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*Dewey Studies* is a peer-reviewed, online, open-access journal of the John Dewey Society, dedicated to furthering understanding of John Dewey’s philosophical work and enlivening his unique mode of engagement with the vital philosophical questions of our time.

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

LEONARD J. WAKS
Temple University, Emeritus
Editor-in-chief

Volume 2 · Number 3 · Winter 2018 · Pages 1-5
The editors of Dewey Studies are pleased to release our first special issue, on “John Dewey: Nationalism and War.” When we founded Dewey Studies in 2017 we proposed to publish two regular issues a year, plus special issues featuring papers from conference sessions sponsored by the Dewey Society and others addressing its annual theme. The Society’s annual theme is selected by the current president in accord with our by-laws, and shapes both our annual meeting and the sessions we sponsor at other meetings. The Society generates manuscripts from our annual conference and sessions sponsored at such conferences as the American Philosophical Society and the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy. We reasoned that if we are to play a role similar to that played by James Studies for the James Society, and Transactions of the Peirce Society, we should be prepared to publish some of these papers ourselves.

Because these are based on presentations at our own sessions, we know the presenting authors and cannot subject the submissions to anonymous review. Instead, we have invited submission for expedited internal review, appropriate especially for papers presented at our annual JDS meeting, as all of these have passed through anonymous peer review at the conference submission stage. In an effort to document our JDS activities, we also invited conference presenters who chose not to work up their papers for publication to submit research briefs abstracted from those papers.

The Special Issue on Dewey: Nationalism and War

The 2018 JDS theme, selected by president A. G. Rud, is “Dewey: Nationalism and War”. The papers published in this special issue include a symposium on John Dewey and Nationalism organized for the American Philosophical Association Eastern meeting in January 2018, and a symposium on the same theme composed of peer reviewed submissions for the annual “Dewey and Philosophy” sessions at the John Dewey Society annual meeting in April 2018. In addition, we offer research briefs of three other papers presented at that time.
John Dewey and Nationalism, American Philosophical Association

The first symposium is composed of papers by John Stuhr, Emory University; Vincent Colapietro, University of Rhode Island; and Jennifer Hansen, Saint Lawrence University.

Stuhr, in “Pragmatism about Nationalism,” elegantly summarizes Dewey’s position on nationalism and then lays out pragmatic principles for a democratic form of nationalism.

Colapietro then takes up the question how citizens with sharply conflicting and emotionally driven views can live together and address each other in a democratic polity. He says that while we might imagine a politics in which passions are eradicated, such passions in actual democratic life are no more eliminable than such constitutional needs as sleep and food. We need practices of communication, therefore which can educate and detoxify them.

Hansen, in “The Hopeful Hashtag,” takes up the question of digital media and democratic contestation. Drawing on the work of Nancy Fraser, among others, she points to the great complexity and opposition of forces that make up ‘the democratic public’. Following Dewey, she rejects a totalizing notion of the democratic polity in favor of a conception of multiple publics, organized around specific problems over which they lack effective control. Even within these publics, there are ineliminable conflicts. Drawing on the internal conflicts within the feminist public on adequate representation of the concerns of women of color, Hansen demonstrates how the Twitterstream, with its unfiltered presentation of multiple voices, offers hope for a more democratic political conversation.

John Dewey: Nationalism and War, John Dewey Society

Turning to the symposium at the 2018 Dewey Society Dewey and Philosophy sessions, we present a symposium with four full articles and two research briefs.

The four articles appear first. These have been authored by Stefano Oliverio, Department of Political Sciences, University of
Oliverio leads off with “Will Whatever It Takes Be Enough? Dewey, the Crisis of the EU, and the Need for an (Inter)nationalizing of Education.” He draws upon Dewey’s analysis of American nationalism as a regionally instantiated cosmopolitan model, to describe a parallel vision for the European Union to provide perspective for its current predicament.

Das, in “Encountering John Dewey’s ‘Pragmatism’ in an Indian Context: Ambedkar’s Critique of War, Violence and Nationalism,” explores the influence of both Dewey and Bertrand Russell on the Indian scholar and jurist Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar’s reflections on violence, and argues that Ambedkar’s moral vision, though formulated in the context of the Asian subcontinent, is profoundly cosmopolitan.

Howlett and Cohen, in “Education As An Instrument For Peace And Democracy: Dewey’s Perspective On The Rise Of Nationalism,” bring together the strands of Dewey’s argument, still highly relevant today, that overzealous nationalism is an impediment to cosmopolitan peace consciousness that has to be combated through public education.

Murray, in “War Without Violence? Dewey’s Insights on Modern Warfare,” draws on Dewey’s analysis of force-as-coercion to explain how the community of nations can respond to the violence inflicted by non-state actors.

The final set is composed of research briefs based on presentations at the same symposium. The authors are Hyunju Lee of the University of Iowa, and B. Jacob Del Dotto of Loyola University-Chicago.

Lee, in “John Dewey and Global Citizenship Education: Beyond American and Postcolonial Nationalism in an Age of Cultural Hybridity,” expands Dewey’s concept of democracy as applied to the global context - to those living together in situations of cultural diversity and hybridity. Echoing the concerns of Howlett and Cohen, Lee argues for a global citizenship education that, while sensitive to the
national cultural identities of individuals, nonetheless encourages active and responsible engagement and dialogue on global issues.

Finally Del Dotto, in “Coded to Confront: John Dewey and the Intersection of Race and Class in Jim Crow Era America,” takes up recent criticisms of the Dewey corpus for neglecting or misconstruing race relations in America. Arguing that these critics “benefit from the twin luxuries of hindsight and immersion in a more socially evolved world,” Del Dotto resituates the Dewey corpus in the ethos of Dewey's own Jim Crow era, to show that his work provides as “implicit critique of the white supremacy of his time.”

As contemporary nation states and the international order confronts new tensions and risks due to the rise of violent non-state actors, overzealous forms of nationalism, and the breakdown of international treaties, Dewey's work on nationalism and war remains relevant. The nine articles presented here provide fresh insight on Dewey's views and their contemporary relevance.

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This issue of Dewey Studies demonstrates the on-going diverse interest in, and influence of, John Dewey throughout the world. The editors ask readers to submit articles to Associate Editor Jared Kemling (jaredkemling@gmail.com), ideas for panels and special issues, interviews, research notes to Leonard Waks (ljwaks@yahoo.com), and book reviews and composite review articles to Reviews Editor Daniel Brunson (daniel.brunson@morgan.edu).
You know what I am? I’m a nationalist, O.K.? I’m a nationalist. Nationalist! Use that word! Use that word! . . . I am a nationalist. It’s a word that hasn’t been used too much. Some people use it, but I’m very proud. I think it should be brought back. . . . All I want is for our country to be treated well, to be treated with respect, so in that sense I’m absolutely a nationalist, and I’m proud of it.

—Donald Trump¹

Isolated and excessive nationalism renders international interdependence, now existing as a fact, a source of fear, suspicion, antagonism, potential war. In order that that interdependence may become a benefit instead of a dread evil and possible world-wide catastrophe, educators must revise the conception of patriotism and good citizenship so that it will accord with the imperative demands of world-wide association and interaction.²

—John Dewey and John L. Childs, The Educational Frontier (1933)

You have to be loyal to a dream country rather than to the one to which you wake up every morning. Unless such loyalty exists, the ideal has no chance of becoming actual.


² John Dewey and John L. Childs, “The Social Economic Situation and Education,” (LW 8:73-74). All citations of John Dewey’s writings are to the thirty-seven volume critical edition. This edition consists of three series and an Index:


In-text citations provide, in order, the critical edition series abbreviation, and then the volume number and page number. For example, (LW 1:21) would be a reference to Dewey’s 1925 Experience and Nature, published in the Later Works series as volume 1, the specific passage quoted or cited being on page 21.

In different times and places, nationalism has meant many different things to many different people. It is both rooted in, and gives rise to, many different, often contested, and sometimes conflicting passions, judgments, policies, and institutions. In its most basic, general, and descriptive sense, however, the meaning of nationalism is a rather straightforward matter. Nationalism is commitment to one’s nation. This commitment includes both feeling and action; it includes both a felt commitment and committed action. It is felt devotion or loyalty to, and hope for, one’s nation. Moreover, it is active advocacy on behalf of one’s nation and its flourishing. A nationalist is a person devoted to, and supportive of, his or her nation. (The term “patriot,” usually defined almost identically to the term “nationalist” despite its different origins, puts a bit more stress on action and readiness to defend, support, and improve one’s nation. Here it may be useful to contrast patriots with chauvinists, the latter term referring to persons who not only are committed to their nation but who also believe it is superior to all others—at times to the point of being jingoists, those who believe that their country forcefully should impose its will on other nations.)

What more specifically does nationalism mean in the United States today? This specification of national context is crucial because nationalism in the USA clearly has a different history and valence than it does in Scotland, Ukraine, Taiwan, South Sudan, Kashmir, Catalonia, the Seneca Nation, or than it did in the United States in 1788 or 1865 or 1945 or 2001, or at any other place at any other time. In the United States today, “nationalism” is a label often applied to, or endorsed by, the Trump Administration, its supporters, and the reactionary political right. (As such, “nationalism” is often only thinly veiled code for “white nationalism” and its factually mistaken claims that the American nation was founded and developed only by Caucasians, by English-speaking, Christian Caucasians, by “real Americans.”) Nonetheless, it is not illuminating to call nationalism the world view, fundamental value, or governing philosophy of the Trump Administration; doing so would imply a level of self-reflection and policy coherence that do not exist—or, at the very least, have not been manifested to date. Still, nationalism à la Trump can be
understood in terms of the evidence that his Administration's preferences, public statements, executive orders, and actions collectively provide. This nationalism is a loose class name that includes: rejection, or at least wariness, of international free trade agreements, international treaties (including nuclear arms limits), and international organizations; the view that other nations are above all economic competitors or adversarial rivals (rather than genuine partners) of the United States; a conservative identity politics that favors deep cuts to legal immigration, indifference at best to asylum seekers, aggressive deportation of most “illegal aliens” aka “undocumented immigrants,” a southern border wall or “steel slats,” and strong visa and travel limitations or bans on Muslims and other non-white, non-Judeo-Christian persons; a consistently abusive, harassing, and mocking stance toward women and the #MeToo movement—to the point of claiming that it is a scary time in American for men but that “women are doing great”; the repeated rejection of equal and enforced protections and opportunities for non-heterosexuals; a proclaimed equal moral status or footing between white supremacists, described as patriots, and persons protesting racial injustice; an oft-stated commitment to racially-coded “law and order;” and the view that American interests are best served by supply-side economic policies and tax cuts for the very wealthy, increased national debt, massive income and wealth inequalities, reduced social services for vulnerable citizens, and the privatization of public goods (from research and education to science and health to national parks and the internet). It also includes belief that America is the wealthiest, most powerful, most principled nation in history—that it is the greatest nation even as the Trump Administration proclaims its goal of making America “great again.”

In all this, two large, fundamental normative commitments are omni-evident. The first is that there is no value greater than national sovereignty. Each nation, as the Trump Administration

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4 Donald Trump, comments to reporters, October 2, 2018, as reported by Jeremy Diamond, CNN, October 2, 2018; https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/02/politics/trump-scary-time-for-young-men-metoo/index.html
proclaims, should place absolute value on the sovereignty of all nations—its own sovereignty, of course, but also the sovereignty of other nations. The second fundamental normative commitment of Trump-style nationalism is that the leaders of any country should place the honor, interests, and well-being of its own citizens above the interests of everyone else—above the interests of other nations and their citizens. In the United States, this means, in the Trump Administration slogan, “America First” and it means concern for the well-being of people in Pittsburgh, not Paris—and certainly not Puerto Rico, Haiti, or all of Africa. More generally it means that each country’s leaders have the right to, should, and must be expected to put their own national interests above all else. In sum, nationalism in the United States today means most basically an unbridled endorsement of national sovereignty, especially America’s national sovereignty, and an unconditioned commitment to the advancement of American national honor and interests against all rivals and enemies (outside or inside the nation). This is the meaning of nationalism as proclaimed by Trump and his supporters.

President Trump has expressed and endorsed these dual commitments in virtually all his major speeches to date. Here, in chronological order, are just four examples. First, on June 1, 2017, declaring himself to be “on the right side of history,” Trump announced formally that he was withdrawing from the Paris Climate Agreement. (Under the terms of this Agreement the earliest effective date for U.S. withdrawal will be November 2020.) This Agreement, initially signed by relevant official representatives of 195 countries, constitutes an international framework and resource commitment to address global warming. In October 2017, Nicaragua signed on and in November 2017, Syria, despite its ongoing deadly civil war, also signed—leaving the post-Obama United States as the only country on earth that is not part of this Agreement following Trump’s withdrawal. Trump’s speech included these passages:

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5 Puerto Rico, an American Territory, is part of the USA, and all persons born in Puerto Rico are automatically granted U.S. citizenship. Trump’s speeches and public comments seem most often unaware of this fact.
In order to fulfill my solemn duty to protect America and its citizens, the United States will withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord . . . As President, I can put no other consideration before the well-being of American citizens. . . . This agreement is less about the climate and more about other countries gaining a financial advantage over the United States. . . . No responsible leader can put the workers — and the people — of their country at this debilitating and tremendous disadvantage. . . . At what point does America get demeaned? At what point do they start laughing at us as a country? We want fair treatment for its citizens, and we want fair treatment for our taxpayers. We don’t want other leaders and other countries laughing at us anymore. And they won’t be. They won’t be. . . . I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris. . . . It would once have been unthinkable that an international agreement could prevent the United States from conducting its own domestic economic affairs, but this is the new reality we face if we do not leave the agreement or if we do not negotiate a far better deal. . . . As President, I have one obligation, and that obligation is to the American people. The Paris Accord would undermine our economy, hamstring our workers, weaken our sovereignty, impose unacceptable legal risks, and put us at a permanent disadvantage to the other countries of the world. . . . It is time to put Youngstown, Ohio, Detroit, Michigan, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania — along with many, many other locations within our great country — before Paris, France. It is time to make America great again. Thank you.  

