-
tiated by an accelerating succession of discoveries in science, which in turn provided the means to question the already fragmenting old orders of Church and State. But unlike the earlier models of man's place in the universe, say, the Hearth of Zeus or the Great Chain of Being, the new cosmology left out social direction. Ethical notions, including the nature of freedom, were neutralized by the misapplication or misunderstanding of natural laws. In his book *Insight and Outlook*, Arthur Koestler contends that "It [the new cosmology] may be described as a shift from 'guidance from above' to 'guidance from below.'" He goes on to say:

In prescientific times the world was explained, and man's actions were guided from 'above,' through the agency of anthropomorphic deities. The gods were upward projections of the human image, extrapolations of humanity on an ascending scale. But the spectacular success of the new methods of natural science brought a decisive change, for molecules and atoms were extrapolations on a downward scale. Destiny from 'above' had been both an explanation of the world and a guide to conduct; destiny from 'below,' determined by electrons and quanta, was an explanation but no longer a guide.20

In the same study, as well as *The Act of Creation* and *Ghost in the Machine*, Koestler points out that science's ethical neutrality, coupled with its proven methodology, provides the best means thus far devised to establish a "natural" system of social and ethical direction. Koestler was hopeful, as was Dewey, that "the split between reason and belief[will] heal and Natural Law will resume its original meaning as both a guide to understanding and a guide to conduct."21

Like Koestler, Dewey sees temporal authority born out of the methods of science, and they shared the hope that the facts of science would provide the means with which society
could reach toward freedom, not with science as a panacea but as a tool to establish new and more enduring social values. Interaction with objective conditions cannot be achieved within a universe beyond man's control, nor in a universe where "guidance from below" precludes the possibility of a natural teleology. In short, the "objective conditions" determined by scientific and common-sense observation can also act to determine the truth or falsity of social value structures.

Some thirty years before Koestler wrote the above statement, Dewey summed up his position on the value of scientific methodology as an instrument to develop human understanding.

It is not pretended that a moral theory based upon realities of human nature and a study of the specific connections of those realities with those of physical science would do away with moral struggle and defeat. It would not make a moral life as simple a matter as wending one's way along a well lighted boulevard. All action is an invasion of the future, of the unknown. Conflict and uncertainty are ultimate traits. But morals based on concern with facts and deriving guidance from them would at least locate the points of effective endeavor and would focus available resources upon them. It would put an end to the impossible attempt to live in two unrelated worlds. It would destroy fixed distinction between the human and the physical, as well as that between the moral and the industrial and the political. A morals based on study of human nature instead of upon disregard for it would find the facts of man continuous with those of the rest of nature and would thereby ally ethics with physics and biology. It would find the nature and activities of one person coterminous with those of other human beings, and therefore link ethics with the study of history, sociology, law and economics. (italics added)

The impossibility of living in both an ideal and real world is the greatest single barrier to the achievement of freedom. The separation of reason and belief makes choice and action abstractions, ideas unrelated to the facts of human nature. And the implications are profound, for "if the world is already
done and done for, if its character is entirely achieved so that its behavior is like that of a man lost in a routine, then the only freedom for which a man can hope is one of efficiency in overt action. But if change is genuine, if accounts are still in process of making, and if objective uncertainty is the stimulus to reflection, then variation in action, novelty and experience, have a true meaning."

To conclude this exploration into the pragmatic nature of freedom, an issue that will be again touched upon in conjunction with the Theory of Inquiry and of Value, I will outline my own evaluations of the Deweyan philosophical overview. As I originally claimed, freedom is the touchstone of pragmatism, but I have taken pains to show that the notion of freedom is intimately related to the overall philosophy of pragmatism.

So to sum up, pragmatism offers an optimistic outlook tempered by an honest recognition of the character of present knowledge and experience. I do not hold that science will solve all problems but nor do the pragmatists. The central feature of pragmatism is that it does not offer universal and eternal solutions to all of human affairs, but this detracts not one whit from its usefulness in dealing with the world, either physically or metaphysically. Pragmatism represents a long awaited weaning from a childish quest for certainty and finality; the rejection of the duality of real and ideal is a step that goes far toward opening up larger vistas for the influence of man. In effect, the result of holding the pragmatic view is a faith that disposes one to maximize what is inherently human. Man is part of nature and so also are
consistent relations. To the extent that man becomes aware of these relations through inquiry, and in turn directs them to his own desires inside of experience, he fulfills himself in his world. William James once remarked that life is of little account if man is limited by what he cannot know. Submission to a life-style directed from forces outside of experience, is, plain and simple, a subtle kind of slavery. Whether or not man's role in the universe is finite and minuscule may be answered in the future, but until the answer is known it would seem pragmatic to play that role with strength, courage and the abundant intelligence now available to man.

Section One: part one

NOTES


4 Dewey, On Experience, chap. XIII.

Section One: part one

NOTES (cont.)


9 As Dewey explains in *Quest for Certainty*:

"We are free in the degree in which we act knowing what we are about. The identification of freedom with "freedom of will" locates contingency in the wrong place. Contingency of will would mean that uncertainty was uncertainly dealt with; it would be a resort to chance for a decision. The business of "will" is to be resolute; that is, to resolve, under the guidance of thought, the indeterminateness of uncertain situations. Choice wavers and is brought to a head arbitrarily only when circumstances compel action and yet we have no intelligent clue as to how to act. p. 250.


Section One: part one

NOTES (cont.)


18 Dewey, Quest, p. 53.

19 Dewey, Quest, pp. 243-44.


21 Koestler, Insight, p. 234.


Dewey's Theory of Inquiry leads us back to the earlier discussion on the classical duality of real and ideal. As we have seen, man attempts to live in two unrelated worlds in a number of ways. One of the more important manifestations of this duality can be observed in the separation of "knowing" from "doing." Reason is seen as an act of "mind" divorced from the vulgar and common world of the practical. The idea that knowing is a passive and higher act, one of man's loftier endeavors, has become incorporated into the traditional definition of reason. The present day concept of science is a reflection of this definition. But it has a long history, beginning with the Greeks who were the first to separate theory from practice. To them the study of scientific phenomenon was both a cosmological puzzle and a sort of highly sophisticated game enjoyed by the leisure class. To the Greek philosophers the practical arts and crafts were thought to be outside or beneath their concern. Their world was more suited to a preoccupation with ethics, music and mathematics. Since the great influence of the Greeks has been acknowledged and chronicled by the historians of philosophy and science, it would seem redundant to detail the acceptance of the Greek worldview from ancient to mediaeval and modern times. Professor Whitehead's famous remark that "the safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it
consists in a series of footnotes to Plato," is as valid today as it was on the day it was written. Koestler claims it should be amended to read "science, up to the Renaissance, consisted in a series of footnotes to Aristotle." Suffice it to say that modern epistemology still suffers from the Greek conception of science.