Trump’s September 2017 Foreign Policy speech to the United Nations is a second major example of his Administration’s commitment (and the commitment of his followers and supporters)

to unbridled national sovereignty, especially American national sovereignty, and an unconditioned advance of national self-interest. Trump's speech included these passages (quoted here again in the spirit of Trump White House staffers who frequently declare that President Trump’s words "speak for themselves"):

We do not expect diverse countries to share the same cultures, traditions, or even systems of government. But we do expect all nations to uphold these two core sovereign duties: to respect the interests of their own people and the rights of every other sovereign nation. . . . Strong, sovereign nations let diverse countries with different values, different cultures, and different dreams not just coexist, but work side by side on the basis of mutual respect. Strong, sovereign nations let their people take ownership of the future and control their own destiny. And strong, sovereign nations allow individuals to flourish in the fullness of the life intended by God. . . . As President of the United States, I will always put America first, just like you, as the leaders of your countries will always, and should always, put your countries first. . . . All responsible leaders have an obligation to serve their own citizens, and the nation-state remains the best vehicle for elevating the human condition. As long as I hold this office, I will defend America’s interests above all else. . . . Major portions of the world are in conflict and some, in fact, are going to hell. . . . While America will pursue cooperation and commerce with other nations, we are renewing our commitment to the first duty of every government: the duty of our citizens. This bond is the source of America’s strength and that of every responsible nation represented here today. . . . If we are to embrace the opportunities of the future and overcome the present dangers together, there can be no substitute for strong, sovereign, and independent nations — nations that are rooted in their histories and invested in their destinies; nations that seek allies to befriend, not enemies to conquer; and most important of all, nations that are home to patriots, to men and women who
are willing to sacrifice for their countries, their fellow citizens, and for all that is best in the human spirit. The true question for the United Nations today, for people all over the world who hope for better lives for themselves and their children, is a basic one: Are we still patriots? Do we love our nations enough to protect their sovereignty and to take ownership of their futures? Do we revere them enough to defend their interests, preserve their cultures, and ensure a peaceful world for their citizens?7

Third, Trump again made clear this same view of an American nationalism committed to America’s national sovereignty and the primacy of the interests of American citizens across all the competitions and battles of international relations in his 2018 State of the Union Address. His lengthy speech included these brief excerpts:

America has also finally turned the page on decades of unfair trade deals that sacrificed our prosperity and shipped away our companies, our jobs, and our Nation’s wealth. . . The era of economic surrender is over. . . My duty, and the sacred duty of every elected official in this chamber, is to defend Americans — to protect their safety, their families, their communities, and their right to the American Dream. Because Americans are dreamers too. . . Around the world, we face rogue regimes, terrorist groups, and rivals like China and Russia that challenge our interests, our economy, and our values. In confronting these dangers, we know that weakness is the surest path to conflict, and unmatched power is the surest means of our defense. . . That is why, tonight, I am asking the Congress to pass legislation to help ensure American foreign-assistance dollars always serve American interests, and only go

to America’s friends. . . As we strengthen friendships around the world, we are also restoring clarity about our adversaries.⁸

Fourth and finally, on September 25, 2018, Trump addressed the United Nations General Assembly on the topics of national sovereignty, his acceptance of “the doctrine of patriotism,” and his rejection of the flawed “ideology of globalism” and its “surrender of America’s sovereignty to an unelected, unaccountable, global bureaucracy.” He declared:

Each of us here today is the emissary of a distinct culture, a rich history, and a people bound together by ties of memory, tradition, and the values that make our homelands like nowhere else on Earth. . . . That is why America will always choose independence and cooperation over global governance, control, and domination. . . . I honor the right of every nation in this room to pursue its own customs, beliefs, and traditions. The United States will not tell you how to live or work or worship. . . . We only ask that you honor our sovereignty in return. . . . We recognize the right of every nation in this room to set its own immigration policy in accordance with its national interests, just as we ask other countries to respect our own right to do the same—which we are doing. That is one reason the United States will not participate in the new Global Compact on Migration. Migration should not be governed by an international body unaccountable to our own citizens. . . . To unleash this incredible potential in our people, we must defend the foundations that make it all possible. Sovereign and independent nations are the only vehicle where freedom has ever survived, democracy has ever endured, or peace has ever prospered. And so we must protect our sovereignty and our

cherished independence above all.\(^9\)

Trump’s “doctrine of patriotism,” of course also informs his insistence that America build a wall or steel barrier along its southern border. Without the security that he (wrongly) claims such a wall would provide, he believes there is no national sovereignty. He thus remarked on January 17, 2019 that “without a strong border, America is defenseless, vulnerable, and unprotected”:

We need strong borders. We need strong barriers and walls. Nothing else is going to work. . . . The federal government remains shut down because Congressional Democrats refuse to approve border security. We’re going to have border security. It’s going to be tight. It’s going to be strong.\(^10\)

Now, this version of nationalism, Trump nationalism, is sometimes labeled populism. If populism, another notion with many different meanings in many different contexts, is understood as belief in the right of people—ordinary, common, regular, and supposedly both virtuous and homogenous people\(^11\)—rather than political insiders, a wealthy elite, or cosmopolitan, global, or foreign powers—to control their government, then it does make at least some sense to understand a nationalism that includes an absolute commitment to national sovereignty and control as a “populist” nationalism.

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However, if Trump Administration nationalism is viewed as part of a populist movement that, like every populist movement, takes for granted a moral division and a political antagonism between common people and powerful but illegitimate elites, then it is a populism of the political right rather than the political left (with which populism more commonly has been associated in the Americas). This right-wing or reactionary populism is thoroughly nativist and anti-pluralist (and thus racist, sexist, jingoist) because it rejects the view that different groups, multiple interests, and messy different values and contesting political wills are all legitimate. It is also essentially anti-democratic because it claims to serve only the supposed legitimate interests of common, ordinary people (otherwise neglected or trampled or victimized by supposed conspiracies to disempower them). In order to do this, it marginalizes and excludes the interests of a great many citizens, undermines democratic institutions (the press, the courts, Congress, public education, public health and insurance, net neutrality, the Justice Department, the FBI, international alliances and partnerships, and so on), and usurps the state just as it claimed elites have done.

Of course, to the extent that this nationalism does not actually as a matter of fact serve the interests of common people and to the extent that social interests are not shared, this understanding of nationalism may be criticized as demagogic and only rhetorically populist. As Robert Kuttner, suggesting that genuine democracy and capitalism seem increasingly at odds with one another, recently observed “wealth has crowded out citizenship, producing greater concentration of both income and influence. The result is an economy of extreme inequality and instability, organized less for the many than for the few.” “To the chagrin of those who look to the democratic left to restrain markets,” Kuttner continued, “the reaction is mostly right-wing populist” as angry and economically stressed people sign on “to Make America (France, Norway, Hungary, Finland . . .) Great Again”:

We have been here before. . . . The great prophet of how market forces taken to an extreme destroy both democracy and a functioning economy was not Karl Marx but Karl
Polanyi. Marx expected the crisis of capitalism to end in universal worker revolt and communism. Polanyi, with nearly a century more history to draw on, appreciated that the greater likelihood was fascism.\textsuperscript{12}

And so we find ourselves with increasingly unrestrained global capitalism and increasingly unrestrained fascist nationalism in response. This is Trump Administration nationalism: It is a fascist nationalism, an authoritarian nationalism, “isolated and excessive” nationalism, a populist-in-rhetoric but elitist-in-action nationalism. It is a nationalism of how democracies die.\textsuperscript{13}

In short: \textit{Trump Administration nationalism is conceptually incoherent and politically dangerous.}

Accordingly, \textit{we desperately need to think and act in radically different ways.} And this means we also need to consider the resources and tools at our disposal to do this if we are to have an opportunity to wake up tomorrow in a country a less like the one in which we woke up today. This point was made over and over and over by John Dewey. Beginning more than a century ago, his critical arguments remain so compelling and his reconstructive insights and proposals are still so penetrating that they merit serious, sustained attention today. This is not a plea to simply \textit{retrieve} Dewey’s philosophy. Indeed, nothing would be less-Deweyan—because even when we’ve been here before, Dewey knew that we’ve never before been \textit{exactly just here and just now}. So, instead, it is a suggestion to \textit{recover and reconstruct} Dewey’s pragmatism about nationalism.

Dewey was a constant critic of American nationalism. In 1922 he called it “exacerbated” (MW 13:249). That same year and again in 1937 he wrote that it was “acute” and “narrow” (MW 13:249; LW 11:252). In 1933 he labeled it “isolated and excessive” (LW 8:273). In 1927, he described it as a piece of “social pathology” (LW2:341). A decade later, he termed it a kind of “indoctrination” “miscalled


\textsuperscript{13} Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, \textit{How Democracies Die} (New York: Crown, 2018).
patriotism” (LW 11:574). And, he suggested it often was a “disguise” for selfish economic interests, private profits, and an increasingly deadly and destructive means to gain support for wars fought by many in the service of profits for the few (LW 7:368-369). So, when Senator John McCain, accepting the 2017 Liberty Medal at the National Constitution Center, asserted that “we [Americans] live in a land made of ideals, not blood and soil” and referred to Trump’s values and policies as “spurious nationalism,” that is one of only a few critical adjectives that Dewey had not already put to use. Putting it most bluntly in his 1927 “Fruits of Nationalism,” Dewey wrote that “sinister interests” have made “nationalism a power for evil” (LW 3:152).

Recognizing “the evil side” of nationalism (LW 3:204), Dewey also thought it had a good side in so far as it involved a consciousness of histories, communities, and purposes larger than “the family, the parish, the sect, and the province.” It broke down “clannishness and provincialism;” it extended love of family, friends, and neighbors to love of country (LW 7:368). In 1916, a year before US entry into World War I, Dewey observed:

The upbuilding of national states has substituted a unity of feeling and aim, a freedom of intercourse, over wide areas for earlier local isolations, suspicions, jealousies and hatreds. It has forced men out of narrow sectionalisms into membership in a larger social unit, and created loyalty to a state which subordinates petty and selfish interests. (LW 7:203)

In 1927 as the US stock market experienced a speculative boom and as Hitler rose to power in Germany, Dewey again connected nationalism’s good side with its origins:

Nationalism was at least a movement away from obnoxious

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conditions—parochialism on one hand and dynastic despotism on the other. To be interested in a nation is at least better than to restrict one’s horizon to the bounds of a parish and province. Historically, Nationalism is also connected with the decay of personal absolutism and dynastic rule. . . . In addition to these two historical changes, Nationalism is associated with the revolt of oppressed peoples against external imperial domination. (LW 3:152)

However, this good side of nationalism is intimately linked to its bad—very bad—side, Dewey claimed. Indeed, without its historical gains and goods, it “could not be perverted to base ends” or “exploited as it is in the interest of economic imperialism and of war, latent and overt.” Dewey wrote:

This emotion of supreme loyalty to which other loyalties are unhesitatingly sacrificed in a crisis could hardly have grown to its high pitch of ardor unless men thought they had found in it the blessings for which they have always resorted to religious faith: protection of what is deemed of high value, defense against whatever menaces this value, in short an ever present refuge in time of trouble. . . Thus Nationalism starting as an unquestioned emotional loyalty, so supreme as to be religious in quality, has invaded the whole of life. It denotes organized ways of behavior and a whole system of justificatory beliefs and notions appealed to in order to defend every act labeled “national” from criticism or inquiry. By constant reiteration, by shaming heretics and intimidating dissidents, by glowing admiration if not adoration of the faithful, by all agencies of education and propaganda (now, alas, so hard to distinguish) the phrases in which these defenses and appeals are couched become substitutes for thought. They are axiomatic; only a traitor or an evilly disposed man doubts them. Bias, prejudice, blind and routine habit reign supreme. But they reign under the guise of idealistic standards and noble sentiments. (LW 3:152-154)
Long before Trump, in his January 2017 Inaugural Address, declared that Americans “will be protected by God” and so need have no fear that their country will become, as he later described it, one of those “major portions of the world” apparently unprotected by God and so “going to hell” or already there, Dewey frequently called attention to the religious character of nationalism. He noted the ways it stands in opposition to experimental method, education, and social knowledge—commitments central to effective democracy. For example, in discussing limits to free communication in The Public and Its Problems, Dewey identified anti-scientific emotions and habits of thought as the pre-condition or basis for the authoritarian manipulation of public opinion. He observed:

One of its commonest forms is a truly religious idealization of, and reverence for, established institutions; for example in our own politics, the Constitution, the Supreme Court, private property, free contract, and so on. The words ‘sacred’ and ‘sanctity’ come readily to our lips when such things come under discussion. They testify to the religious aureole which protects the institutions. . . .As supernatural matters have progressively been left high and dry upon a secluded beach, the actuality of religious taboos has more and more gathered about secular institutions, especially those connected with the nationalistic state. (LW 2: 341)

This deeply felt but superficially reflective religious nationalism, Dewey warned, stirs up international hostility and war; it leads citizens to make the immense sacrifices of wars and suffer the peace-time “burdens of taxation due to wars;” and it masks the private economic interests advanced by wars (LW 7:367). In a brief essay titled “Freedom,” Dewey explained:

Because of acute nationalism every nation lives under the burden imposed by past wars and under the pall of threat of future wars. There is no other single force so completely destructive of personal freedom as is modern war. Not merely the life and property of individuals are subjected by war to external control, but also their very thoughts and their power to give them expression. War is a kind of wholesale moral enslavement of entire populations. (LW 11:252)

“Were it not for facts in evidence,” Dewey added, “it would be hard to conceive that any sane man could parade the motto: ‘My country right or wrong.” Or, presumably, “Make America Great Again.”

Dewey's observation is so relevant that it reads as though it were written yesterday. It needs to be heard again today. Nationalism, Dewey asserted, “has created a purely fictitious notion of national interests” and national honor. It 'has no being outside of emotion and fantasy;' “the erection of a national territorial State into a Person who has a touchy and testy Honor to be defended and avenged at the cost of death and destruction is as sheer a case of animism as is found in any savage tribe” (LW 3:155).

Dewey viewed national sovereignty, the first commitment of Trump nationalism, as the foundation or centerpiece or “culmination” of nationalism. As the notion of sovereignty passed over time from monarch, dynasty, and Church to modern nation, Dewey understood that “it retained all the evils that inhered in the notion of absolute and irresponsible personal power (or power responsible only to God and not to any earthly power or tribunal) and took on new potencies for harm.” He explained:

The doctrine of national sovereignty is simply the denial on the part of a political state of either legal or moral responsibility. It is a direct proclamation of the unlimited and unquestionable right of a political state to what it wants to do in respect to their nations and to do it as and when it pleases. It is a doctrine of international anarchy; and as a rule those
who are most energetic in condemning anarchy as a domestic and internal principle are foremost in asserting anarchic irresponsibility in relations between nations. . . . I spoke in terms of the popular fallacy when I referred to the ‘right’ of a state to do as it pleases when it pleases. For right here is only a polite way of saying power. It was usual during the World War [1] to accuse Germany of acting upon the notion that Might makes Right. But every state that cultivates and acts upon the notion of National Sovereignty is guilty of the same crime. (LW 3:156-157)

Dewey’s multi-decade critical analysis allows us to diagnose Trump Administration nationalism—an absolute commitment to national sovereignty and an “American first” commitment to the primacy of one’s own national interests—as a particularly virulent strain of the evil side of American nationalism. There are four main points here.

First, a strong commitment to national sovereignty is immoral, politically dangerous (if not catastrophic), and intellectually dishonest and self-deceptive. The notion of national sovereignty is immoral because it assigns absolute value to the mere existence of national will regardless of the content of that will. Supreme, absolute, uncontrollable power does not guarantee morality. If anything, history shows that absolute power tends to corrupt.¹⁶ That a country wills to kill its people in genocides, ethnic cleansings, chemical attacks, and campaigns of extermination and supposed manifest destiny, or wills to imprison or otherwise silence its political opposition, or wills to enslave and impoverish people in or beyond its borders, or wills to manipulate the beliefs of many in the service of the selfish interests of

¹⁶ In an 1885 letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton, John Dalberg-Acton now famously observed that history shows that wrongdoing increases as power increases: “Historic responsibility has to make up for the want of legal responsibility. Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men, even when they exercise influence and not authority, still more when you superadd the tendency or the certainty of corruption by authority.” Historical Essays and Studies, ed. J. N. Figgis and R. V. Laurence (London: Macmillan, 1907), p. 96.
a few does not render these actions moral. With respect to morality, there is no national sovereignty.

This notion is also politically dangerous because it practically guarantees that all international disagreements and differences will involve parties each of which views itself as absolutely justified in enacting whatever it wills and each of which asserts itself properly free of foreign interference—despite finding itself in a world of international connections and entanglements. (Thus Trump, without any apparent awareness of irony, is able in one breath to advocate national sovereignty and in the very next breath to proclaim that America will not allow other nations—North Korea, Iran, China, Canada, and a long list of others—to act as they have so willed.) In conditions of increasing globalization, national sovereignty is increasingly an obscene fiction, a recipe for hostilities, terrorism, and war—and policies driven by tweets about who has the “bigger and more powerful” “Nuclear Button.” It is a recipe for life as war, for war without end, for one nation that considers its will to be sovereign against another nation that equally considers its different will to be sovereign.

Moreover, this notion of national sovereignty is intellectually inconsistent, dishonest, and self-deceptive because practically every exercise of national sovereignty impacts—and thus violates the sovereignty of other nations. Thus, for example, at present the United States and North Korea both appeal to the exact same policy of national sovereignty as they pursue conflicting practices and policies—as their current leaders now dangerously taunt each other about whose weapons of fire and fury are the largest, whose nuclear button is biggest, who has the most might. National sovereignty in America (or in any other country) today is not really a principle; it is a calculated rhetoric—a mistaken calculation disguised as a principle.

Second, Trump-style nationalism is misguided about genuine national interests. The problem here is not that the Trump administration claims that it seeks first or only to serve American

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national interests. The problem is that it almost wholly misunderstands what those interests actually are. American citizens, like the citizens of all other countries, in reality are not in some sort of zero-sum reality show or winner-take-all sports match about economic prosperity, health policy, educational systems and learning, global environmental sustainability, or technological innovation. In fact, it is not the case that ordinary, average Americans become wealthier or lead more secure or meaningful lives only at the expense of other nations around the world. As Susan E. Rice, former United States ambassador to the United Nations, has written:

In Mr. Trump’s estimation, we live in a world where America wins only at other’s expense. . . The new strategy enshrines a zero-sum mentality: ‘Protecting America’s interests requires that we compete continuously’. . . This is the hallmark of Mr. Trump’s nationalistic, black-and-white ‘America First’ vision. . . America’s strength has long rested not only on our unmatched military and economy but also on the power of our ideals. Relinquishing its moral authority in these difficult times will embolden rivals and weaken ourselves. It will make a mockery of the very idea of America first.18

Americans don’t “win” only if and when the rest of the world “loses.” To think this way is to confuse relative and absolute standards of living. It is to focus myopically on individual losses rather than aggregate gains (of, for example, global trade or immigration or international climate pacts). It is to miss the large extent to which the interests of interdependent citizens of different nations are shared. And it is to divert public attention and policy efforts from addressing massive wealth inequality at both national and international levels—a diversion that could only be called “nationalism” with a straight face if one meant “white 1% nationalism.”

This dangerous, hyper-nationalistic view of the United States as first and foremost a combatant in a zero-sum, win-or-lose death

match with all other nations is rooted in tribalism and its two-fold fear. “Skillful politicians and other self-seekers,” Dewey noted, “have always known how to play cleverly upon patriotism, and upon ignorance of other peoples to identify nationalism with latent hatred of other nations” (MW 10:204). In a remarkable address, “Racial Prejudice and Friction,” delivered in China in 1922, Dewey explained these two aspects of this fear: fear of other peoples who are different and fear that one’s own asserted (and desired) superiority may not be real. Dewey wrote:

We are struck by the instinctive aversion of mankind to what is new and unusual, to whatever is different from what we are used to, and which thus shocks our customary habits. . . Such words as stranger, foreigner, alien, outsider are psychological words rather than geographical ones. . . . There is no lesson of anthropology more striking than its testimony to the universal antipathy which is aroused by anything to which a tribe or social group is not adjusted in its past habits. . . . We shall then not be surprised to learn that foreigner, stranger, alien are originally synonymous with enemy . . . Latent anti-foreign feeling is usually rendered acute by some crisis.

The other consequence concerns the psychological effect of rule upon the dominant political group. Arrogance and contempt are fostered. Moreover we hate those whom we have wronged. . . . The disdain and contempt of the overlord class for the inferior is moreover usually complicated by an uneasy subconscious feeling that perhaps the subject people is not really so inferior as its political status indicates. Then the expression of superiority assumes a noisy and aggressive form on the psychological principle the ‘lady protests too much.’ An assured superiority would be more calmly complacent. (MW 13:243-248).

It requires no special insight to see the first fear dramatically manifest in the Trump Administration’s promotion of travel bans for peoples from dominantly Muslim countries, the Trump Administration’s
determination to build a “beautiful” wall along the southern border with Mexico, or the claim that we need more immigrants from Norway but no immigrants from “shithole” countries like Haiti or the nations of Africa—an outlook consistent both with Trump’s real estate company’s efforts in the 1970s to avoid renting apartments to African-Americans and also with his promotion of the baseless claim that Barack Obama was born in Kenya rather than the United States. Similarly, it requires no advance training in psychology or degree in counseling to identify the second fear at work in Trump’s claims that America is the richest, most powerful, and greatest country in history and that God is on the side of America. These claims parallel his more personal boasts that he has the biggest vocabulary and “best words,” highest IQ, and largest inaugural crowd, and that he is the “least racist” person. These personal fears go hand in hand with fear-based nationalism and its power for evil.

Third, in place of this fear of difference and the zero-sum thinking it fosters, a genuinely democratic form of nationalism must advance genuinely democratic values. These interests are not neatly bounded by national borders; they are the interests of all persons: education and growth; a sustainable environment and healthy life; equal opportunity, fair and equitable treatment, and due process; societal care for those who are particularly vulnerable—the young, the weak and powerless, the poor, the sick, the old, the isolated and neglected and lonely, and the victimized, abused, and dehumanized; access to resources that nurture inventive and imaginative activity; and free and meaningful expression and association. It is only as nationalism serves these human values that it avoids being a spurious social pathology.

Dewey noted that to change our understanding of nationalism and our own national interests in this way “is a matter of ideas, of emotions, of intellectual and moral disposition and outlook” and that as a result “it depends for its accomplishment upon educational agencies, not upon outward machinery” (MW 10:203). To understand national interests in terms of genuinely democratic values, it is necessary to rethink or reconceptualize nationalism. It is necessary, as Theodore Roosevelt put it in a remarkable speech in Osawatomie, Kansas in 1910, to develop a “new nationalism.” Identifying the very meaning of American Republic with “the triumph
of real democracy,” Roosevelt claimed: The American people are right in demanding that New Nationalism, without which we cannot hope to deal with new problems. . . . Those who oppose all reforms will do well to remember that ruin in its worst from is inevitable if our national life brings us nothing better than swollen fortunes for the few and the triumph in both politics and business of a sordid and selfish materialism.”

Agreed. At the same time, this philosophical work is not sufficient. It is crucial here to recall what I take to be the guiding insight of all pragmatist pedagogy: The best way to change hearts, minds, and habits is an indirect, even visceral\(^\text{20}\) way; it is not a matter of simply preaching for changes to habits (because people would not have or hold on to their habits if those habits did not in some sense seem to them to work) but, instead, it is a matter of changing the institutions, practices, and cultural conditions (that have shaped and sustained old habits) so that they now come to cease working well. Simply articulating a new, genuinely democratic view of nationalism, an expansive rather than narrow version of nationalism, is ineffective unless it is joined by changes in cultural practices, policies, institutions, and forms of social interaction. Similarly, as is so often urged today, to wish that everyone would just come together “as one team, one people, and one American family”\(^\text{21}\) is nearly empty as long as existing anti-democratic political, economic, religious, and other intersecting social forces are actively embraced or merely passively tolerated. Indeed, often philosophical reconstruction—the very values and thoughts we have—-not only requires but also must wait on political, economic, and social reconstruction. I take this to be the guiding principle of all pragmatic, practical social action and change.

Fourth, a democratic nationalism that renounces incoherent and dangerous notions of national sovereignty and reconstructs the meaning of American national interests in terms of shared social growth, harmony, and

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sustainability rather than supposed zero-sum testosterone-fueled cage matches has both a special opportunity and a special responsibility to recognize the internationalism that lies at the heart of any nationalism to which the United States might aspire. (If put in more lofty philosophical language, this amounts to thinking beyond, or beneath, a nationalism/globalism dualism or a provincial/cosmopolitan dualism.\textsuperscript{22}) As Dewey accurately noted, the US is “complex and compound,” “interracial and international,” composed of a multitude of peoples speaking different tongues, inheriting diverse traditions, cherishing varying ideals of life:"

No matter how loudly any one proclaims his Americanism, if he assumes that any one racial strain, any one component culture, no matter how early settled it was in our territory, or how effective it has proved in its own land, is to furnish a pattern to which all other strains and cultures are to conform, he is a traitor to an American nationalism.\.\.\. I find that many who talk the loudest about the need of a supreme and unified Americanism of spirit really mean some special code or tradition to which they happen to be attached. They have some pet tradition which they would impose upon all. In thus measuring the scope of Americanism by some single element which enters into it, they are themselves false to the spirit of America.\textsuperscript{23}

Earlier, evil, false-spirited, fascist versions of nationalism give rise to intellectual, emotional, and political habits that are not adapted to present realities. If these habits and ways of life ever did work well,
they do not work now. Their outcome is war and oppression and inequality. They immiserate people across the world, both outside and inside this country. Dewey recognized this, I think, and he summarized this way:

Patriotism, National Honor, National Interests and National Sovereignty are the four foundation stones upon which the structure of the National State is erected. It is no wonder that the windows of such a building are closed to the light of heaven; that its inmates are fear, jealousy, suspicion, and that War issues regularly from its portals. (LW 3:158)

The task ahead is both simple and difficult: Today any effective nationalism—a genuinely democratic nationalism—a nationalism worthy of American ideals (even as those ideals in significant measure are yet to be realized)—must constitute in part, and be congruent in whole with, what Dewey called “democracy as a way of life” and the “constructive tasks of peace.” Any country loyal to democratic values can embrace only a version of nationalism that really advances those values. Any other form of nationalism, no matter what its public relations arm may proclaim, is authoritarianism. And any nationalism that proclaims “America First” must recognize that this now should mean “Democracy As A Way Of Life First.” Any other form of nationalism is fake. Any other form of nationalism is ultimately fascist. In the spirit of Dewey, who observed that “artists have always been the real purveyors of news” (LW 2:350), any other form of nationalism is captured and criticized effectively by these lines in Tony Hoagland’s “Ode to the Republic”: “America, you big scary baby, didn’t you know when you pounded your chest like that in public, it just embarrassed us? When you lied to yourself on television, we looked down at our feet” and “I thought I had to go down with you hating myself in red, white and blue, learning to say ‘I’m sorry’ in more and more languages.”

By means of social reconstruction—including changes in

politics, economics, education, communication and media practices\textsuperscript{25}-\textsuperscript{26}, the task for expansive nationalists and genuinely democratic patriots today is to grow the tribe of folks committed to the values of shared and plural democratic ways of life and to their fact-based,\textsuperscript{26} experimental pursuit. The task is to resist being a passive spectator to the murder of democracy under the banner of nationalism. Persons committed to and engaged in this (also tribal) undertaking and its fighting faith\textsuperscript{27} really are pragmatists about nationalism.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{25} See Jennifer Hansen’s analysis and extension for the hashtag era of Dewey’s recognition that community requires communication, “The Hopeful Hashtag: Digital Feminist Publics in the Trump Era,” in this issue of \textit{Dewey Studies}. And, as Yascha Mounk has observed “Once any string of words is considered as true as any other, any course of action comes to be seen as legitimate as any other. . . As a result, the public sphere quickly degenerates into a battleground in which opposing tribes string together words to wield as weapons.” “The Real Coup Plot is Trump’s,” \textit{New York Times}, December 21, 2017, p. A31. Democracy dies—rather, it is killed—as it becomes a zero-sum war.

\textsuperscript{26} Long before the Trump Administration, authoritarian regimes have propped up their own “alternative facts,” accurately recognizing the ways in which experimental inquiry and free communication are “enemies of the state.” In this context, it is interesting to note the research findings of Noam Lupu and Nicolas Carnes that it was not the working class that elected Trump: “People without a college degree or fewer years of education were more likely to vote for Trump. But that’s true across all income groups.” \textit{Vanderbilt Magazine}, Fall 2017, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{27} See Vincent Colapietro’s “Visceral Politics and Heuristic Democracy” in this issue of \textit{Dewey Studies}.

\textsuperscript{28} An earlier version of this article was presented at the meeting of the John Dewey Society at the Eastern Division, American Philosophical Association meeting in Savannah, GA on January 4, 2018. I am grateful for, and have learned from the papers presented by my fellow participants, Vincent Colapietro and Jennifer Hansen.
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Jessica Wahman, José M. Medina, and John J. Stuhr, 
VISCERAL POLITICS AND HEURISTIC DEMOCRACY

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An earlier version of this article was presented at the meeting of the John Dewey Society at the Eastern Division, American Philosophical Association meeting in Savannah, GA on January 4, 2018.

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... the immediate need, as far as I can see, is to affect the general temper of social discussion, and in the direction of introducing some degree of frankness and of humane sympathy¹

— John Dewey (1928)

¹ All citations of The Collected Works of John Dewey, 1882–1953, edited by Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967–1990), are made in accord with established practice: The Early Works cited as EW, The Middle Works as MW, or The Later Works as LW), followed by volume and page number. This citation for the used as an epigram is LW 3, 184. Hereafter all citations of these volumes will be internal. “Why I Am for [Al] Smith” (LW 3: 184–185) was originally published in The New Republic, 56 (1928), 320–21. As just indicated, I am citing The Later Works of John Dewey, volume 3, in accord with standard manner of citing this critical edition. It is pertinent to not only my paper but also the contributions to this issue by John J. Stuhr and Jennifer Hansen that Dewey explains his support for this candidate for president, in part, as a counter to the “bigotry and tolerance” (LW 3: 185) fueling the opposition to Smith. It might seem that today all too much frankness characterizes our social discussions and political debates. On the surface, the multifaceted attacks on “political correctness” would seem to be an attempt to render them franker. This is however for the most part illusory. While the immediate need today might be the same as the one Dewey identified in 1928, the ultimate goal is to transform politics from top to bottom, though in exactly the opposite way that Donald Trump is trying to accomplish, with some success. In a democratic polity, however, the temper, tone, and textures (or nuances) of our everyday discourses are of the utmost importance. It is, after all, in reference to democracy that William James stressed in “The Social Value of the College-Bred,” in Essays, Comments, and Reviews (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) the importance of tone (“By their tone are all things human lost or saved”), a point to which I will return.
I will seize this occasion as an opportunity to reflect on neglected aspects of Dewey’s social philosophy and, then, to reflect on the crises of our time in light of insights garnered from such reflection. These are reflections on practice, for the sake of practice; they are the reflections of practitioners striving to carry on and, if required, transform endeavors in which they are implicated. The structure of this essay is, hence, not that of applying theoretical insights to practical problems. For I reject as completely as Dewey did the tendency to grant priority to theory and, entangled with this, the model of applying theoretical insights to practical questions. Put positively, I am advocating the primacy of practice. Accordingly, theory is not to be pitted against practice but rather to be seen as itself an instance of practice, indeed, a vastly extended family of human practices in which a heuristic ethos is a defining feature (practices in

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2 I wrote an abridged version of this paper for the meeting of the Society Dewey held in conjunction with the Eastern Division of the APA (January 4th, 2018). As it turned out, I never made it to the meeting: extreme weather forced the cancellation of my flight. Even so, Professor Jessica Wahman graciously and, from all accounts, very effectively read this version in absentia. Of utmost relevance here, this paper was conceived, written, and revised in conjunction with those by Professors Stuhr and Hansen.

3 What William James proclaimed in The Meaning of Truth (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978) about his humanistic version of the pragmatist orientation is even truer of Dewey’s entire philosophy: it is “essentially a social philosophy, a philosophy of ‘co,’ in which conjunctions do the work” (238). In this regard, it is especially important to consider Dewey’s “The Inclusive Philosophic Idea” (LW 3: 41-54). For Dewey, “the social as a category is as important in the critical evaluation of recent systems of thought as it is in direct application to problems of matter, life and mind” (LW 3: 54; emphasis added).

4 “Any experience savored and enjoyed for itself is,” John Dewey suggests in Unmodern Philosophy and Modern Philosophy, “esthetic. Such experiences do not, however, of themselves constitute art. The esthetic becomes artistic only when its materials are re-ordered by doing something with actual materials, colors, sounds, words, wood and stone” (270). See, of course, also Art as Experience (LW 10: especially 30-41, also 53-63).