There are three central difficulties that stem from the knowing-doing duality. For one, "knowledge" became the means of seeking out and confirming the existence of an ultimate Being. Indeed, the original ontological argument was developed as a method to prove the existence of a Prime Mover, and soon became the Christian argument for the existence of God. The second, the process of "knowing," became the mere gathering of information without purpose. And third, the conception of "mind" was born, not an active, changing and ever challenging mind, but a passive recipient of previous "knowledge." Dewey claimed that all three could be described as the spectator theory of knowledge.

In contrast, Dewey's epistemology sees knowing as doing. The process of knowing creates more problems for knowing. As an illustration, suppose a problem in literature was to be examined, say the character of the Fool in King Lear. With the first reading the student is normally confused, he doesn't "know" the Fool but some impressions have left their mark. With a second reading those first impressions, in conjunction with secondary impressions, may leave him less confused but with more problems for knowing, since the Fool's character becomes richer with familiarity and association, say, with the
Fool in *Twelfth Night*, or sitting at the next desk. Even if the "last word" on the Fool has been said, other aspects of the play will become subject matter for examination. They too will become problems for knowing. The quest is on-going, never ending and never final. However, the reading itself remains worthless if it remains passive. If the reading is unapplied the student is merely gathering information, and thus is conceding to the spectator theory of knowledge. If applied, in let us say, the development of a deeper understanding of human behavior, and in turn acted upon, his knowledge of self and society will broaden. Only to the extent that action is undertaken will his ability to actualize individual freedoms be widened.

There is a constant reconstruction of problems through the interaction of the knower and his subject matter. A reconstruction that can take place on any level of cognition: emotionally, as in listening to a symphony or viewing a film; in work, as a mechanic attempts to repair a faulty fuel pump; or intellectually, as a mathematician works on a problem in calculus.

Pragmatic inquiry is the controlled process of knowing. It is existentially based on the experimental and practical instrumentalities of science and common endeavor. The general definition of inquiry is provided by Dewey in *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*.

Inquiry is the directed or controlled transformation of an indeterminate situation into a determinately unified one. The transition is achieved by means of operations of two kinds which are in functional correspondence with each other. One kind of operation deals with
ideational or conceptual subject-matter. This subject-matter stands for possible ways and ends of resolution. . . . The other kind of operation is made up of activities involving the techniques and organs of observations. Since these operations are existential they modify the prior existential situation, bring into high relief conditions previously obscure. . . . The ground and criterion of the execution of this work of emphasis, selection and arrangement, is to delimit the problem in such a way that existential material may be provided with which to test the ideas that represent possible modes of solution. Symbols, defining terms and propositions, carry forward both ideational and existential subject-matters in order that [the problem may be solved].

The crucial feature of Dewey's epistemology then is identification and formation of the problem within an existential matrix -- from which the problem is given and taken -- and an isolation of the remaining doubtful and perplexing features, in terms of a desired end.

The first condition necessary to stimulate inquiry is an indeterminate situation, or more simply, doubt. But doubt is continuous because of the nature of reality, which as we have seen, is a boundless, changing, initially undifferentiated experience, aptly likened to an ocean. Out of this ocean relations become explicit, thereby allowing subjects and objects to develop. But they remain undifferentiated until an inquiry is underway, for "things in their immediacy are unknown and unknowable, not because they are remote or behind some impenetrable veil of sensation of ideas, but because knowledge has no concern with them. For knowledge is a memorandum of conditions of their appearance, concerned, that is, with sequences, co-existences, relations." From this conception of reality the pertinent pragmatic assumptions about truth, falsity and the worth of inquiry arise.
Charles Peirce, Dewey's intellectual mentor, wrote extensively on the worth of inquiry as a method of proof. "The irritation of doubt is the only immediate motive for the struggle to attain belief." He goes on to say:

It is certainly best for us that our beliefs should be such as may truly guide our actions so as to satisfy our desires; and this reflection will make us reject every belief which does not seem to have been so formed as to insure this result. But it will only do so by creating a doubt in the place of that belief. With the doubt, therefore, the struggle begins, and with the cessation of doubt it ends. Hence, the sole object of inquiry is the settlement of opinion. We may fancy that this is not enough for us, and that we seek, not merely an opinion, but a true opinion. But put this fancy to the test, and it proves groundless; for as soon as a firm belief is reached we are entirely satisfied, whether the belief be true or false. And it is clear that nothing out of the sphere of our knowledge can be our object, for nothing which does not affect the mind can be the motive for mental action. The most that can be maintained is, that we seek for a belief that we shall think to be true. But we think each one of our beliefs to be true, and, indeed, it is mere tautology to say so.

In the same essay Peirce examines traditional philosophical methods used to settle opinion, making it clear that inquiry based on the practical methodology of science, is by far the best system. In order to justify this claim, however, he makes his assumptions about reality explicit, and outlines the methodology of science. He asserts that practically and experimentally science must deal with real things, the verifiable, objective facts of common occurrence, that the process is in no way sure of final results, only of possible results. In science, as in common sense, "we seek for a belief that we shall think to be true."

His answer to the old philosophical conceit on the existence or non-existence of "real" things, sums up the essence
of pragmatic ontology. He asks us to consider what effects of a practical nature we want the objects of our conception to have, in this case "reals," and then points out that the conception of these effects is the whole of the conception of the object. All else is speculative and outside proof, both "antecedent to reflective inquiry and independent of it."

Peirce, by claiming an existential ontology as a base for his concept of "reals," is able to substantiate inquiry as the best avenue to truth -- but truth of a functional nature, which as we shall see, means the verifiable and nothing else. As he writes:

It may be asked how I know there are any Reals...The reply is this....If investigation cannot be regarded as proving that there are real things, it at least does not lead to a contrary conclusion; but the method and conception on which it is based remain ever in harmony. No doubts of the method, therefore, necessarily arise from its practice...The feeling which gives rise to any method of fixing belief is a dissatisfaction at two repugnant propositions. But here already is a vague concession that there is some one thing which a proposition should represent. Nobody, therefore, can really doubt that there are not Reals, for, if he did, doubt would not be a source of dissatisfaction. The hypothesis, therefore, is one which every mind admits. So that the social impulse does not cause men to doubt it.

Peirce's contentions do not pretend to be the keys to finality or certainty. The "contrary conclusion" that he notes implies that the end of investigation cannot be regarded as irrefutably proving the case one way or the other; if "proof" must equal "absolute," then the method is inadequate. When this is recognized it becomes clear that the Theory of Inquiry, although avoiding contradiction, is simply not satisfactory for those seeking certainty. Peirce does not make any claims for certainty, but he does very definitely make the claim of
utility for inquiry in the fixation of belief. A claim perfectly consistent with a philosophy that ontologically fixes on a recognition of the temporal and changing nature of man's world.

Truth and knowledge are similarly free from absolute definition. Relative truth and relative knowledge hold the hope of a changing, growing and more timely system of social direction. In Reconstruction in Philosophy Dewey asks that we reject the Greek concept of absolute knowledge and replace it with existential and practical meaning; erase the Aristotelian footnote, so to speak. An act that would allow us to turn philosophy into a critical and active participant in human affairs.