5 By this expression, I simply mean a culture in which inquiry is not only highly prized but also woven into the everyday practices of ordinary people. Even for an experienced mechanic, fixing an engine might be taken as an opportunity to inquire into the intricate workings of a mechanism with which the individual is already intimately familiar. The best mechanics are the most inquisitive ones, refusing
which not only is a situation to be rendered determinate in some critical respect but also ones in which the very efforts to accomplish this are themselves made into objects of inquiry, evaluated for what light they can throw on other such efforts. The critical distinction is not that between theoretical pursuits and practical undertakings, but one within the vast domain of our shared practices. Above all, it pertains to habits: “We are confronted [at every turn] with two kinds of habits, intelligent and routine” (MW 14, 51). On the one hand, there are endeavors in which the acquisition and exercise of habits proceeds apart from recourse to intelligence (to questioning, inquiring, experimenting, and much else), and, on the other, undertakings in which embodied agency and its situated enactment are taken to be incidental to these undertakings. This vision is, in part, what Dewey is trying to deconstruct. Practice here is a name for mere routine, theory a name for disembodied intellection. The theoretician and, far more manifestly, the experimentalist are, however, flesh-and-

6 Recall here Dewey’s definition of inquiry. It is not amiss to recall Bertrand Russell’s criticism of this definition. “Inquiry is,” Dewey claimed in his Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, “the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole” (LW 12: 104-105). In “Dewey’s New Logic,” published in The Philosophy of John Dewey, edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp (NY: Tudor, 1939), Russell replied: This cannot be right, since “the operations of a drill sergeant in transforming a collection of raw recruits into a regiment, of a bricklayer transforming a heap of bricks into a house” would be, upon Dewey’s definition, an instance of inquiry (143). While Russell took this to be a reduction ad absurdum, Dewey did not see a problem with stretching inquiry to include more than the manipulation of symbols. It is hard to see how counting the activity of rendering indeterminate social situations determinate in the manner specified by Dewey as an instance of inquiry would not benefit social life greatly.

7 The aptness of this term comes to light when we realize that it designations the task of destracuring, not of destruction.
blood actors whose thoughts and interventions are entangled with the world. On the other side, even our most blind routines do not tend to be utterly devoid of the exercise of personal intelligence. Inquiry is an art in the robust Deweyan sense and art is in turn a practice (LW 1: 268). Accordingly, the only distinction worth drawing is not between practice and theory, but between those modes of practice that are not intelligent, not inherently and immediately enjoyable, and those which are full of enjoyed meanings. This is a distinction drawn within the realm of our practices, including those constitutive of our political institutions and thus our aspirational democracy.

Theory, properly understood, is not only the most practical thing in the world. Practice, properly conducted, is an instance of inquiry: it is through and through heuristic. What Dewey notes in one place he notes in numerous other ones. In a late manuscript, he stresses, “what has been said [about the biological origin of theoretical inquiry] does not signify that knowledge either should be or is subordinated to some [other] specific mode of practice or all modes of practice.” The reason why this is so is also important to recall: “For there is nothing in what has been said that militates against, knowing, inquiry, being capable of being itself an engrossing form of behavior, and thus a form of ‘practical’ behavior,” that is, a practice in its own right. Inquiry is an art and, as such, it is in itself a means-ends continuum in which giving an esthetic form to a complex endeavor is a critical feature of the heuristic endeavor itself: inquirers craft of their

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8 The adjective here (personal intelligence) is critical: it signifies the assumption of responsibility for what is said and done (see, e.g., LW 1: 179-80). To conceive individual intelligence (or reason) in opposition to customary action is, in Dewey's judgment, part of the problem. It implies that intelligence is ready-made and custom is always merely second-hand. But, in some instances, customs are the very habits of our being and, in all cases, the acquisition of “personal rationality” depends on a nexus of social transactions (see, e.g., MW 14, 56).

tasks and results nothing less than a performance and a (more or less) integrated set of consolidated results having the salient features of an artistically executed performance or crafted material.

Nowhere is it more important to stress this point regarding the primacy of practice than in reference to questions with which we are preoccupied on this occasion. The arts of self-critical inquiry and those of self-governing associations are more intimately connected than we ordinarily realize. To be sure, scientists do not arrive at a consensus by taking a vote, any more than associations govern themselves by becoming engrossed in inquiry for the sake of inquiry. Systemic exclusions are, however, as fatal to experimental investigation as they are to democratic associations, just as the precarious ethos of impartial inquiry is as vital to democratic institutions as it is to scientific endeavors.

Though certainly no Deweyan, Alasdair MacIntyre captures more than the spirit of Dewey’s (and my Deweyan) advocacy of this commitment when he writes: “We need to begin with practice, for theory is the articulation of practice and good theory [the articulation of] of good practice.” What MacIntyre immediately goes on to say is as relevant to the purpose at hand as the sentence just quoted: “Moral debate is not primarily between theories as such, but rather between theories that afford expression to rival forms of practice. And we do not understand any theory adequately until we’ve understood in concrete detail the form of practice of which it’s an articulation.”

This encompasses, as much as anything else, the articulation of passions, emotions, feelings, and other distinctive phases of our affective lives. No human practice is more bound up with human

12 Ibid.; emphasis added. These rival forms of practice are, at bottom, indicative of rival forms of life. Hardly any culture in our world is monolithic: each encompasses competing forms of life. The manner in which the diversity of cultures within a culture is given its due goes a distance toward defining that culture.
13 For the way in which the articulation of our passions and emotions is constitutive
passions, often of an intensely visceral character, than those constitutive of the political sphere, especially in a democratic polity.\textsuperscript{14} Hence, none is more bound up with the exacting task of articulating in an effective yet nuanced manner the animating passions of democratic citizens. In brief, politics is deeply and inescapably visceral. It concerns emotionally charged issues pertaining to one or more facets of the citizen’s identity (facets often quite distinct from and even felt to be opposed to the political aspects). Individuals judge these issues to bear on nothing less than their annihilation in a certain respect, though not for the most part their physical annihilation. Individuals as, say, evangelical Christians judge the state to be mounting or intensifying an assault on them precisely as Christians. This is felt to be aimed at not only their political but also their cultural and personal status. That is, it is felt as an existential threat, radiating from the center of an individual’s existence to more outward dimensions. Self-defense in the face of annihilative threats, even merely imagined ones, typically assumes a passionate and energetic form.

In general, then, politics is visceral.\textsuperscript{15} No passionate participation in the political life of any human association could possibly be intelligent if it did not deal squarely with the multitude of passions at play in that life. Without passion, there will almost certainly not be participation.\textsuperscript{16} Without intelligence, however, of them, see Charles Taylor. The language in which they are articulated and, thus, the settings in which they are shaped demand our attention, if we are to understand them at all and, specifically, if we are to appreciate their decisive role in our political life. See, e.g., \textit{Human Agency and Language} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) and \textit{The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity} (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

\textsuperscript{14} The citizens of such a polity possess a deeply felt right to express their disapproval and, above all, their outrage.

\textsuperscript{15} Dewey tends to use the word \textit{vital}. My use of \textit{visceral} in this context is intended to capture what he means by \textit{vital}. “One of the most marked features of recent culture,” Dewey noted in 1942, “has been the perception of the immense role played in human affairs by vital factors, by impulses, desires, active tendencies, to which collectively the name ‘unconscious’ has been popularly given – however ineptly” (“William James As Empiricist”; LW 15: 16).

\textsuperscript{16} It is worth recalling that, in the judgment of Hegel, expressed in his Introduction.
participation will even more likely be self-defeating. I will return to this crucial notion of visceral politics. As I hope to make clear when I do, my intention is not to pit visceral politics against heuristic democracy. It is rather to conjoin them or, better, to acknowledge the unseverable conjunction between them. The articulation of our democratic practices encompasses the articulation of our political passions, including our visceral reactions. These passions and reactions drive politics, for ill and good. In this and all other regards, Dewey is anything but utopian. We must take humans as we find them. This of course does not mean that we ought to leave them as we find them, that we ought to despair of facilitating self-transformation by transforming the cultural conditions in which the human animal strives to live a luminous life.

To take this as an occasion to point out his failures and shortcomings is utterly misguided. The tasks at hand are too urgent, the stakes too high, the possibilities for amelioration too precious, for bemoaning what he left undone or did badly, all the while doing nothing ourselves to carry out the tasks more fully. Indeed, no individual thinker is adequate to the comprehensive demands of cooperative intelligence. The best any such thinker can do is identify the most pressing issues, suggest some of the ways in which they are bound together, and address one or more of the issues falling within the scope of that thinker’s expertise. And Dewey did this, in a creative and suggestive manner. As often as it has been considered, his multifaceted contribution to social philosophy is still not adequately appreciated. For example, his appreciation of force and power are...
rarely given the consideration it deserves.\(^{18}\) We honor most those with whom we think,\(^{19}\) just as we honor most our historical moment when we candidly confront its constitutive crises (that is, when we think through the crises defining our time). It may be, as Hegel claims, that we can only understand an epoch after it has closed. But it may also be that we must attempt to understand a time of transition as it is occurring. Among other things, philosophy, along with journalists, artists, and scientists, can help “to make human beings more aware of what they are doing, and what they're trying to do, [also] what they're trying to undo.”\(^{20}\) What are we, here and now, doing? What’s going on?\(^{21}\) In the midst of upheavals and transitions, it is ordinarily imperative to make an intelligent effort to grasp the elusive significance of the historical present, knowing in advance this effort will fail. Dewey’s writings illustrate a steadfast effort to grasp revolutionary developments in their deeper import, knowing his understanding of them could never be anything more than selective, fragmentary, and fallible. The alternative to such an effort is to allow oneself to be carried along blindly by forces and developments one has not even bothered identifying for oneself. An imperfect yet nuanced understanding of one’s historical time is, in Dewey's judgment, preferable to such acquiescence. “Nothing in the world is,” as Martin Luther King, Jr., astutely notes, “more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.” Nowhere are such ignorance and such stupidity more likely to be prominent features of social life than during those disconcerting periods of historical upheaval.

\(^{18}\) It is significant that many of the best pieces in this regard were written in the context of war. See, e.g., “Force, Violence, and Law” (1916), Force and Coercion” (1916), and “Intelligence and Power” (1934).

\(^{19}\) One of my principal models for undertaking this complex task is Thinking with Whitehead: A Free and Wild Creation by Isabelle Stengers (Harvard, 2011). Another is virtually everything such Dewey scholars as Stuhr, Larry Hickman, and Richard Eldridge have written on Dewey.


\(^{21}\) This alludes to the title of a song by Marvin Gaye. The question is critical. Part of Dewey’s wisdom is to realize just how much we do not know and, hence, how much patience is required to reflect carefully while the pressures for immediate action are intense and inescapable. See, e.g., “In a Time of National Hesitation, first printed in Seven Arts (1917), 3-7; reprinted in MW 10: 257-59.
Nothing has or could prepare us for such times of crises. Indeed, our intellectual inheritance is, at once, a resource for, and an obstacle to, understanding more adequately what we are doing and trying to do, also undoing or trying to undo.\(^{22}\) We have here and now to craft an understanding more finely and fully attuned to the tensions, dangers, and opportunities of this time than the uncritical deployment of traditional frameworks facilitates. But what are we to make of the spectacle of a thinker who has devoted his life to the task of taking aim at the heart of the present being rendered speechless in the face of events, when arguably his fellow citizens more eagerly sought his insights than ever before? Is this indeed how we are to perceive Dewey’s performance at Cooper Union on December 7\(^{th}\), 1941? What justifies thinking with a thinker who fell back on a prepared text in the face of national catastrophe? Can one discern a portrait of creative intelligence in so seemingly remote a philosopher?\(^{23}\)

**Thinking with Dewey**

No portrait of Dewey, especially regarding war, is, in intent, more damning than the one sketched by John Patrick Diggins as an opening to *The Promise of Pragmatism*. Diggins portrays Dewey in the immediate aftermath of Pearl Harbor as having *nothing* to say to his contemporaries. He uses Dewey’s own words to condemn the eighty-two-year-old philosopher: “I have nothing, had nothing, and have nothing now, to say directly about the war.”\(^{24}\) Dewey immediately

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\(^{22}\) Dewey tended to stress the extent to which this inheritance is an obstacle, rather than a resource, for facilitating such understanding. But he was deeply appreciative of the wings no less than the weight of our inheritance. See, e.g., MW 10:5. Even philosophical systems addressing in their own time artificial problems are beneficial: “The horizon has been widened, ideas of great fecundity struck out, imagination quickened, and a sense of the meaning of things created” (ibid.).

\(^{23}\) The word is Dewey’s own. In “Lessons from the War – in Philosophy,” Dewey observes: “My remarks are rather philosophical in nature, on the philosophy side, and philosophy is a somewhat remote, and sometimes, I fear, a rather arid subject” (LW 14: 326; emphasis added).

\(^{24}\) LW 14: 325-26. “After September 1939 and the outbreak of war in Europe, Dewey did not sit quietly, but he wrote,” Alan Ryan observes in *John Dewey and High
adds: “My remarks are rather philosophical in nature, on the philosophy side, and philosophy is a somewhat remote, and sometimes, I fear, a rather arid subject” (326). In fact, Dewey reads his prepared text. In a letter, Bertrand Russell revealed Dewey: “To my surprise I liked him very much. He has a large slow-moving mind, very empirical and candid, with something of the impassivity and impartiality of a natural force.” Nowhere are the impassivity and deliberateness of Dewey’s mind more apparent than on this occasion.

There are other ways of reading Dewey’s performance at Cooper Union’s “Great Hall” on December 7th, 1941 than the one offered by Diggins. Dewey confesses that he has nothing directly to say about the war just declared. He deliberately refuses the role of a seer (LW 14: 326-26).

Even today Dewey is portrayed as naïve and even utopian. Nothing warrants such an unjust characterization of this unblinking meliorist. His meliorism is best seen as a strategy to save such a witness and, of greater moment, the world from despair. It is as though he were saying: “Yes, the world is mad and we are entangled in its madness, but creative intelligence might yet find a foothold for reducing the avoidable suffering due to the reign of conscripted

_Tide of American Liberalism_, “almost nothing directly on the war” (330; emphasis added).


26 Quoted by Sleeper in his Introduction to LW 14: xx. “I’ve not gotten over,” Dewey confessed upon reading Russell’s _A History of Western Philosophy_, “being sorry that I let R. Russell down so easily as I did. I have never been able to take him seriously enough intellectually to do him justice. If any evidence of the dam [sic.] low estate of philosophy at present were needed, his inflated rep would be enough – he may or may not be an authority on the formalization of mathematics. I’m suspicious about that … but even so it is pitiful that should give him a rep in philosophy” (quoted by Lewis S. Feuer in his Intro to LW 15: xiin. That is, Sleeper in his Introduction to LW 14 is quoting Feuer in his to LW 15. This regret is conveyed to Boyd H. Bode in a letter dated April 3, 1948.

27 Diggins does not entertain the possibility that rather than Dewey being overwhelmed by events, rendered in effect speechless by the news of the day, Dewey is refusing to panic in the face of calamity. His calmness might carry the message: we will somehow manage to get through even this.
intelligence." At every turn, he refused to succumb to the fashions of cultural despair, though he resisted to an even greater extent any impulse to look away from the horrors of the decades through which he lived. As a very young child, he was a witness to the Civil War. Lest there be any illusion, that war is still unfolding. A formal surrender hardly ever means anything more than the cessation of armed conflict.28 As a public intellectual of international stature, Dewey was in his later years a witness to a divided world in which a nuclear arms race was intensifying. There cannot be any illusion here: that race is still afoot.

Dewey observed a dilemma deeply inscribed in the attitude of his contemporaries. For many, significant change was impossible, especially change envisioned and overseen by public institutions. For many others, recourse to violence provided the only means for such change. He doubted the efficacy of violent revolution, but also the impotency of concerted action. He however never questioned the need to deploy force. As he wryly notes, “since one cannot even walk down the street without using force, the only question which persons can discuss with one another concerns the effective use of force in gaining ends in specific situations” (MW 10: 213). In a different essay, he uses the terms power or energy, noting that “either is a neutral or a eulogistic term” (MW 10:247). As a neutral term, power, energy, or presumably force simply means “effective means of operation; ability or capacity to execute, to realize ends” (ibid.). As a eulogistic one, each might be taken to designate “the sum total of conditions available for bringing the desirable end into existence” (ibid.).

Our reliance on force (or power) in our efforts to realize ends-in-view is ineliminable. There is a certain wavering in Dewey’s recognition of intelligence as itself a force or power. In the same paragraph, he suggests, on the one hand, intelligence “becomes a power only when it is brought into the operation of other forces than itself” but, on the other, concedes, “[p]ersuasion and conference are also powers” (LW 9: 109). It is easy for those who earn their living by words to overestimate the power of words to persuade people, just as

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it is easy for those who make their livelihood otherwise to underestimate or even deny the efficacy of words and other symbols. While Dewey appreciated the ubiquity of power or force (there is no place outside of its operation), he was quick to point out: “we have not said anything so long as we have merely said power. What first is needed is discrimination, knowledge of the distribution of power” – and, I would add in for clarity, the diverse forms of power. Power is not only variously and, for the most part, unequally distributed. It is also irreducibly plural in its forms (e.g., the power of a charismatic personality is not to be slighted, while that of the subtler modes of economic coercion is impossible to exaggerate). Overt reliance on force is often denounced as violence, even when it is the justifiable use of necessary force in self-defense, while customary exercises of violence often go unnoticed. Indeed, those who are most ready to denounce violence are, in Dewey’s judgment, those most blind their tacit advocacy of the violent measures by which certain institutions maintain themselves (see, e.g., MW 14, 115-116).

“And it is,” Dewey insists, “no exaggeration to say that the measure of civilization is the degree to which the method of cooperative intelligence replaces the method of brute conflict” (LW 11: 57). But brute conflict entails conscripted intelligence no less than cooperative intelligence deploys forceful exertion. That is, brute conflicts are rarely, if ever, simply brute; and the very exercise of such intelligence is an instance of force. While our purportedly brute conflicts can be made less wasteful, the actual exercise of cooperative intelligence can never be anything but an exercise of force. Intelligence is as ineliminable in conflict as force is integral to intelligence. While conflict almost always involves cunning, intelligence always leans on the deployment of force, if only that of fingers striking a keyboard or organs used to make sounds, to utter words.

What Bruno Latour proposes in Politics of Nature and indeed elsewhere might profitably be recalled here. Who is exercising force? Against whom it is it being exercised? In the name of what is force

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29 Cooperative intelligence often takes the form of conscripted intelligence. Think here of the Manhattan Project.
being exerted? And, of greatest importance, at what cost, especially, what is being wasted or destroyed as a result of this specific deployment of force? Some of the stakeholders in our conflicts are absent from both the deliberations regarding how these conflicts are to be addressed and the attempts to reach a formal settlement after physical conflict has exhausted one or both sides. Of course, Latour’s questions are familiar to any member of this Society, for they are after all Dewey’s questions. Whether intelligence can bear the weight Dewey places upon it – whether it can realize the range of purposes for which it was crafted (above all, a significant reduction in coercive forms of conjoint activity) – is, for me at least, an open question. This much is indisputable: we do not know as well as we so urgently need to know the meaning of our own exertions and enterprises, our traditions and institutions. The ever more sophisticated forms of warfare are indicative of the power of experimental intelligence, while the ever greater reliance on these weapons is indicative of the artificial limits we have placed on creative intelligence. When Dewey on December 7th, 1941, stood before the audience at Cooper Union and reflected on how we might probe the meaning of our own activity, he was exemplifying the lesson yet to be learned, the form of democracy yet to be appreciated. In a time of crisis, with obvious exceptions, nothing is more requisite but also nothing more unlikely than a protracted moment of deliberate hesitancy. The courage to make up one’s mind is depicted as cowardice, such hesitancy often seen as nothing short of treason. Dewey however so intimately links the democratic life with creative intelligence that, in a time of crisis, he praises the courage to be tentative and circumspect, to resist the temptation to be “decisive” without having been reflective.31

31 This is nowhere more manifest than in “In a Time of National Hesitation” (MW 10, 256-59).
Thinking through our Time

As the titles of so many of Dewey’s writings (most notably, Democrac
y and Education, Experience and Nature, Liberalism and Social Actions,
Culture and Freedom, Experience and Education) intimate, the title of my
reflections on this occasion – “Visceral Politics and Heuristic
Democracy” – is one in which the sign of conjunction is as important
as the terms conjoined. It is decidedly no part of my intention to pit
visceral politics against heuristic democracy. All politics is visceral.
This is true of democratic politics in its Deweyan sense no less than
theocratic authoritarianism. In turn, all visceral reactions are, at the
very least, potentially illuminating symptoms about the body politic.
Put more simply, all visceral responses possess heuristic significance.
They indicate lines of inquiry. Indeed, they are among the most
fruitful sites of public interrogation. But what makes them such
fruitful sites also renders them extremely fraught occasions for
effective inquiry.

I was reminded of this very recently by Louis Menand’s piece
in The New Yorker on the 1968 election.32 He relates an incident in
which this is manifest. He and his father are listening on their
television in the basement of their home to a speech by President
Lyndon Johnson (as it turns out, it is the speech in which Johnson
announces that he will not run for a second term). As Menand depicts
the scene, his father “was standing with his back to the television, so
that he would not have to look at Johnson. He was protesting
Johnson’s policy on Vietnam. The only person present in the
basement to appreciate the symbolism was me.”33 When LBJ made
his announcement, Menand’s father shouted to his wife, who was upstairs
because she refused even to listen to Johnson: “He’s not running! He’s
not running!” Neither his mother nor father could bear the sight of
Johnson (in his mother cases, she could not bear even the sound of
LBJ’s voice), such was their disgust at his policy in Vietnam. The family

It is striking that Jennifer Hansen in her contribution to this issue of Dewey Studies
cites a work by this same author in the same publication, albeit a different article.
33 Menand, ‘Been There,” 69.
was in MA rather than DC because Menand’s father had quit his job working for one of Johnson’s anti-poverty programs. The depth of this individual’s sense of betrayal would be difficult, if not impossible, to measure.

The unquestioned confidence we have in our visceral reactions is, in effect, a dangerous form of moral intuitionism. For these reactions are taken as self-certifying or self-warranting (in effect, one is asserting, “I am outraged by this and, thus, the object of my outrage, given the intensity, sincerity, and force of my feeling, is unquestionably the occasion for this feeling”). But this should not lead us to suppose our visceral reactions are necessarily the principal problem. They may or may not be. Feeling extreme disgust in response to a display of bullying is one thing, feeling this in reaction to two men kissing is another. Either some things are disgusting or some things must be identified as such in order to defend a form of life. We need not distract ourselves by engaging in a protracted dispute, or even an abridged one, about moral realism. We might imagine, as Martha Nussbaum does, a politics in which we eradicate the role of disgust, or, as she is hesitant to grant, we might envision a politics in which disgust is taken to be ineradicable yet educable. I can no more imagine the eradication of such a constitutional response as disgust as I can a constitutional need such as hunger.\footnote{I take the need for food and disgust to be intimately linked. That we so readily or spontaneously find things other than food disgusting is, in my judgment, instructive.} This might of course be an indication of the limits of my imagination. But, then, it might be an indication of the reach of my sense of reality.

In our country, the alleged war against such religions as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam\footnote{My inclusivity here is highly questionable. For those making the case, the alleged war against religion is, for the most part, a war against one specific religion (Christianity), though it is possible for those alleging this occasionally to marshal support from adherents of other religious traditions.} is in truth not a war against these religious traditions but rather a rejection of the absolutistic forms historically assumed and, indeed, contemporaneously championed by many (most?) of their most prominent defenders. The absolutists ought to be concerned that there is afoot a life and death struggle. What James observed in a different context is equally true here: The
triumph of pragmatism, as a method, “would mean an enormous change in ... the ‘temperament’ of philosophy” and, indeed, of much else. Specifically, it would mean: “Teachers of the ultra-rationalistic type would be frozen out, much as the courtier is frozen out in republics, as the ultramontane type of priest is frozen out in protestant lands.”

“Our democratic problem ... is,” as James suggests elsewhere, “statable in ultra-simple terms: What are the kind of men [and women] from whom our majorities shall take their cue? Whom shall they treat as their rightful leaders?” Will we remain tolerable of “[v]ulgarity enthroned and institutionalized” or will we rebel in our own name, as “philosopher-citizens,” against that sneering vulgarity and, far more to the point, “conscientious stupidity” are intolerable in our fellow citizens and, hence, our elected representatives?

“By their tone are,” James also contends, “all things human lost or saved. If democracy is to be saved it must catch the higher, healthier tone.” This tone is not that of derision, arrogance, or intolerance. It is just the opposite.

In Deweyan democracy, there would be formal tolerance of the absolutist orientation but a steadfast commitment to religious pluralism. For such pluralism, the motivations animating private citizens are one thing, reasons having public force in a democratic polity are quite another.

War is, on this account, the child of absolutism. Dewey is quite explicit about this:

The claim to possession of first and final truths is, in short, an appeal to final arbitration by force.... [T]here is no reasonable, practicable way of negotiating their difference. Stark and absolute opposition covers the whole situation. ("Lessons

36 James, Pragmatism, 31.
37 Essays, Comments, and Reviews, 110.
38 This expression is borrowed from Cornelius Castoriadis. See, e.g., “Intellectuals and History” in Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy. We do not need philosopher-kings, but rather philosopher-citizens, those who have the courage to call into question their inheritance while valuing that inheritance. See Dewey, MW 14: 19.
Such opposition can be rendered less than absolute only when absolutism is itself rendered far less than omnipresent. The authoritarian and autocratic character of our formally democratic institutions is the cover under which absolutism insinuates itself, everywhere. The human, all too human, quest for an unattainable certainty and clarity must give way to the humble yet hopeful quest for effective solutions to specific problems (e.g., shelter for the homeless, food for the hungry or starving, education for humans of all ages, but especially for the young).

Here is where Dewey seems most utopian but is, in fact, most realistic. What holds out hope for such transformations encompasses the freezing out of certain ideals of character and the lifting up of rival ideals. Radical democracy requires a critical mass of radical experimentalists, as parents, as neighbors, as teachers, as journalists, as artists, as scientists, and in every other imaginable capacity. Please note: it does not require a majority of such experimentalists, only a critical mass of them.  

40 The “most urgent problem of education in its deepest and broadest sense” is this: “The formation of the attitudes and dispositions in human beings which take effect in the sort of behavior that is prized and engaged. For habits formed in the long run, through the cumulative combination of consequences[,] the kinds of customs [or practices] and institutions which come to prevail socially” (LW 14: 323). But the formation of such attitudes and dispositions, at least in their interpenetration, constitutes character.  

41 An experimentalist

40 This appears to be a truism that is actually true: at the time of the revolt of the Colonies against the crown of England, roughly a third of the population was in favor of the revolt, roughly a third against such “treachery,” and the final portion either not strongly committed one way or the other or not committed at all. The Soviet Revolution succeeded by an even smaller percent of the population. The potential power of a critical mass of organized individuals should never be underestimated. Given the circumstances, this might be as little as 15% or (in rare circumstances) even less, though ordinarily it is around the percent that carried the day in the American Revolution.

41 “Character is,” Dewey stresses in Human Nature and Conduct, “the interpenetration of habits” (MW 14: 29).
character stands in stark, but not absolute, opposition, to an absolutist character. For ingenuous experimentalists can find common ground even here. They certainly do not insist upon anyone giving up the Torah, the New Testament, or the Quran. They only insist that, in the public sphere, the appeal to such scripture has, at most, very limited authority. In most contexts, it has no relevance at all for anyone but those who subscribe to the scripture to which appeal is being made. Of course, absolutists will rightly judge this to be an attack on the authority they accord to the sovereignty of God. The only way to counter this is the slow, patient process of exemplifying the ideals of character which can be glimpsed, however partially, in every culture and every epoch, but which only in recent centuries have assumed a far greater stature.

The war against war is a war against absolutism in all of its forms. But this war cannot be a war in the traditional sense, since the means of opposition must be one with the ends animating the endeavor. Regarding war, let Deweyan advocates of radical democracy never deceive themselves about their opponent. But, of equal moment, let them never deceive themselves about the only effective means for freezing out certain traditional ideals. These means include a just appreciation for what these exemplars of character have done to bequeath us with a sense of excellence. Noting their inadequacy for our times does not entail overlooking either their historical significance or (in a qualified sense) their abiding relevance.

We have never been modern because we have never been as experimentalist as our world requires, indeed, as our experimentalism

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42 In A Common Faith, Dewey suggests a cultural development of the most profound implications, one we are just beginning to recognize in its historical significance: “Nothing less than a revolution in the ‘seat of intellectual authority’ has taken place. This revolution, rather than any particular aspect of its impact upon this and that religion, is the central thing. In this revolution, every defeat is stimulus to renewed inquiry; every victory is the open door to more discoveries; and every new discovery is a new seed planted in the soil of intelligence” (LW 9: 23). The absolutist not only appeals to external authority but defends this authority against any fundamental critique. In contrast, heuristic democracy is predicated on accepting the implications of the revolution to which Dewey is pointing in the passage from A Common Faith. The immanent authority of ongoing inquiry is sufficient unto the day.
itself demands. An experimental commitment to radical experimentalism can be absolute, or better, uncompromising without being absolutistic or authoritarian. Indeed, it destroys itself when it allows itself to be made in the image of its opponent. The task before us is to help remake absolutists in the image of their opponent – the humble, courageous inquirer willing to modify or even abandon cherished beliefs and traditional frameworks.43

New media make this more possible and more difficult.44 Decentered forms of experimental authority however provide a singular opportunity for radical democracy. At least as much as this, they offer singular dangers. Given recent events and upheavals, they obviously also generate unparalleled dangers. With John Dewey, the only hope lies in going forward, with greater resolve, imagination, and generosity than we have yet marshaled. The tragic irony is that those who wish to go backward (e.g., back to the Founding Fathers or the divine patriarch or one of his prophets) have more effectively seized these media than those who profess a commitment to go forward. The practical lesson of Dewey’s *The Public and Its Problems* however could not be clearer: the ethos of democracy depends upon seizing the cutting-edge technologies of communication and using them for transforming an inchoate, incipient public into a vibrant, reflexive one. Our failure to do so is, at once, a moral, political, technological, educational, and ecological failure. It is arguably more a failure of intelligence and imagination than one of will or passion.

If the task before us remains substantially what it was when Dewey in 1939 at the age of eighty read the talk to which I am alluding here,45 that’s on us, not on him. We need far more today than in 1939

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43 If religion could be seen, as Santayana suggests, as a form of poetry, and if this would not be taken as a denigration of religion, it would be much easier to square the existential “truths” of sacred scripture and the experiential truths (or warranted assertions) of controlled inquiry. It is far from insignificant that literalism, religious, juridical, and otherwise, is so closely tied to absolutism.


45 “Creative Democracy – The Task Before Us” (LW 14, 224-30). See Richard J. Bernstein’s “John Dewey on Democracy: The Task Before Us” in *Philosophical Profiles*
to link the self-corrective practices of experimental inquiry with the self-governing ideals of our nominal democracy. Above all else, we need to cultivate that ideal of character in which the humility of the experimental inquirer eclipses the knowingness of the scientific expert, or worse, ideologue, also the expansive generosity of civic friendship counteracts deeply visceral reactions to individuals whose choices are so personally, culturally, and environmentally destructive (as self-destructive as anything else). We should not hesitate to denounce certain attitudes as deplorable, but we should also be precise in identifying those whom we are denouncing in this manner. For example, white supremacists are deplorable. Dewey certainly did not hesitate in deploring them. To see an equivalence between “Black lives matter” and “White lives are superior” indicates more than “a certain blindness in human beings.” It points to a deplorable prejudice in some nominally democratic citizens. The attitude of the experimentalist however expresses itself most properly in its “sympathies and admirations, not by dislikes and disdains” (James, “The Social Value of the College-Bred”). Especially in this way, its attractiveness as an ideal of character can be most immediately and deeply felt. There is nothing patronizing or haughty in its stance toward either the natural world or other human beings. It is a temperament in which a deep, if flickering consciousness of intimate, sustaining ties to the natural world and to other human beings tempers our most visceral reactions and perhaps even animates our most systematic inquiries.