When the practice of knowledge ceased to be dialectical and became experimental, knowing became pre-occupied with changes and the test of knowledge became the ability to bring about certain changes. Knowing, for the experimental sciences, means a certain kind of intelligently conducted doing; it ceases to be contemplative and becomes in a true sense practical. How this implies that philosophy, unless it is to undergo a complete break with the authorized spirit of science, must also alter its nature. It must assume a practical nature...

And in his major study on epistemology, Experience and Nature, he defines the term truth. "Truth is a collection of truths; and these constituent truths are in keeping with the best available methods of inquiry and testing as to matters-of-fact; methods, which are, when collected under a single name, science."

There is, in fact, little difference between truth and knowledge except in the temporal sense: one gives birth to the other. Knowledge is a constantly evolving process that is, in effect, on the way to becoming truth. In short, knowledge is intelligent doing, where truth is the result of intelligent
doing. Knowledge then, once the object of science, is used in a more direct and universal sense, to achieve the consummation of intention. Only to the extent that it accomplishes this consummation can it be said to demonstrate truth.

To sum up, the means of accomplishment are relatively simple and imminently practical. It begins with a problem for knowing, which causes perplexity, doubt and confusion, an "indeterminate situation." The second step consists of examining the immediate possibilities, of isolating the problem. The third, a careful study of all factors surrounding the problem, a compilation of facts, of truths pertinent to it, in order to bring about deeper understanding. Fourth, the development and widening of a tentative hypothesis for precision and consistency, to allow for speculative examination in a broader context. Fifth, a declaration of action specifically aimed at existing, existential affairs, and, to test the hypothesis, the action itself. The fourth and fifth steps represent the experimental and instrumental direction of the inquiry. To stop before these steps are taken is to guarantee a trial and error inquiry with slight chance of success. These five steps could be called the "theory" of inquiry, or a properly directed reflective experience. But as I have shown, every one of the steps involved is in some way inter-related with the pragmatic notions of knowledge, experience, the nature of reality and truth and falsity. Only through a comprehensive understanding of these terms can inquiry be consistently workable.

Those who doubt the validity of inquiry as a universally applicable means to settle opinion, base their doubt less on
the above outlined system than on what they see to be a limitation of scope. The argument goes, as a methodology inquiry could be quite successful, so long as the subject matter remains within science. But when Dewey speaks of truth as "processes of change so directed that they achieve an intended consummation," he deals out morality. Dewey anticipated such reaction; "To generalize the recognition that [truth] means the verified and means nothing else places upon men the responsibility for surrendering political and moral dogmas, and subjecting to the test of consequences their most cherished prejudices."

The crux of most human perplexities in everyday affairs is the angry juxtaposition of values. Dewey, instead of neglecting values, pointed the way for establishing new values in the face of change. His insistence that man stop the futile attempt to live in two unrelated worlds, forced the issue of values out of the dark of metaphysical spectulation and into the hard light of day.

Section One: part two

NOTES


2 John Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley, Knowing and the Known (Boston: Beacon Press, 1949), chap. 5.
Section One: part two

NOTES (cont.)


6 Peirce, Philosophical Writings, pp. 15-17.


8 Peirce, Philosophical Writings, pp. 18-19.


On Value and the Criticism of Beliefs

Both Dewey and Peirce regarded the end of inquiry to be the fixation of beliefs or the elimination of doubt, an idea usually misinterpreted as a limitation of the utility of inquiry when controversial human values are involved. Inquiry is seen as useful only in settling questions of truth or falsity, as a kind of wordy, complex and sophisticated Venn Diagram. But in no way can inquiry be seen in so limited a light. Inquiry is used as a method to criticize and clarify meaning; not to fix certainty or finality, but to existentially examine human affairs. In *Experience and Nature* Dewey asserted that "the realm of meanings is wider than that of true-and-false meanings; it [the clarifying of meaning] is more urgent and more fertile." He then went on to say,

When the claim of meanings to truth enters in, then truth is indeed pre-eminent. But this fact is often confused with the idea that truth has a claim to enter everywhere; that it has a monopolistic jurisdiction. Poetic meanings, moral meanings, a large part of the goods of life are matters of richness and freedom of meanings, rather than of truth; a large part of our life is carried on in a realm of meanings to which truth and falsity as such are irrelevant. And the claim of philosophy to rival or displace science as a purveyor of truth seems to be mostly a compensatory gesture for failure to perform its proper task of liberating and clarifying meanings, including those scientifically authenticated.

As we have seen earlier, knowing -- the means to controlled change -- is the result of making explicit an opinion about something and testing it existentially. It matters
little whether the opinion to be tested is natural or supernatural, since all opinions are rooted in human affairs and are products of experience. Thus inquiry is as valid a system in historical and literary examination as it is in biological or mathematical theorizing. "The difference in subject-matters is not incompatible with the existence of a common pattern [of inquiry] in both types."

The connection of knowledge with belief is fundamental to the pragmatic notion of value, and again the question of traditional dualism is raised. "As a natural history of mind [the notion that mind and nature are separate] is wholly mythological. All knowing and effort to know starts from some belief...In every instance, from passing query to elaborate scientific undertaking, the art of knowing criticizes a belief which has passed current as genuine coin, with a view to its revision."

This "wholly mythological" notion, stemming from the separation of belief from reason, finds its philosophical beginnings in the severance of subject from objective reality. In contrast, Dewey holds that the subjective side of the subject-object relationship is itself a part of nature. Opinions about what is the truth are equally as verifiable as is truth itself, and in this sense philosophy becomes the criticism of beliefs. Philosophy does not have the truth. There is no reason to believe that the imminent domain of truth is in the "mind" of the philosopher, or for that matter, in the "spirit" of the theologian.

This view is often criticized as taking away the dignity
of philosophy; that philosophy by joining with common concerns and practical politics becomes simply an instrument of social reform. But surely the common concern of all men, including philosophers and theologians, must be social reform. If the philosopher wishes to retain his world of Olympian aloofness, that is quite all right, but his wisdom should tell him that social disaster is a very great possibility; disaster of such magnitude that it would take with it both the valleys of vulgar concern and Olympus. And in this sense philosophy must become the criticism of beliefs.

The central reason for the subjective-objective confusion is the retreat of most philosophies into the position that subjectivity is not open to science, that the only scientific method worth that name is quantitative measurement. As Dewey warns in *Experience and Nature*:

Desires, beliefs, 'practical' activity, values are attributed exclusively to the human subject; this division is what makes subjectivity a snare and a peril. The case of belief is crucial. For it is admitted that belief involves a phase of acquiescence or assertion, it presents qualities which involve personal factors; and...value. A sharp line of demarcation has therefore to be drawn between belief and knowledge, for the latter has been defined in terms of pure objectivity. The need to control belief is admitted; knowledge figures, even though according to these theories only per accidens, as the organon of such control. Practically then, in effect, knowledge, science, truth, is the method of determining right participation in beliefs on the part of personal factors.5

Clearly, just as knowledge which has come to be considered "objective" arises from reality, so too does value. Value is only outside of experience when human ideas as to good and bad are considered to be outside of reality. Dewey's position, of course, rejects the notion that values are somehow "eternal"
or "irrefutable," that they are ends in themselves. But I
shall have more to say on this in both section two and three.

Dewey's conception of reality, that all man's experience
lies within it and has reference to it, thereby producing
values, allows the assertion that inquiry is universally ap-
plicable. As in all human affairs, however, there is the
question of end results. But to seek out certainty in value
is as fruitless a task as it is in science, for like science,
the quest is never ending. The methods of inquiry promise
only to clarify meaning and to critically examine belief.

The means of clarifying questions of value were intro-
duced earlier in my discussion on choice. Pragmatically, to
hold that something is of value is not only to perceive some
intrinsic quality of "good" but to perceive greater quality
in relation to others: "not in the sense of one preference
already made and stronger than others, but as the formation
of a new preference out of a conflict of preferences."

Through the operation of inquiry man is able to make the dis-
tinction between objects and situations which are immediately
good and those which are eventually good. "Of immediate
values...which occur and which are possessed and enjoyed,
there is no theory at all; they just occur, are enjoyed, pos-
sessed; and that is all." Eventual good, or its appraisal,
must involve inquiry:

The moment we begin to discourse about...values, to
define and generalize, to make distinctions in kinds,
we are passing beyond value-objects themselves; we are
entering, even if only blindly, upon an inquiry into
causal antecedents and causative consequents, with a
view to appraising the 'real,' that is the eventual,
goodness of the thing in question. We are criticizing,
not for its own sake, but for the sake of instituting and perpetuating more enduring and extensive values. Dewey does not speak of objects and situations which are apparently good and those which are really good, since he sees such a distinction as question begging. Arguments that lead to distinctions in kind simply do not go far enough or dig deep enough. Within both religion and politics the fact that an object is believed in, is offered as reason to substantiate the belief, but such an argument is only preliminary to the question of the genesis of the belief and its present value.

The all-important matter is what lies back of [the belief in something as a good] and causes acceptance and rejection; whether or not there is a method of discrimination and assessment which makes a difference in what is assented to and denied. Properties and relations that entitle an object to be found good in belief are extraneous to the qualities that are its immediate good; they are causal, and hence found only by search into the antecedent and the eventual. The conception that there are some objects or some properties of objects which carry their own adequate credentials upon their face is the snare and delusion of the whole historic tradition regarding knowledge.

Thus immediate good and eventual good can be distinguished only in terms of relational aspects. A good arrived at through inquiry differs from an immediate good only to the extent that it is held good in relation to other goods. The extent is measured by relying upon an existential appraisal of its antecedents and consequences. Goods established through inquiry are freer and more enduring since they reflect existential conditions; therefore, in no way do they stifle the creative genius of man. On the contrary, by applying the methods of inquiry to bring about new human values, we would be immeasurably enriched.
Section One: part three

NOTES


6 In the chapter on "Existence as Precarious and as Stable," in Experience and Nature, Dewey presents what I see to be the best argument I have encountered thus far for the rejection of classical duality: pp. 68-71.


On the concluding pages of Reconstruction Dewey sums up his hope for a more meaningful social direction based
Poetry, art, religion are precious things. They cannot be maintained by lingering in the past and futilely wishing to restore what the movement of events in science, industry and politics has destroyed. They are an out-flowing of thought and desires that unconsciously converge into a disposition of imagination as a result of thousands and thousands of daily episodes and contact. They cannot be willed into existence or coerced into being. The wind of the spirit bloweth where it listeth and the kingdom of God in such things does not come with observation. But while it is impossible to retain and recover by deliberate volition old sources of religion and art that have been discredited, it is possible to expedite the development of the vital sources of a religion and art that are yet to be. Not indeed by action directly aimed at their production, but by substituting faith in the active tendencies of the day for dread and dislike of them, and by the courage and intelligence to follow whither social and scientific changes directs us. We are weak today in ideal matters because intelligence is divorced from aspiration. The bare force of circumstance compels us onwards in the daily detail of our beliefs and acts, but our deeper thoughts and desires turn backwards. When philosophy shall have co-operated with the course of events and made clear and coherent the meaning of the daily detail, science and emotion will interpenetrate, practice and imagination will embrace. Poetry and religious feeling will be the unforced flowers of life. To further this articulation and revelation of the meaning of the current course of events is the task and problem of philosophy in days of transition.
SECTION T.0

Further Observations on Freedom, Inquiry and Ontology

Since pragmatism began, three major philosophical criticisms have been directed against it. The first rejects the pragmatic concept of freedom; the second rejects the Theory of Inquiry as a viable tool with which to deal with value; and the third rejects Dewey's existential ontology. I have dealt at some length with most of the central issues of all three; however, in order to make the pragmatic position more clearly discernible, I shall restate some of the more troubling points.

It may be asked, is freedom reducible to a capacity to achieve satisfaction or to a disposition to explore consequences? There are two questions here and the latter must be rejected out of hand. Dewey's concept of freedom is more than mere disposition of any kind. To define freedom as an exploratory disposition implies a kind of lofty indulgence in dilettante caprice: back to the heights of Olympus. Only if freedom were seen as a very particularized and active disposition, and I use the term reluctantly, would such a definition have merit. We saw earlier that action in relation to choice is intrinsic to freedom; consequently, no matter what our disposition might be, unless we have both the ability to act and choose
in accord with our disposition, we cannot begin to achieve freedom. As an illustration, we may wish to explore the consequences of changing the course of a river, and find through our explorations that to do so would greatly enhance the fortunes of the community served by the river. But after choosing to do so, unless we have the power to act, the river will remain unchanged. The same argument applies when considering the "right" to vote. If there is no party or person representative of an individual's view, or the political structure is so controlled that all parties are virtually the same, one must settle for the ideal of the right to vote, which, although very noble in political appearance, does little to foster real change. Richard Bernstein explains that "...Dewey tells us [that]...'mere elimination of obstructions is not enough to secure rights and achieve freedom.' Man's freedom is not a fact, it is a possibility. 'But like all other possibilities, this possibility has to be actualized; and like all others, it can only be actualized through interaction with objective conditions.' If man is to achieve genuine freedom and individuality, it is necessary to counter the natural tendency of a technological society. Present social institutions must be reconstructed so that they will encourage the realization of creative individuality. How this is to be achieved cannot be answered in a wholesale manner, for it is a matter of specific reforms in particular situations."

If the question, "Is freedom reducible to the capacity to achieve satisfaction?" were properly qualified, the answer would be yes. The central qualification would be that satis-
faction cannot be intended as a final state. There is no future point in time at which it could be said that total satisfaction would be achieved. Freedom, like all of human affairs, has a temporal and contextual dimension. It is meaningless for one to state that he is free: he is either free to do something, or free from something, but never just free. Similarly, he may be free to do something now, but there is nothing which insures that he will have the same freedom in the future. A man released from prison is not a "free" man, he is free from prison. He has greater choice and greater power of action, greater possibilities for the achievement of freedom, but if he uses these possibilities to again violate the law, thus jeopardizing the freedom of others, he will find himself soon deprived of even the possibility of freedom.