“In respect for experience is,” Dewey wrote in a late manuscript, “respect for its possibilities in thought and knowledge as well as an enforced attention to its joys and sorrows. Intellectual piety toward experience is a precondition of the direction of life and of generous and tolerant cooperation among men. Respect for the things of experience alone brings with it respect for others, the centres of experience, as is free from patronage, domination and the will to impose” (LW 1: 392).

In a review of God the Invisible King (NY: Macmillan, 1917) by H. G. Wells, Dewey wrote in in Seven Arts (2, 334-39), “Uneasy and tortured egoism, finding not rest for
denizens of the Earth and the offspring of histories too myriad even to identity, before and beyond being citizens of a nation. For most of us, our attachment to our country is neither our primary nor our ultimate attachment, even when it is deeply important. Our civic ties need to be interpreted and assessed, time and again, in light of these more extensive and intimate ties, natural and historical. This hardly itself in itself, creates a huge Ego [God the invisible king] which, although finite and although not a creator of worlds, is still huge enough to be our King, Leader and Helper” (MW 10: 314). The “projection” of such a Divine Ego to shore up the sense of anxiety and inadequacy of the human ego (the word “projection” here is Dewey’s own) is not only fantastic but also ineffective. The sole path to moral maturity is the cultivation of humility, the acceptance of our finitude. While Wells prompted Dewey to think of “the psychological mechanism … of ‘projection,’” he ultimately was led to recall humility; “And then I thought,” he notes in closing, “of the humbleminded in all ages and places who live in a sense of the infinite ties, a few perceived but most of them obscure, which them to their fellows, to the soil, to the air and to the light of day, and whose strength to suffer and to enjoy is renewed daily by contact and by intercourse” (MW 10: 314). But what does this have to do with our topic? To continue quoting from the concluding paragraph of this review to its last word: “I then seemed better able to understand both that egoism which brings war into the world, and that egoism which revels in the masking a balked egoism by setting it in a journalistic declaration of the God of the modern mind. In the light of the world’s catastrophes perhaps such is the religious creed of contemporary man” (ibid.). But it is patently a self-destructive creed, moreover, an ecologically disastrous faith. The common faith of the humble naturalist stands in marked contrast to the arrogant faith of the egoistic nationalist (or is it naturalistic egoist?). John J. Stuhr’s contribution to this issue of Dewey Studies offers an astute diagnosis of this social pathology (the pathology of such nationalism). “Only an illusion of conceit [or egoism],” Dewey observes in Human Nature and Conduct (1922) persuades us that cosmic difference hangs upon even our wisest and most strenuous effort. … In a genuine sense every act is already possessed of infinite import. The little part of the scheme of affairs which is modifiable by our efforts is continuous with the rest of the world. The boundaries of our garden plot join it to the world of our neighbors and neighbors’ neighbors. That small effort which we can put forth is in turn connected with an infinity of events that sustain and support us. The consciousness of this encompassing infinity of connections is ideal” (MW 14: 180). It nonetheless can be efficacious. It is especially pertinent to quite the concluding sentences of this pivotal text: “The life of the community in and through which we live and have our being is the fit symbol of this relationship” to nature in its entirety. The acts in which it expresses our perception of the ties which bind us to others are its only rites and ceremonies” (MW 14: 227). See also Experience and Nature (1925) and A Common Faith (1934).
means advocacy of a facile cosmopolitanism. But it minimally means embrace of a demanding globalism. For such an embrace, our loyalty to our country is critical, in a twofold sense. It is critical in the sense of being vital or indispensable, but also in that of being intelligently and hence “critically” enacted. But the ideals of liberty, equality, and solidarity not only justify this loyalty. They also require us to contest any tendency to sacralize the nation, to grant even the elected representatives of the national state the unquestionable sovereignty of an unaccountable bully.

This sense of our connectedness can be far more than ethereal and emotional, though it is inherently vague and affective. It can nonetheless be the animating principle of a fighting faith, a faith that does not meekly accept the renting of these ties (e.g., the pollution of air and water, the destruction of neighborhoods and wilderness). A felt sense of the infinite yet intimate ties binding us to soil and sun, the Earth and the stars, the atmosphere and the oceans, the gentle and even the “harsh north wind” (James) does not dispose us to quietism or passivity. Such a consciousness prompts us to be solicitous and nurturing, attentive to destructive fissures and protective of

49 Whereas the polis in cosmopolitanism has only a very vague and ephemeral referent, the globe in globalism, in referring to the Earth, has a concrete and specific one.

50 In his essay “On the Duty of Civil Disobedience,” in Walden and Civil Disobedience (NY: New American Library, 1980), Henry David Thoreau observes: “The mass of men serve the State thus, not as men mainly, but as machines with their body. … Others … serve the State chiefly with their heads; and, as they rarely make any moral distinctions, they are as likely to serve the devil, without intending it, as God. A very few, as heroes, patriots, martyrs, reformers in the good sense, and men, serve the State with their consciences also, and so necessarily resist it for the most part; and they are commonly treated by it as enemies” (224)

51 John E. Smith, Quasi-Religions (NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1995).

52 In “The Social-Value of the College Bred,” in Essays, Comments, and Reviews, James writes, on the one hand, we fully recognize the possibility that “democracy as a whole may undergo self-poisoning. But, on the other hand, democracy is a kind of religion, and are bound not to admit its failure [that is, to fight against its defeat]. Faiths and utopias are the noblest exercise of human reason, and no one with a spark of reason in him will sit down fatalistically before the croaker’s picture” (109). Rather we will fight for the success of democracy, even against what often appears to be hopeless odds. For some of us at least, American democracy is a fighting faith.
vulnerable beings. While all life is precarious, some stages and beings are more precariously situated than others. “The acts in which we express our perception of the ties which bind us to others are,” Dewey suggests, “its only rites and ceremonies” (MW 14: 227). These acts can take as many forms as these ties themselves can assume, not least of all acts of protest, resistance, and opposition.

If the community provides the most apt symbol of these infinite ties, the care for, and enhancement of, those ties, becomes the “rites” by which the members of the community affirm, nurture, and strengthen this nexus of relationships. The failings of political representatives bear directly upon this enveloping nexus of relationships. Serious interrogations from the press and elsewhere will be greeted with threats, derision, and insults by these leaders. Reasonable appeals from national allies and alliances are judged by these representatives to be of no account, even though at least a critical mass of engaged citizens judge otherwise. The state is presumed by these representatives to be accountable only to itself, the authority of the executive to be beyond question, while many of those being “represented” contend that such a unilateral stance is essentially a bellicose posture.

A sense of connectedness to more than the nation can and ought to animate and focus opposition to nationalistic egoism when it operates in such an irresponsible manner. When John Dewey heard the visceral politics of “America First!” he interpreted the cry contextually and, hence, historically. He did not take it to be a

53 In addition to those already cited, there are important formulations in A Common Faith of this fundamental thesis. See especially LW 9, 56-58.

54 The contributions of John Stuhr and Jennifer Hansen have considered this aspect of the question to a far greater extent than I have. As mentioned in another footnote, my paper was conceived, written, and expanded in light of theirs. In this respect, it is deliberately complementary.

55 While I will focus on a passage from the Introduction to the Second Edition of German Philosophy and Politics, another demands to be recalled here. “So I close by saying,” Dewey wrote in “The Basic Values and Loyalties of Democracy,” originally published in American Teacher (May 1941), “that the third loyalty which measures democracy [after loyalty to liberty and equality] is the will to transform passive toleration into active cooperation. The ‘fraternity’ which was the third member of the democratic trinity of the France of the Revolution has never been practiced on
justifiable or even intelligent (or minimally reasonable) affirmation of the legitimate demands of a sovereign nation. He rather heard the cry as overweening nationalism greatly contributing to international instability, thus, to the instability of the nation from which the cry is emanating. After recalling the concluding sentences of his own *German Philosophy and Politics* (1915) – “the situation which then [in 1915] existed ‘presents the spectacle of the breakdown of the whole philosophy of Nationalism, political racial and cultural,’” Dewey in “The One-World of Hitler’s National Socialism” (1942)\(^{56}\) is quick to point out these sentences also suggested that

our own country is not free from the guilt of swollen nationalism. Without reviving here the question of ‘isolationism’ versus ‘interventionism’ which events have decided, it is fitting to note that the isolationist plea for ‘America First,’ and the reasons it put forth in behalf of that plea, was animated by an uncurbed nationalist spirit of the sort which has brought the world to its present tragic state. The ever-increasing interdependence of peoples in every phase of modern life does not automatically bring understanding, amity and cooperation of the interdependent elements. As the state of the world proves, it may produce tensions and frictions, and these may lead each element to try at once to withdraw into itself and to establish peace and unity by forceful conquest of opposing elements. (LW 8: 445)\(^{57}\)

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\(^{56}\) This first appeared as the Introduction to the Second Edition of *German Philosophy and Politics* (NY: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1942).

\(^{57}\) Subsequent events have only decided even more emphatically in favor of the international side. This of course does not mean that citizens or their representatives will acknowledge what historical events have made patently clear – international
To try to insure the safety of the nation by engaging in indefinite wars with a number of other countries does very little to accomplish its goals. Democratic sovereignty is sacrificed on the altar of national “sovereignty.” Not only is the nation pitted violently and, hence, stupidly against other nations, the protracted struggle to protect national sovereignty in this fanatical manner pits the citizens of the nation against one another in what reveals itself to be nothing less than a war of some against others. The mythical war of all against all distracts attention from the actual war, within the nation, of some locked in war against others.

What Dewey wrote in 1942 is arguably even truer today. “As yet we have no adequately developed American philosophy, because,” he stresses, “we have not as yet made articulate the methods and aims of the democratic way of life” (LW 8: 444). The articulation of these method and aims, however, must be interwoven with that of the passions and emotions by which over most encompassing and radical attachments or connections are expressed. Visceral politics need not be a celebration of stupidity, much less a riot of intolerance. While the intelligent articulation of our angers, frustrations, fears, anxieties, outrage, and much else cannot help but to transform them, they will always be the animating force of our political life and, indeed, every other form of human life. One should never imagine that “the emotional, passionate phase of action can or should be eliminated,” especially “in behalf of a bloodless reason” (MW 14:136). Dewey could not be clearer about the way forward: “More ‘passions,’ not fewer, is the answer” (bid.). His examples are instructive. “To check the influence of hate there must be sympathy.”

For eliciting, widening, and deepening one’s sympathy toward others, however, the arts are almost always needed. In order to render sympathy itself nuanced, situational, and respectful to those to whom it is directed, “there are needed emotions of curiosity, caution, and respect for the freedom of others” (ibid.). In the nuanced, flexible, and integrated\textsuperscript{58} habits of experimental practitioners, human intelligence

\textsuperscript{58} Such integration can of course never be final or complete. But rigid
most clearly reveals itself.\textsuperscript{59} For in the character of these experimentalists and the culture (or ethos) advanced by their actions, interventions, and indeed protests, such intelligence shows itself to be a working harmony of mutually supportive and intensifying passions.\textsuperscript{60}

compartmentalization tends to be symptomatic of pathology. For example, the inability to see the humanity of one's enemy's children – the rigid compartmentalizing of human sympathy – is more than a moral limitation or even blindness. It is an instance of moral distortion and disfigurement.\textsuperscript{59} The interplay between sympathy and curiosity is especially relevant to the difficult challenges posed by our visceral politics. As Dewey suggests in the passage being quoted, curiosity helps to work against sympathy becoming maudlin, sentimental, and worse (manipulative, patronizing, and denigrating), while sympathy works against curiosity becoming unhinged from due care for sentient life other than human life, also for other cultures of a markedly different character from our own. As we witness in Donald Trump, a lack of curiosity can be as damaging as a lack of sympathy. David Brooks and others have indeed pointed out this lack of interest in others and in the world to be possibly his most incapacitating quality: little does more to render him unfit to rule a democracy than this lack.\textsuperscript{60} This invites comparison to George Santayana's characterization of reason as an harmony of impulses or desires. While Dewey could be sharply critical of Santayana, he was also deeply appreciative of his writings, especially \textit{The Life of Reason}. See, e.g., Dewey \textit{MW} 3, 319-22.
THE HOPEFUL HASHTAG: DIGITAL FEMINIST PUBLICS IN THE TRUMP ERA

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Philosophy starts from some deep and wide way of responding to the difficulties life presents . . .
—John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy*

Intolerance, abuse, calling of names because of differences of opinion about religion or politics or business, as well as because of differences of race, color, wealth or degree of culture are treason to the democratic way of life.
—John Dewey, (LW 14, 227)

**Keeping Faith with Deweyan Democracy**

In his 1939 book, *Freedom and Culture*, John Dewey warns that the complex of customs—or the cultural conditions—shaping the institutions, habits, and practices of American democracy are not immune from the sweep of totalitarianism in Europe. In fact, in stark opposition to a chorus of “patriots” declaring that American-style democracy is the only antidote to nationalist trends and thereby must be protected from this external *enemy*, Dewey soberly observes: “[t]he serious threat to our democracy is not the existence of foreign totalitarian states. It is the existence within our own personal attitudes and within our own institutions . . .” (LW 13, 98). In many of his writings from this time period, including “Creative Democracy—The Task Before Us,” Dewey draws out the significance of the rise of totalitarianism on the Continent: namely, this current fact is both a caution as well as an invitation to remind ourselves that democracy is an enduring *personal* task (LW 14, 226). By a personal task, Dewey means that democracy lives not in our formal institutions and laws, but rather in the cultivation of individual habits—dispositions—that in turn animate collective actions toward bringing about a better future.²

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1 All citations of *The Collected Works of John Dewey, 1882-1953*, edited by Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1967-1990), will be made in this essay as follows, references to *The Early Works* (EW), *The Middle Works* (EW), and *The Latter Works* (LW) will be cited with reference to period, volume, and page number. The above epigram, for example, is MW 12, 110).

Our American democracy is not something, nor will it ever be, that has been achieved and thereby stands as an everlasting bulwark against external or internal threats. Rather, only by continually directing our collective energies, intelligence, and creativity to studying the consequences of our current institutions, personal habits, and practices; by assessing how well our institutions, habits, and practices accord with the ideals of democracy; and, by experimenting with cultural conditions when we find they are not, can we guard against the evils of totalitarianism, fascism, or false populism from taking permanent residence.

In 2018, many would persuasively argue that the threat of nationalism is indeed internal in the Trump era; in fact, we likely will look back at this period in American history as a time when our habits, specifically and importantly our habits of communicating, were in desperate need of reconstruction. President Trump brazenly embraces an unreconstructed3 ‘Nationalist’ label to describe his policies and proclivities,4 so it goes without saying that his vicious rhetoric toward opposing viewpoints, e.g., the globalists,5 is infused with an absolutism that Vincent Colapietro6 compellingly points out will only result in violence.7 In his quest to snuff out dissent and

3 See John J. Stuhr, “Pragmatism About Nationalism,” *Dewey Studies* 2, no. 3 in this volume for a sense of what a pragmatic, reconstructed view of nationalism might look like.

4 At a rally for Senator Ted Cruz, President Trump incredulously pronounced “‘Really, we’re not supposed to use that word,’ he told supporters in a nod to the usual political sensibilities that he relishes disrupting. ‘You know what I am? I’m a nationalist, O.K.? I’m a nationalist. Nationalist! Use that word! Use that word!’” See Peter Baker, “‘Use That Word!’: Trump Embraces the ‘Nationalist’ Label,” *New York Times*, October 23, 2018, https://nyti.ms/2SuufJ.