There is, of course, a social argument here. As we saw earlier, the notion of choice became involved with responsibility and blame. Deviant social behavior, therefore, is largely misunderstood since it is seen in terms of blame and subsequent punishment. But there is ample evidence to show that no amount of punishment will change the consequences of a man's history, a history written within existential experience. Not until genuine attempts to change the laws and institutions of society have come about, attempts that reflect existential conditions, will crime and criminality be understood and reduced.

In sum, if the term satisfaction means that dynamic state of affairs which intelligently attempts to bring about the maximum expansion and harmony of individual needs, and if
such a state of affairs is put under the constant scrutiny of inquiry, then I would have to agree that freedom is the capacity to achieve satisfaction.

It may also be asked, "Is it not possible for two people to agree on the consequences of an act and still disagree on its value?" Of course. But as was pointed out earlier, Dewey makes no claims to the contrary. There is no suggestion that the cessation of all conflict will be achieved through the use of inquiry. What is suggested is that inquiry is the best method to deal with conflict of all sorts. On this point let me repeat one of Dewey's earlier contentions:

It is not pretended that a moral theory based upon realities of human nature and a study of the specific connections of these realities with those of physical science would do away with moral struggle and defeat. It would not make the moral life as simple a matter as wending one's way along a well-lighted boulevard. All action is an invasion of the future, of the unknown. Conflict and uncertainty are ultimate traits. But morals based upon concern with facts and deriving guidance from knowledge would at least locate the points of effective endeavor and would focus available resources upon them. To the extent that resolution can occur, it is best brought about through a recognition of the consequences of the conflict, determined by the use of inquiry.

The pragmatic rejection of "eternal" truth is another bone in the throat to the traditionalists of philosophy. Dewey admits to truths that are in a sense "out" of time, that could be called eternal. The universals whose existence and value have been apparent and puzzling to philosophers through the centuries are not denied by him, for physics gives example of such stability and pervasiveness. Certainty, changelessness, insubstantiality, "eternals" which characterize the Greek's
ideals, are attributable to instrumental universals, not hypothesized into a superior order of existence or transcendental laws of the universe. As Dewey writes in *Experience and Nature*:

Timeless laws, taken by themselves, like all universals, express dialectic intent, not any matter of fact existence. But their ultimate implication is application; they are methods, and when applied as methods they regulate the precarious flow of unique situations. Objects of natural science are not metaphysical rivals of historical events; they are means of directing the latter. Events change; one individual gives place to another. But individually qualified things have some qualities which are pervasive, common, stable. They are out of time in the sense that a particular temporal quality is irrelevant to them. If anybody feels relieved by calling them eternal, let them be called eternal. But let not 'eternal' be then conceived as a kind of absolute perduring existence or Being. It denotes just what it denotes: irrelevance to existence in its temporal quality ...As such they [eternals] are tools, instrumentalities ...historic events regulate their course.

Eternal existential truths about the affairs of men are impossible. To hold this position is to repeat the claim that truth is the verified and nothing else. It would test the resources of the best library on the social sciences, or for that matter, the Library of Congress, to find any eternals within the temporal world of man and his affairs. The important fact, however, is that we possess more and truer truths today than ever before, and our recognition that these truths are not eternal does not affect their reliability in the least. Despite the fact that present theories concerning the origin and development of the universe are subject to infinite modification and refinement, these theories are far truer than any of the mythical explanations which they have replaced.

Much more is known about the face of the earth than was
known by any previous generation. We know for example that the base line used to establish altitude measurement is not somehow built into the structure of the earth, or given by the gods or intuition, but is chosen for its efficacy in integrating the intricate pattern of land measurements. The choice of a common measure is made necessary by the functional requirements of collective social activities. In practical human terms, including "subjective" values as well as "objective" facts, the choice will survive only so long as it remains functional. Thus Dewey writes, "Anything which can exist at any place and at any time occurs subject to tests imposed upon it by surroundings, which are only in part compatible and reinforcing. These surroundings test its strength and measure its endurance...The stablest thing we can speak of is not free from conditions set to it by other things... A thing may endure secula seculorum and yet not be everlasting; it will crumble before the gnawing tooth of time, as it exceeds a certain measure. Every existence is an event."  

Section Two

NOTES


Section Two

NOTES (cont.)


In the preface to *Experience and Education* Dewey expressed the conviction that "it is the business of an intelligent theory of education to ascertain the causes for the conflicts that exist and then, instead of taking one side or the other, to indicate a plan of operations, proceeding from a level deeper and more comprehensive than is represented by the practices and ideas of the contending parties." Few it seems would quarrel with his objective, but considering the number of efforts being made toward "new" educational directions which have notably failed, Dewey was being surprisingly optimistic. Clearly, existential consequences have shown that his plan of operations have not yet helped matters noticeably.

Without citing evidence or authority I will presume that conflict about our educational system is at least as widespread as it was in 1938, the publication date of *Experience and Education*. In fact, it appears that recent world events make the conflict even more acute. Soviet technical success has been difficult to explain away. If our system, so much longer in operation than the Russian, cannot maintain a wide lead in achievement, then the reason is clear, the "progressive" education of Dewey has destroyed Western education. The charge may sound somewhat overstated and paranoid, but it is not with-
out foundation; as just one example, Mortimer Adler, in a national magazine, called Dewey "the most dangerous man since Hitler." It would follow that by forsaking Dewey and his fellow pragmatists we may find the way back to a successful pedagogy.

But for a number of reasons the difficulties cannot fairly be blamed on Dewey and his followers. To begin with, the great majority of schools in both Canada and the United States have never been anything like progressive schools; indeed, most of the so-called progressive schools and educators are not Deweyan in any sense. Also, the problem before us is not essentially one of methods but of aims, meaning that the bulk of the controversy about discipline, problem-solving, cognitive development, learning process, to name a few, is not immediately relevant. The value questions involved are general. In no way can they be restricted to education alone. We are confused about aims of individual and social life; thus the questions have to do with philosophy as well as pedagogy.

In the reading I have done, from Jacques Barzun's *The House of Intellect* to the most recent articles in *The American Teacher*, there appears an almost hopeless recognition that present day education is at best fulfilling some of the economic needs of society, and at worst, is a huge and impersonal machine unwilling or unable to seek out new ways of maximizing and making relevant the experience of the child. But to imply that the present state of education is the result of Deweyan pedagogy is very like blaming the problems of American society on Martin Luther King.
It must be admitted that Dewey did contribute in profound measure to the theory and practice of learning and teaching, as Einstein did in the field of physics. However, Dewey is no more responsible for our decline in cultural and technical skills than is Einstein responsible for our suicidal stockpile of atomic death. Less so, since in most cases Dewey's work has yet to be directly incorporated into our institutions.