7 Within a week of each other, two events in late October 2019 demonstrate how nationalist, totalitarian propaganda incites violence. First, beginning October 22, 2019, Cesar Sayoc Jr. Democratic politicians and supporters started to receive pipe bombs in the mail from an ardent Trump supporter, Cesar Sayoc Jr. He sent 13 pipe bombs in total. All of his targets, including George Soros, Robert De Niro, Cory Booker, and Maxine Waters are regularly mocked and denigrated by President
debate, Trump, along with prominent Republican legislators, cynically characterize the press as “fake news” as well as disingenuously describe protestors exercising their freedom of association and free speech as “angry mobs” or “violent.” And while Russian agents interfering with the 2016 elections dramatically undermined public trust in voting—a fundamental means of expressing one’s voice in a democracy—new voter restriction laws deterring or burdening voters in states such as North Dakota; illegal purging9 of voter rolls in states such as Georgia;10 and continued partisan gerrymandering in states

Trump at his rallies. Then, October 27th, Robert Bowers gunned down 11 people attending Shabbat services at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh. Before he went on his shooting rampage, he left several anti-Semitic statements on social media, including his deep concern that “Jews were helping transport members of the migrant caravans," which is one often cited to support President Trump’s newly ramped up anti-immigration rhetoric at rallies before the 2018 midterm election (see Dakin Andone, Jason Hanna, Joe Sterling and Paul P. Murphy, “Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting That Left 11 Dead,” CNN, October 29, 2018, https://cnn.it/2QhstQV). The “Tree of Life” shooting is now known to be the deadliest attack on Jews the United States.

8 Many protestors assembled in the Hart Building, the Capitol Building and the Mall, and other parts around the country during the second hearing for Brett Kavanaugh’s fitness for the Supreme Court of the United States. Some protestors confronted Republican senators directly, most famously two women—who stopped Republican Senator Jeff Flake, who was perceived to be a possible swing vote against Justice Kavanaugh. In the aftermath of these protests, many Republicans, including President Trump and Senator Grassley began a campaign of regularly branding these protestors as an angry mob or using mob rule tactics. See Matt Visser and Robert Costa, “An Angry Mob: Republican Work to Recast Protests as Out-Of-Control Anarchy,” Washington Post, October 8, 2018, https://wapo.st/2Ddn6PZ. Importantly, Dewey identifies the “desire for security” as a contributing factor to installing dictators to restore “law and order” (L.W 13, 106).


10 Brian Kemp, the Secretary of State of Georgia, who is currently running for Governor against former State House Minority Leader, and Voter Rights activist, Stacey Abrams, is currently facing a new lawsuit in a federal district court claiming he has unlawfully purged 53,000 Georgia voters, 70% of which are African American. This is not the first time Kemp has faced lawsuits for practices found illegal wherein he purged several hundreds of thousands of voters in Georgia since
such as North Carolina\textsuperscript{11} more straightforwardly disenfranchise voters. In addition to attacks on the free press and the franchise, we are contending with an intensified partisan war on science, which deliberately focuses on discrediting democratic processes of inquiry, or what Dewey observes as useful about science as a practice conditioning the cultivation of other habits, namely, “a knowing that is self-corrective in operation; that learns from failures as from successes” (MW 12, 270). As such, in this era, many Americans are unabashedly believing “alternative facts”\textsuperscript{12} or putting their faith in “junk science”\textsuperscript{13} that supports their preferred view, rather than adopting views that accord with actual conditions in our environment. Such intellectual laziness, social psychological studies reveal,\textsuperscript{14} is too often our default thinking unless we take seriously the need to create social conditions that support the cultivation of democratic habits.\textsuperscript{15}


\textsuperscript{12} This phrase was infamously coined by President Trump’s senior advisor, Kellyanne Conway during an interview with Meet the Press’s, Chuck Todd. Todd was pushing Conway on the falseness of then Press Secretary Sean Spicer’s claims concerning the number of people in attendance at President Trump’s inauguration. Conway responded: “Don’t be so overly dramatic about it, Chuck. What—you’re saying it’s a falsehood. And they’re giving Sean Spicer, our press secretary, gave alternative facts to that.” For a full transcript, see Rebecca Sinderbrand, “How Kellyanne Conway Ushered in the Era of ‘Alternative Facts,’” The Washington Post, January 22, 2017, https://wapo.st/2OYD1rA.

\textsuperscript{13} Many Republican Senators (and one Democrat, Joe Manchin) preferred to appeal to a view that any gaps in Dr. Blasey Ford’s memory suggested that nothing she remembered could be credible. Journalist Avi Selk calls this view “junk science.” See Avi Selk, “The Junk Science Republicans Used to Undermine Ford and Help Save Kavanaugh,” The Washington Post, October 7, 2018, hhttps://wapo.st/2Q15w4h.

\textsuperscript{14} Certainly, Dewey hoped that social science would begin to progress—become an experimental inquiry rather than a set of untestable metaphysical beliefs.

\textsuperscript{15} See, for example, Daniel Kahneman, Thinking Fast and Slow (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, New York, 2011). Kahneman characterizes thinking as composed of two systems—System 1 and System 2. The former tends to dominate and is automatic,
Dewey's abiding faith in democracy is an abiding faith in the powers of cooperative, intelligent inquiry to “[detect] ills that need remedy . . . and the formation of plans and methods for dealing with them . . .” (MW 12, 174). By cooperative, Dewey in no way means to suggest complete harmony or unity of purpose, rather he has in mind an association of persons with different talents, different contributions, different abilities, and even different ends who, by virtue of combining together, discover they are more efficacious in achieving their desired ends than singly (LW 2, 328-329).

Cooperative, intelligent inquiry, should it be sustained, depends upon the cultivation of habits\(^\text{16}\) of communication—essentially human interaction—to successfully crowd out intellectual laziness\(^\text{17}\) (which is an ideal breeding ground for totalitarianism and fascism). Frankly, communication as a tool for identifying common purposes and organizing action to achieve such purposes would be wholly unnecessary should human organisms be so constituted to have a unity of purpose; it is because of the fact of our plural desires, needs, and temperaments that communication emerges as “the tool of tools (MW 1, 134).” Communication enables us to bridge our differences in order to identify a common goal; common goals are forged not found. intuitive, quick, and prone to a variety of cognitive biases, while the latter is slower, deliberate, demands great attention and effort, and is thereby lazy. Hence, when we engage system 2 to check system 1 thinking, Kahneman explains that system 2 “is more of an apologist for the emotions of System 1 than a critic . . . and endorser rather than an enforcer” (103). Prior to scientific confirmation of our lazy cognitive machinery, Dewey himself observed that “[i]t is human nature to think along the easiest lines . . .”(LW 2, 284), and the evidence he provided for this observation relied on his theory of habit, drawn from William James’ Principles of Psychology. Habits—what many social psychologists today call ‘heuristics’—take a great deal less energy insofar as they automate regular tasks.

\(^{16}\) While I don’t have space in this essay to this, it is essential to note that for Dewey the cultivation of democratic habits in individuals requires beneficial cultural conditions that support these habits in the form of customs and institutions. Primary among the beneficial social conditions that promote the cultivation of democratic habits is education, which was one of his life-long concerns.

Unlike democratic communication, Dewey notes in *Freedom and Culture* that one of the aims of a totalitarian regime is to “control the whole life of its subjects by its hold over feelings, desires, emotions, as well as opinions” (LW 13, 70). A totalitarian regime seeks total unity of sentiment to the degree that communication, and the inquiry and contestation required to carry it out, become enemies to state. A fascist regime appeals to ready-made non-empirical “theories” that, for example, scapegoat immigrants for low wages or threats to personal security. Such propaganda demands very little of the citizenry; it acts on their sensations rather than their intellectual judgment. Totalitarian habits of non-communication play to our default “. . . complacency in virtual enslavement, to sloppiness, superficiality and recourse to sensations as substitutes for ideas . . .” (LW 2 340). Democracy, on the other hand, comes to life, for Dewey, when it embraces the dispositions and practices of the scientific method: “freedom of inquiry, toleration of diverse views, freedom of communication, the distribution of what is found out to every individual . . .” (LW 13, 135). To weed out the totalitarian habits rooting in our current cultural conditions, we must, reconstruct our habits of communication in the new spaces they are taking place, namely, the sphere of social media.

In what follows, I will focus specifically on Twitter and the ‘hashtag’ (#) as a pervasive mode of communication in the Trump era that, despite Trump’s own practices, holds out promise for our democracy. Twitter is a unique social media platform insofar as it is a live, reverse chronological, unregulated stream of voices—or, at least not well regulated by mainstream media interests. Twitter does not organize information by algorithms that determine what should be read or paid attention to, nor does Twitter enable individuals to create what Dorothy Kim calls “specific digital neighborhood bubbles” in a way Facebook typically does (i.e., further reinforcing totalitarian habits of communication). Twitter is an unwieldy torrent of conversation to which anyone with access to the internet can join, i.e., no media affiliation, no celebrity platform, no institutional affiliation.

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is required to participate. Twitter is, however, navigable by hashtags that enable one to focus conversations on specific ideas. Given that tweets are live streams—organized only by chronology rather than the putative social status of the individual or organization that tweets—this platform notably affords a space of deliberation, criticism, and participation of typically marginalized voices.\footnote{19}

To be clear, President Trump’s tweets are certainly not an example of healthy democratic communication insofar as he alternates between distracting individuals and the media from events unfolding on the ground that are likely to have deep, personal, adverse consequences for him and employing this megaphone to, as Dewey puts it, “[enlist] ... the inertia, prejudices and emotional partisanship of the masses by use of a technique which impedes free inquiry and expression”\footnote{20} (LW 2, 341). However, the the #MeToo campaign is an


\footnote{20}{To give just one example of the power of social media to distract, consider that during the Kavanaugh hearings, The New York Times published, on October 2, 2018, an in-depth, special investigation tracing the multiple tax schemes that President Trump, and his parents, used to cheat both New York and the Federal Government out of significant tax revenue. What The New York Times unearthed is yet another example of criminal behavior on the part of our President that could still be investigated and prosecuted. This reporting also gives detail evidence of President Trump’s fraudulent claims to be a self-made billionaire (a claim that was crucial to swaying many Trump supporters). Moreover, this systematic tax evasion meant that millions of dollars were effectively stolen from “the people.” See David Barstow, Susanne Craig, and Russ Buettner, “Trump Engaged in Suspect Tax Schemes as He Reaped Riches from His Father,” The New York Times, October 2, 2018, https://nyti.ms/2qj6a1u. On the very day that the New York Times’ story broke, President Trump clogged the social media and mainstream media airwaves by mocking Dr. Christine Blasey Ford at campaign rally in Mississippi. This callous and cruel act effectively buried the Times investigative reporting in the news cycle. See Josh Dawsey and Felicia Sonmez, “Trump Mocks Kavanaugh Accuser Christine Blasey Ford,” Washington Post, October 2, 2018, https://wapo.st/2EQ9rQj.}
instructive, promising, and hopeful counterweight to alt-right social media communication (as embodied by President Trump). I have selected this particular example of "hashtag activism"\textsuperscript{21} because thus far the #MeToo movement has been the most successful Twitter campaign targeting sexual violence\textsuperscript{22}—raising awareness of its ubiquity, breaking silences, and delivering significant accountability and reform to date.\textsuperscript{23} The #MeToo movement illustrates in real-time, the Deweyan dynamics of democratic communication, including the importance of contestation among participants trying to forge solidarity—cooperative action—in order to oppose, modify, and problem solve the pernicious ills of sexual violence. By the ‘importance of contestation among participants,’ I mean that the #MeToo movement shines a spotlight on the corrosive effects of ignoring and erasing the experiences of women of color, indigenous women, poor women, disabled women, global south women, and trans women. Moreover, the open platform of Twitter not only more successfully shines a light on these oppressive practices, but it better enables productive criticism of ‘white feminism,’ thereby holding out the hope that traditionally marginalized voices will successfully disrupt customary habits of claiming that the highly visible, white, heterosexual women’s analyses, theories, experiences are universal experiences of gendered-based violence. The #MeToo movement, I assert, concretely illustrates Dewey’s hypothesis that optimal communication allows democratic publics to form and reform our environment.

\textsuperscript{21} See Guobin Yang, “Narrative Agency in Hashtag Activism: The Case of #BlackLivesMatter,” Media and Communication 4, No. 4 (2016) who is often credited with coinining the phrase ‘hashtag activism.’


\textsuperscript{23} For the one-year anniversary of the start of the #MeToo movement, The New York Times provided an interactive graphic of 201 men who were fired from their jobs—in a variety of industries—on charges of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct, https://nyti.ms/2JS2vBc.
Language is a Commons

With all the damage that’s being done to the social fabric, in matters ranging from race relations to income inequality, to name just two areas where the national leadership seems not only determined to make things worse but weirdly excited about it, fretting over the state of the language seems like an indulgence...[but] words are tools, and what matters is the job that they are being made to do. Still, language is a commons. It’s a resource that we share, and the resource is impoverished when words are redefined, weaponized, or otherwise co-opted and bent out of shape.

—Louis Menand, New Yorker

What history has shown us time and again is that if marginalized voices—those of people of color, queer people, disabled people, poor people—aren’t centered in our movements then they tend to become no more than a footnote. I often say that sexual violence knows no race, class or gender, but the response to it does. ‘Me too.’ is a response to the spectrum of gender-based sexual violence that comes directly from survivors—all survivors. We can’t afford a racialized, gendered or classist response. Ending sexual violence will require every voice from every corner of the world and it will require those whose voices are most often heard to find ways to amplify those voices that often go unheard.

—Tarana Burke, Washington Post (my emphasis)

In the January 8, 2018 issue of New Yorker, Louis Menand, in unsurprisingly Deweyan fashion, suggests that “[a]rguably, the Word of the Year is not a word at all. It’s an alphanumeric character, #.” Menand continues “[t]he president speaks in hashtag, but so do the President’s opponents, and so does, for example, the #MeToo

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26 Menand, Comment, New Yorker, January 8, 2018.
movement . . . # democratizes . . . .”  

To put this in Deweyan terms, the hashtag, as a mode of communication, has the potential to integrate a public, which emerges when loosely associated individuals—or individuals form a network out of cross-cutting associations—simultaneously recognize a serious problem, and then set out to debate and discuss its complexities and contours to begin problem-solving (LW 2, 314). There is no one public; there are many publics.  

A public emerges, most typically, in moments of crisis because such moments clarify concretely—thereby enabling articulation—the frustrated purposes, aims, and goals of many—or what Melvin Rogers poignantly describes as “a complex horizon of value and meaning that is now fractured . . .”  

When problems can be named—communicated—so that all affected by them recognize a shared interest, a public establishes a ‘common’; a public becomes a community (LW 2, 323-324). Erin Tarver in her analysis of the feminist blogosphere further elucidates that the formation of publics online promises to enrich our democracy by dislodging “entrenched patterns of oppression” because, as she rightly notes,

a community cannot and will not be truly democratic insofar as it remains a community in which some of its members are systematically disadvantaged and devalued, while others systematically benefit from their disadvantage and devaluation.

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27 Menand, January 8, 2018.
29 Rosemary Clark, “Hope in a Hashtag,” 792.
What is important here, and why Twitter in particular should give us hope, is that improving the conditions for communication in service of problem-solving is more likely to enable us to alleviate problems—especially communication that can eliminate obstacles to democracy such as entrenched patterns of oppressing some citizens so as to directly enrich other citizens. When our habits of communication favor pluralism, rather than exclude and marginalize voices out of a desire for unity (totalitarianism), we unleash the full potential of democracy as intelligent inquiry. If Twitter undermines this lazy, sloppy, custom of establishing a dominant, univocal view of a given problem—especially the problem of gender-based violence—then it is precisely the kind of technology Dewey imagined could provide optimal conditions for problem-solving. Rogers explains that for Dewey the very concept of ‘the public’ "denotes a space of pluralism . . .There is no privileged access to mutually recognized concerns or solutions—that is, they must be built up discursively—and so all members stand on equal footing." It is in this vein, that Dewey's notion of the public and, as I am arguing here, its enactment on Twitter with #MeToo, may speak to Tarana Burke's claim that “[e]nding sexual violence will require every voice from every corner of the world and it will require those whose voices are most often heard to find ways to amplify those voices that often go unheard.”