In the schools that Dewey planned the child was to become "the sun about which the appliances of education revolve... the center about which they are organized." Schools like the ideal home with teachers like the parents of such a home, organized and educated so that inquiry could and would take place in an atmosphere of stability. Physically the school was to be intimately related to the community, for the child would "come to school with all the experience he had got outside the school, and leave it with something to be immediately used in his everyday life." In place of the static "you listen, I talk" teaching, and the fixed equipment provided to facilitate this kind of teaching, was to be substituted both furnishings and activities related to "field, forest and factory," and of course to the home.

These are not romantic dreams, but necessary components through which the child could receive the relevant experiences needed to make education something more than a boring or fearful task. If there was a romantic element it was unfortunately introduced by the later progressives, but the unforgivable bromides of contemporary free-schools, like "it is the adults that are dull," or "the teacher is to nurse the divine nature
of the child, this is the method of all education," cannot be charged to Dewey. The slogans are Fröbel's and come from Schelling's philosophy. As Bernstein observes, "Dewey never advocated that education ought simply to cater to the needs and whims of the child...he criticized the child-orientated theory of education by acutely noting that it harbors a formal and empty concept of development. The child is expected to 'work things out for himself' without receiving the proper guidance. Advocating complete freedom of the child reflects a 'sentimental idealization of the child's naive caprices and performances' and inevitably results in 'indulgence and spoiling.' Both critics and defenders of Dewey have often neglected his critique of the laissez-faire approach to education. This critique is developed and explained throughout his writings. He tells us that 'doing as one pleases signifies a release from truly intellectual initiative and independence,' and that when unlimited free expression is allowed, children 'gradually tend to become listless and finally bored, while there is an absence of cumulative, progressive development of power and of actual achievement in results.' In opposition to this view, Dewey argues for the necessity for deliberate guidance, direction and order. Education is, or ought to be, a continuous process of reconstruction in which there is progressive movement away from the child's immature immediate experience to experience which becomes more pregnant with meaning, more systematic and ordered."

Apart from the learning-through-play corruption of Dewey's pedagogy, what of the capturing of our schools by his theories?
How many schools do we have that approach the pragmatic pattern? Out of the thousands of schools in the cities of Canada and the United States, there is not more than a handful where Dewey, or Fröbel for that matter, would be pleased with what they saw. The great majority of our urban schools are drab and crowded places, filled with fixed desks, and permeated with a distinct institutional feel and smell. The staff, although well-meaning, are underpaid and under-educated, still maintaining discipline by authority and teaching "lessons" that would not seem particularly novel to their grandfathers. The picture is no more hopeful in the rural areas; if anything it is worse.

The reasons that Deweyan pedagogy did not become an important element in most of our schools are fairly simple. In the first place this type of schooling is expensive. Few districts would see fit to spend the kind of money on education that would provide anything like what Dewey had in mind. So long as our social priorities remain what they are -- three times as much money is spent annually on cosmetics and alcohol as is spent on education -- little possibility for a change in the present structure can be foreseen. Secondly, Dewey in the main enunciated and explicated a philosophy and theory of education, a theory difficult to assimilate and one that would take time to work out in practice. Few of the thousands who earnestly absorbed education courses labelled with Dewey's name have more than a vague notion of what he was talking about. There is in Dewey's books a deceptive seeming of the commonplace. It is easy to read through *Human Nature and Conduct*, nod in understanding at most paragraphs, and close the
volume with only a dim and fleeting grasp of the very subtle and profound reasoning just encountered.

Other works are very much more technical and difficult. His *Quest for Certainty*, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, *The Public and its Problems* and *Experience and Nature*, comprise a corpus in comprehension and technical genius equal to the greatest philosophers. It is safe to say that many years of work will be required to assimilate his ideas into our common heritage. But even the general pedagogic ideas which stemmed from *The School and Society*, *Interest and Effort in Education* and *Democracy and Education* are such as to require much time and experimental effort to be put into practice. Many of the methods which are now being used or introduced as a result of extensive experiment were inspired, though usually unknowingly, by Deweyan insights. And they represent real and effective application of his theories. The example that immediately comes to mind is the model schools mentioned in the Hall Report. When such schools become more widespread, and have been tried and observed over an extended period of time, then we can discuss more fully the successes and failures of Deweyan education. Until that time, however, we should not denigrate Dewey for the results of schooling that has not been Deweyan.

As was earlier suggested, our educational troubles do not originate in education. On the contrary, they reach into the schools from outside, as a result of the tensions, schisms and conflicts extending through the whole of society. No system of popular education can possibly succeed without the support of community and government. Respect, esteem, prestige, econ-
omic rewards given to the educated, economic support to the student, a secure role assured to the graduate, these are not just pleasant things to wish for, but are indispensable if the young are to become interested in learning and in maintaining a society that still holds democratic change as the best method to achieve social justice.

If our troubles are not isolated to the classrooms, where must we turn to set in motion changes that will lead to a better educational system? On the one hand there are those who would like to see the restoration of an 18th century laissez-faire, autocratic and "respectful" system, but history seldom accommodates dreams, no matter how comforting. On the other hand there is change through revolution, bloodless or bloody, but I doubt if revolution, no matter how justified, will see objective education as a paramount priority. Dewey had a stubborn belief that "a future new society of changed purposes and desires may be created by a deliberate humane treatment of the impulses of the young. This is the meaning of education; for a truly humane education consists in an intelligent direction of native activities in the light of the possibilities and necessities of the social situation." Since there are issues yet to be explored, however, the question of either education or drastic social change will be examined at the conclusion of this paper.

Dewey's ontological assertions are central to the rejection of pragmatic pedagogy. But before expanding this contention, a few words on the multitude of criticisms leveled against Dewey. From Marxist to logical positivist Dewey was
condemned for crimes as various as materialism to naturalism to subjective idealism. I shall not, therefore, attempt to deal with all his critics, since to do so would embroil me in an almost impossible task. As an indication of the depth of such a task let me offer the following observation. The misreading and confusion over Dewey's philosophy is rather well illustrated by the fact that C.L.R. Joad thinks that Marx's theory of knowledge is congenial to Dewey's instrumentalism because, writes Joad, Dewey holds "the human mind always changes what it knows in the course of knowing it." This, it happens, is the fundamental reason why Marxists reject Dewey. Consequently, since there are so many contradictory reasons for denying the value of pragmatism, I shall re-examine, within an educational context, only the major question and its issues: Dewey's view of the nature of man's place in the universe.

Dr. Albert Lynd, in his book *Quackery in the Public Schools*, addresses the question squarely if inconsistently. Although not in agreement with Deweyan ontology, he did understand some of the confusion over Deweyan pedagogy, and was justifiably angry with the nonsense that passed as progressive education.

The transition from Rousseau and romanticism to Dewey and scientific pragmatism is remarkable. Even more remarkable is the invocation of Dewey's name by disciples who have elaborated those meaningless incantations, those 'emotive, question-begging words and phrases' about growth and joy and richness and the rest of the stuff which passes for pioneer thinking in so much of the literature of the New education. Lost remarkable of all is the dogmatic use of Dewey's name by many Educationalists as a charm within the profession and a exorcism without. This is an interesting fate for a philosopher who was the century's most consistent enemy of dogmatism.
But Lynd's sympathy and understanding does not extend to Deweyan ontology: "Many of the practices of progressivism make little sense when isolated by limited understanding from the basic philosophical assumptions of Professor Dewey. When intelligently related to those assumptions, they may make a great deal of sense, if you are prepared to go along with Mr. Dewey's views on the nature of man and his universe."

Since Lynd's book is addressed to parents of school-age children, what he says in essence is that the Deweyan method might make a good deal of sense, but only if the parent is willing to agree with pragmatic ontology. He also claims that "the important question here is not whether Dewey's views of the nature of man and his universe are right or wrong. That is as you please." The troublesome implication of these statements is the rather gross relegation of responsibility away from the educator and toward the parent. It is absurd to ask the parent to read Experience and Nature and School and Society, plus Whitehead, Russell, Hegel, Kant, St. Thomas, Aristotle and Plato, and then vote a decision. Stripped of its dross, Lynd's beliefs would read, "the question is not whether Dewey was right or wrong, but rather of what people think." Clearly, this is a declaration for a continuation of the impasse in education, that schools should pass on unchanged the values now current. The present attitudes, habits and beliefs of the majority apparently become the norm over-riding Dewey's intention that we, in effect, learn to think together and intelligently in order to modify this vale of tears nearer to human needs and desires.
As noted Lynd makes the claim that Dewey's ontology, whether right or wrong, is of no importance and yet he goes on to show why it is of the utmost importance, and even of the utmost danger. In his arguments he touches on most of the central questions responsible for the rejection, misapplication or misunderstanding of the Deweyan position. Thus I shall follow his points one by one.

The first issue with Lynd is Dewey's rejection of eternal truths. But as we have seen Dewey did accept the idea that in appearance and function there are certain qualities which are stable and pervasive. As an illustration, the Platonic notion was once held that we can approach perfection in actual measurement. Today it is necessary to qualify even a simple one-half inch, to the nearest 1/1000 or 1/10,000 or to whatever degree of accuracy is needed. The ordinary science student knows that an absolute one-half inch is a logical absurdity. What is absolute is the functional concept. This is indeed perfect, and our real measurements approach it only asymptotically. Its purely functional character is clear when we realize that, as a unit of measurement, it needn't be a half inch at all; it could just as well be half the length of a box of Eddy Matches. As was earlier pointed out, the choice of a common measure is made necessary by the functional requirements of collective activity.

Similarly, in social terms this "functional necessity" is one of the fundamental reasons behind religious or political strength. Scholars from Levy-Bruhl, Durkheim and Lalinousky to Arthur Koestler, von Bertalanffy and Hugh Duncan have
supported the claim that the choice of a common deity or belief, political or otherwise, fills the same needs in man for functional social direction. Without "truths" held in common, whether mythical or not, communities and societies would fade into oblivion or rip themselves to pieces in anarchy. With functional commonality as a qualification, there are "eternal" truths, but they are constants only in an instrumental sense; if you like, instrumental universals.

This may appear to be a rejection of metaphysics, but Dewey never claimed certainty one way or the other on matters of metaphysics. What he did say is that we now know more about the nature of sureness. Thus metaphysics, like all of human affairs, must be examined critically in the light of the far truer truths we now have at our disposal.

In his concern over eternals, Lynd is also fearful that the Deweyan method would sweep religion out of the schools. In fairness to Lynd, however, he does admit that religion, as it is presently maintained in the schools, is virtually innocuous. But he suggests that irreligion should not be taught, and since he sees Deweyan pedagogy as irreligious, it must be rejected. To which the obvious retort is that the faith of any educator must be in teaching the truth, in physics, biology or geography, as in history -- even if the facts of that history conflict with the facts of our religious ideologies. This is not nearly so anti-religious and dogmatic as it may sound.

The body of current theory and observation in, say, biology or anthropology, is supported by evidence within these disciplines. It is and must remain autonomous. Any deformation of data or
theory caused by external agencies, political or religious, is simply dishonest. If, in the study of history, the Bible is found to be a compilation of mythical explanations common to most of the tribes in the Mesopotamia basin, thus casting doubt on the Bible as revealed truth, should such information be suppressed?

The same applies with the teaching of critical thought, of methods of inquiry. The correct way to approach questions, whether technical, humanistic or theological, is through progressive experience in problem-solving and through progressive acquaintance with the relevant history of man in a temporal, existential setting. "History is a bad teacher" is a worn out old cliche. "History is taught badly" is closer to the truth. It is interesting to note that social philosophers and psychologists of all stripes insist that to know a man it is necessary to know his history, and yet the same demand for historical knowledge is not placed upon the young of a nation or race. We fumble in our own history, call it bunk and continue the killing, a killing not limited to physical death.

If thinking is to be proscribed because the wrong conclusions are to be drawn, we have indeed reached full circle. This is not the first time that the schools have been told that reason is a dangerous thing. Papal infallibility, Fuehrerprinzip, the Wisdom of the Party, are all of them excuses for not thinking.

The danger is not that the young through faith in reason may come to question the faith in their fathers. Having lost such faith anyway, and not having the means of inquiry to find
new guidance, they will struggle hopelessly in the swamp of uncertainty until they are challenged by some brazen-lunged, paranoid "student leader" whom they will follow because any faith is better than none. Aimlessness is unbearable for long. As Koestler so beautifully puts it: "An increasing number of scientists, authors, and philosophers, sized by panic, advocate a return to doctrinaire religion, to the worship of an anthropomorphic God. The fact that millions in our day still find comfort in petrified doctrine proves that the human craving for self-transcendence will be purchased at any price, even at the price of its regression to a fixation at an infantile level.

Pure myticism is equally unfit to provide a solution. The quietest mystic and his antipode, the political fanatic, sin in opposite directions: the second through denial of the oceanic feeling, the first through not harnessing it to social integration."

Which brings us to the added accusation that Dewey did not believe in God and the soul. It is remarkable that such criticism should still remain current in the light of modern theological thought. Since the genesis of Christianity there have been wide and bitter divergencies in the interpretations placed upon the concepts of God and soul. In fact, liberal Christian thought today very often describes God in terms which actually owe much to Dewey. It is true that Dewey's God was perhaps more like the over-soul of Emerson, anchored to human society and vitalized by communication. Clearly not the grand but abstract and remote God of St. Thomas or Luther, or the bearded impassioned Eternal of the Hebrew Patriarchs,
or the infinitely and natural-teleologically evolving "mind" of Hegel, or "matter" of Marx. But without being fixed or immutable, it was still a God. The notion that God is one and the same for all displays a rather curious lack of sophistication in matters of theology.

Besides, the unfairness is compounded by the fact that what is being criticized here is a philosophy and a pedagogy, not a theology. Some may want their educational system designed and administered by theologians, but I doubt that the majority do. However, to close the argument on the possibility of theological consensus: Whitehead has this to say about the concept of God in metaphysics:

Aristotle's metaphysical train of thought...did not lead him very far towards the production of a god available for religious purposes. It may be doubted whether any properly general metaphysics can ever, without the illicit introduction of other considerations get much further than Aristotle. 15

Aristotle's god was, of course, merely the "prime mover," the power which started things going, a requirement in his philosophy. Whether a "thicker" faith can be reached by logic is a very old question, and one I doubt will ever be answered.

Parallel considerations apply to the soul. Dewey did not believe in the soul as a substantial but immaterial entity in the traditional sense, as a thing separate from the body. He never denied, however, that a person is more than just a body; that the more is not physical, but, generalized, is a man's unique way of entering into interaction with other things, and that the cultivation of those habits and interests that may lead to this unique interaction should be man's high-
eat aim. Again, to hold one view of the soul, or consciousness, or mind -- soul has been described with these and many more synonyms -- indicates a curious narrowness in theology and philosophy.

In sum, Dr. Lynd's argument would read: Dewey was a fine, courageous and brilliant philosopher with the highest intentions, but the application of his theories in pedagogy leads inexorably to implanting in our children the atheistic and relativistic principles which are fundamentally characteristic of his philosophy. An important point to note is that Lynd assumes the efficacy of education in hastening social change.

It would appear that this is precisely what he is afraid of.

I shall conclude this paper on the issue of social change. R.M. Hutchins is sure that "relativism, scientism, scepticism and anti-intellectualism, the four horsemen of the philosophical apocalypse, have produced the chaos in education which will end in the disintegration of the West." Although elsewhere in the same speech he questions "...whether and to what extent the state of mind of the public is or can be the result of its educational system." He is also sure that Dewey "re-made the American educational system in forty years." Except to say that Hutchins is thought to be an important spokesman of education, I am at a loss for words. Hutchins also holds the opinion that the Deweyan hope for education, that it may peacefully accomplish social change, is fallacious. This "doctrine of social reform" is unsound because, writes Hutchins, "The social reformer is limited to adapting the rising generation to social changes already agreed upon. He is limit-
ed to meeting needs that are sanctioned by the society. He can hope to make himself felt in the educational system only after he has won over the society." Dewey, according to Hutchins, made himself felt because he succeeded in winning over society, and because the social ideas he favored were those generally popular in the United States. He and Dr. Lynd seem at odds on this point. However, I think I have shown that neither Hutchins or Lynd need concern themselves over Deweyan pedagogy, which can hardly be a threat before it is a fact.

The issue of education as an instrument of change is a very old one indeed, beautifully stated by Plato. The answer to the question of revolution or education probably is that there are no either/or conclusions to be drawn. It is my hope, as it was Dewey's, that education will initiate the kind of attitudes for reform that would make revolution unnecessary. But I am not so naive to suggest that education will automatically bring about the conditions of a democratic society, and neither was Dewey.

Deweyan pragmatism has willed to educational practice three major concepts that have yet to be acted upon with any real force: the necessity of physical, manipulative activity to be a part of learning; the creation of a habit of inquiry based on the proven systems in science; and the very great need to see and vitalize the social role of education. Until these views are understood and acted upon by educators, we can hope for little better than what we have. Finally, the hope of Professor Dewey for the direction of a new educational
system, and since the educability of man extends to all of human affairs, for the betterment of mankind.

Because intelligence is critical method applied to goods of belief, appreciation and conduct, so as to construct, freer and more secure goods, turning assent and assertion into free communication of shareable meanings, turning feeling into ordered and liberal sense, turning reaction into response, it is the reasonable object of our deepest faith and loyalty, the stay and support of all reasonable hopes. To utter such a statement is not to indulge in romantic idealization. It is not to assert that intelligence will ever dominate the course of events; it is not even to imply that it will save from ruin and destruction. The issue is one of choice, and choice is always a question of alternatives. What the method of intelligence, thoughtful valuation will accomplish, if once it be tried, is for the result of trial to determine. Since it is relative to the intersection in existence of hazard and rule, of contingency and order, faith in a wholesale and final triumph is fantastic. But some procedure has to be tried; for life is itself sequence of trials. Carelessness and routine, Olympian aloofness, secluded contemplation are themselves choices. To claim that intelligence is a better method than its alternatives, authority, imitation, caprice and ignorance, prejudice and passion, is hardly an excessive claim. These procedures have been tried and have worked their will. The result is not such as to make it clear that the method of intelligence, the use of science in criticizing and recreating the casual goods of nature into intentional and conclusive goods of art, the union of knowledge and values in production, is not worth trying. There may be those to whom it is treason to think of philosophy as the critical method of developing methods of criticism. But if this conception of philosophy also waits to be tried, and the trial which shall approve or condemn lies in the eventual issue. The import of such knowledge as we have acquired and such experience as has been quickened by thought is to evoke and justify the trial. (italics added)
Section Three

NOTES


8. The one exception among Marxists is John Lewis. In his *Introduction to Philosophy* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1954), he is most understanding of pragmatism, though not overjoyed.

Section Three

NOTES (cont.)


12 In his discussion of the self in *Mind, Self, and Society*, Mead says:

Man's behavior is such in his social group that he is able to become an object himself, a fact which constitutes him a more advanced product of evolutionary development than are the lower animals. Fundamentally it is this social fact -- and not his alleged possession of a soul or mind with which he, as an individual, has been mysteriously and supernaturally endowed, and with which the lower animals have not been endowed -- that differentiates him from them.


Section Three

NOTES (cont.)

19 Hutchins, Freedom, p. 16.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


"Decrassifying Dewey," Philosophy of Science, VIII (April 1941), 147-56.


BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)


Art as Experience. New York, 1934.

The Child and the Curriculum. Chicago, 1902.


"Ethical Subject-Latter and Language," *Journal of Philosophy* XXXIII (December 20, 1945), 701-12.

Experience and Nature. Chicago, 1929.

"Further as to Valuation as Judgment," *Journal of Philosophy* XL (Sept. 30, 1943), 543-52.

How We Think. Boston, 1910.


Interest and Effort in Education. New York, 1913.

"Knowledge and Speech Reaction," *Journal of Philosophy* XXIX (October 12, 1922), 561-70.


BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)


_______. The Quest for Certainty. New York, 1929.

_______. The School and Society. Chicago, 1915.


_______. Moral Education. London, 1933.

_______. Sociology and Philosophy. London, 1924.


BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)


__________. *Pragmatism: A New Name for some Old Ways of Thinking*. New York, 1907.


BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)


Lynd, Albert. **Quackery in the Public Schools.** New York, 1950.

Lackey, D.S. "What does Mr. Dewey mean by an 'Indeterminate Situation'?" **Journal of Philosophy** **XXXIX** (March 12, 1942), 141-48.


________________________. **Sex and Repression in Savage Society.** New York, 1955.


________________________. **The Philosophy of the Present.** Chicago and London, 1932.


Lorris, Charles W. **Signs, Language and Behavior.** New York, 1946.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (cont.)


*______________.* *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell.* Evanston, 1944.

*______________.* *The Philosophy of John Dewey.* Evanston, 1939.