32 I do not have sufficient space to tackle a disagreement between Tarver and Rogers over how to understand Dewey's invocation of 'the public' rather than simply speak of 'publics' in *The Public and Its Problems*. Briefly, Tarver criticizes Dewey for construing 'the public' as a homogeneous and unified public. Rogers provides a more nuanced reading of Dewey's concept of 'the public' (emphasizing the passages where Dewey uses the definite article) and offers an interpretation quite at odds with Tarver's. Both Tarver and Rogers, however, ultimately take up the importance of publics as optimal spaces of deliberation in service of problem-solving.

33 Melvin Rogers, "Dewey and His Vision of Democracy," 86.

Discursive Activism

Language is power. When you turn ‘torture’ into ‘enhanced interrogation,’ or murdered children into ‘collateral damage,’ you break the power of language to convey meaning, to make us see, feel, and care. But it works both ways. You can use the power of words to bury meaning or to excavate it. If you lack words for a phenomenon, an emotion, a situation, you can’t talk about it, which means that you can’t come together to address it, let alone change it. Vernacular phrases—‘Catch-22,’ ‘monkeywrenching,’ ‘cyberbullying,’ ‘the 99 percent and the 1 percent’—have helped us to describe but also to reshape our world. This may be particularly true of feminism, a movement focused on giving voice to the voiceless and power to the powerless.

—Rebecca Solnit, “#Why #YesAllWomen Matters”

The recent resurgence of the #MeToo movement reflects the longstanding marginalization and exclusion that women of color experience within the larger feminist movement in U.S. society. This marginalization of women of color has occurred within the #MeToo movement despite the fact that a black woman, Mechelle Vinson, was the plaintiff in the very first Supreme Court case to recognize a cause of action under Title VII for a hostile work environment created by sexual harassment; despite the fact that #MeToo began with a woman of color; and despite the fact that women of color are more vulnerable to sexual harassment than white women and are less likely to be believed when they report harassment, assault, and rape.

—Angela Onwuachi-Willig, “What About #Us Too?”


Avoidance of the conversation has shaped our culture; cultures are defined not only by the stories they tell, but also by the ones they don’t. It’s the negative space that gives definition to the pictures we have of how men and women ought to live together—and that picture, of course, is the world of a series of old masters.

—Laurie Penny, “The Unforgiving Minute”

Returning again for a moment to the habit of communication, Dewey considers it one of the most, if not the most, important democratic habits to be cultivated because it unleashes new powers over nature and the second-natured worlds of custom and tradition that, borrowing Dewey’s hydraulic metaphors, channels our behavior into certain predictable currents of activity (what Dewey calls habits). Communication is like a trough that diverts part of an otherwise indiscriminate flow of events into a navigable stream in which one can sift out of discriminate objects that “are subject to reconsideration and revision” (LW 1, 132). Phenomena that might feel as ungovernable as erupting squalls, through the mediation of the tool of communication, transmute into an intriguing engineering problem awaiting human intelligence. Even patriarchal dominance maintained through violence—and the cunning, adaptable strategies it uses—is rendered into a specific problem capable of being subdued or overcome.

The #MeToo campaign, like several feminist campaigns against sexual violence before it, is primarily a space of debate and contestation over the multiple and complex meanings of patriarchal ideology in order to dislodge the harmful dominant explanations or justifications of sexual violence. All too often, the dominant meanings of sexual violence circulating, especially when a perpetrator’s acts become public—i.e., the gang rape and murder of Jyoti Singh Pandey (2012), the elevator video tape of Ray Rice beating his fiancée (2014), the Isla Vista shooting (2014), Trump’s Hollywood Access tape (2016), or Harvey Weinstein’s long history of sexually harassing and assaulting actors (2017), typically perpetuate non-egalitarian, patriarchal, and racist hegemonic power relations. Specifically, the

dominant interpretations—regularly circulating in the mainstream media—explain away or weaponize these public scandals for other self-serving ends, unless spaces for contesting and generating alternative meanings of these acts occur. Linda Martín Alcoff makes more concrete the sort of dominant meanings that circulate—and threaten to crowd out more useful ones—in the wake of media coverage of sexual violence, noting that:

[p]ublic outrage can be channeled toward critical and ungenerous judgments about the women who come forward, or toward the sexism of other cultures, or toward the actions and attitudes of a few individual perpetrators represented as pathological, or toward the ‘need’ to close borders and shut out asylum seekers . . . .

And yet for Dewey, communication is the interactive, iterative social process of discerning vital, important, and missing elements from a provisional definition so that newer versions will be better equipped to do the work desired of it—if our concepts or definitions fail to adequately grasp the nuances of any given problem, then they will not be useful. In fact, the more sophisticated we become as communicators, the better we will become at detecting the work of domination as constitutive exclusions of relevant, vital information in our concepts that thereby weaken their problem-solving capacity. As I have claimed above, I am arguing here that the #MeToo movement—and many other hashtag feminist movements related to sexual violence that precede it—use Twitter for the discursive task of delimiting the complexity of the problem as it concretely affects individuals, especially as they find themselves situated differently—and more vulnerably—by class, race, sexuality, and ability, in addition to gender. While the #MeToo movement has by no means escaped

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39 ‘Hashtag Feminism,’ is a term that has become prominent in the study of feminist uses of Twitter. For example, see Shenila Khoja-Moolji, “Becoming an 'Intimate Publics,' Exploring the Affective Intensities of Hashtag Feminism,” Feminist Media Studies 15, no. 2 (2015): 347-350.
criticisms of falling into predictable patterns of excluding marginalized voices, I will argue those penetrating criticisms generate further contestation over the meaning of patriarchal ideology, promising, at least at the time of this writing, corrections, change of course, and thereby forays into restoring what Burke above describes as the footnoting of marginalized voices into the center, into the main text.

Many histories of second-wave feminism note that effective contestation of patriarchal domination was difficult until the problem could be sufficiently conceptualized. And, in a Deweyan vein, conceptualization of a social ill cannot afford sloppy thinking; it requires creating optimal conditions that thereby enable the participation of multiple points of view and individual experiences of any given phenomena because, as Rogers notes above there is, “no privileged access to mutually recognized concerns or solutions. . . ”. Nancy Fraser argues, complimenting Dewey’s notion of publics, that the crucial discursive work necessary for effective participation and subsequent transformation of the political sphere requires the building of “subaltern counterpublics,” serving as crucial spaces where “members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs.” They had insufficient conceptualization, but the possibilities are in the discursive work of the subaltern counterpublics, in the contestation over meaning. Presently, feminist scholars are studying “an important resurgence . . . of feminist attention to and actions (online and off) around sexual violence and male entitlement,” focusing their analyses specifically on Twitter because its open platform eliminates many of the material barriers that exclude the voices of marginalized women in feminist debates, thereby opening up the possibility that those voices effectively change the conversation.

Scholars working in feminist media studies have adopted the

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40 Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” Social Text, nos. 25/26, (1990): 67.
42 Clark, “Hope in a Hashtag,” 789.
phrase ‘discursive activism’\textsuperscript{43} to capture the nature of the feminist activism on Twitter. In other words, the #MeToo movement should not be understood as merely a preparation for more organized, on-the-ground protests, rallies, or lobbying. Rather the #MeToo movement is political activism insofar as it aims at changing discourse around the ‘sexual violation’ of women in the media and thereby the broader culture. Alcoff introduces the phrase ‘sexual violation’ in order to give us a more nuanced understanding of the nature of the violation that is sexual violence. She explains that by using the larger rubric of ‘sexual violation,’ activists make clearer:

that our concern is broader than what used to be called ‘forcible rape,’ or an action that is physically coerced. To violate is to infringe upon someone, to transgress, and it can also mean to rupture or break. Violations can happen with stealth, with manipulation, with soft words and a gentle touch to a child, or an employee, or anyone who is significantly vulnerable to the offices of others . . . What we are concerned with is a violation of sexual agency, of subjectivity, or our will. We should also be concerned with the ways in which our will has been formed. \textsuperscript{44}

The goal of this movement, and important precursors, such as #YesAllWomen, #WhyIStayed, #NotOkay, is to unmask the multiple and shifting strategies of patriarchal ideology that attempt to explain away these acts of violation—i.e., bad actors, mental illness, cultural pathologies—so as to divert attention away from the reality that sexual violations are a systemic problem, not only in our American democracy, but globally.

‘Sexual violation’ of women, as outlined by Alcoff, is also helpfully extended by Kate Manne’s conceptualization of ‘misogyny’ as “a property of social environments” rather than the more dominant, convenient, and conventional view of patriarchal dominance, namely,

\textsuperscript{43} See, for example, Frances Shaw, “Hottest 100 Women,” \textit{Australian Feminist Studies} 27, no. 74, (2012): 373-387.
\textsuperscript{44} Alcoff, \textit{Rape and Resistance}, 12.
a warped psychological property of individuals. Manne further expounds that misogyny:

... functions to enforce and police women's subordination and to uphold male dominance, against the backdrop of other intersecting systems of oppression and vulnerability, dominance and disadvantage, as well as disparate material resources, enabling and constraining social structures, institutions, bureaucratic mechanisms, and so on.

The fruitfulness of Manne's reconstruction of 'misogyny' and its extension of Alcoff's reconstruction of 'sexual violation,' lies in construing it as a "social function." Manne argues misogyny is "instantiated via norms, practices, institutions and other social structures" that "polices, punishes, dominates, and condemns those women who are perceived as an enemy or threat to the patriarchy." Both Manne and Alcoff's analyses of misogyny and sexual violation, moreover, make clear that women, to different degrees, internalize the norms of femininity that misogyny polices. Among such norms are what Manne calls the "feminine-coded goods" of caring for, nurturing, and loving men and their children as well as not competing with men or striving in any way to be achievement-oriented.

46 Manne, Down Girl, 19.
47 Manne describes her analysis of 'misogyny' as an 'ameliorative project' wherein one determines the meaning of words for pragmatic purposes: "Ameliorative . . . projects . . . require actively making decisions about what to mean with our words. Familiarly, if we want to change the world, we many need to conceptualize it differently. This is particularly the case when it comes to social activities and practices: as social and self-conscious creatures, we are liable to conform to norms enshrined by our basic concepts, categories, and schemas. And when it comes to other people, we are prone to enforcing norms and expectations of which we are uncritical" (42).
48 Manne, 19.
49 Manne, 33.
50 Angela Onwuachi-Willig points to the work of legal scholar Vicki Schultz, who she argues offers a more penetrating formulation of sexual harassment for the
Insofar as women internalize—become—the kind of women that maintain the patriarchal order, the more difficult it becomes for women to recognize when they are violated.

Turning now to a discussion of the #MeToo movement, I plan to draw on both Manne and Alcoff’s theoretical work to offer a provisional hypothesis to describe the progressive discursive activist work emerging in this movement as it meets and productively responds to poignant—and sometimes understandably enraged—criticisms of powerful social tendencies rooted in American culture to exclude marginal voices. Namely, what is unfolding as the #MeToo movement continues, is in fact a reconstruction of the meaning of ‘misogyny’ as the enforcement arm of patriarchal ideology. #MeToo deliberations clarify (a) that the sexual violations of misogyny selectively punish women to the degree such women are perceived to pose a risk, (b) that the more immediately public—or rather publicized—acts of misogyny will be white, heterosexual women or the victims of ‘famous’ men because of the totalitarian habits of attention in mainstream media, and (c) that while the goal of misogyny will always be to seek strategies to silence women, the strategies deployed will differ as dramatically as the life experiences of the women. On this last point, Manne’s discussion of a serial rapist, Daniel Holtzclaw, who was also a police officer and specifically targeted African American women, highlights that the “structural barriers and roadblocks” for bringing him and similar attackers to justice are more pernicious because “women who are subject to other forms of disadvantage—for example, racism, poverty, having a criminal record, being a sex worker, and the non-additive results of their various intersections” are targeted precisely because the attacker knowingly relies on the pervasive social stereotypes working to discredit these women.51

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#MeToo Doesn’t Find, But Forges Solidarity

To date, most official stories of the #MeToo movement begin with Alyssa Milano posting, on October 15, 2017, the following:

Me too.
Suggested by a friend: “If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote ‘Me too.’ as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem.”
If you’ve been sexually harassed or assaulted write ‘me too’ as a reply to this tweet (@Alyssa_Milano, October 15, 2017).

Within 24 hours of Milano’s tweet, half a million people around the world had tweeted #MeToo and, in 12 million posts, 4.7 million people shared #MeToo on Facebook. Within hours of Milano’s first post, however, an African American journalist, Britni Danielle, tweeted a speech given by civil rights activist Tarana Burke in order to rightfully credit Burke as the originator of #MeToo movement years earlier: “Shout out to my girl @taranaburke who has been advocating for assault victims & saying #MeToo for years. metoo. support” (@BritniDWrites, October 15, 2017). The next day, Milano responded to credit Burke and shared her website, which explained the origin of #MeToo. Hence, Tarana Burke, as the official story goes, is completely erased as #MeToo goes viral, and then after significant criticisms from women of color pushing back on Burke’s erasure—Burke is put forward—albeit not consistently—as the moral hero.

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52 http://bit.ly/2ELm1QK.
56 Alyssa Milano “I was just. Made aware of an earlier #MeToo movement, and the origin story is equal parts heartbreaking and inspiring” (@Alyssa_Milano, October 15, 2017), http://bit.ly/2Jn97XJ.
voice and energy behind “me too.” This is essentially the official story of how the #MeToo movement started—one can find it in most newspaper accounts—even Wikipedia. This ‘official’ account of the viral #MeToo, however, leaves a lot out, in fact much worth going over, in order to demonstrate how vibrant discursive activism on Twitter is and was before Milano’s #MeToo Tweet.

Weeks before Alyssa Milano famously tweeted her call to survivors to post “me too,” the New York Times and the New Yorker broke stories exposing Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein’s 30-year history of unimpeded sexual predation. Responding to the wide publication of Weinstein’s history of violations against actors, and the many persons and institutions covering up this egregious behavior, actor Rose McGowan—Milano’s co-star from the series Charmed—took to Twitter to stir actors to come forward, break the silence, and show the depth and depravity of Hollywood. In fact, McGowan first turned to Twitter in 2015 precisely to find a public forum where she could expose the misogyny in Hollywood and beyond. So after the Times story broke on October 5, 2017, McGowan predictably and reliably was on Twitter calling out various players in Hollywood and asking why so many Hollywood women were silent, for example, “Ladies of Hollywood, your silence is deafening,” (@RoseMcGowan, October 6, 2017).

In fact, on October 7, 2017, McGowan specifically called out Milano on Twitter for not speaking up publicly about the Weinstein story, and some of McGowan’s followers tweeted at

57 For example, Time Magazine crowned #MeToo as the “person of the year,” and included profiles of a variety of women beyond Hollywood, including Tarana Burke. But, Time did not place Burke on the cover of the magazine. This illustrates perfectly the inconsistent attention the mainstream media pays to Tarana Burke. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MeToo_movement.
Milano as well for her perceived silence. Milano responded directly to McGowan on Twitter, and then, on October 9, 2017 followed up with a public statement explaining why she chose not to speak up directly about the Weinstein scandal.

Entertainment news, and some mainstream news, started picking up McGowan's tweets, often tagged with #RoseArmy, and referred to her as the “voice of Weinstein resistance.” Over a series of days, McGowan essentially revealed that she was raped by Weinstein, called for his board to resign, called out Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos for his role of funding Weinstein’s projects, called out Ben Affleck for abetting and enabling Weinstein’s behavior, all to have Twitter Security lock her out of her account. After McGowan posted a screenshot on Instagram with the message from Twitter Security explaining she broke the rules and was therefore suspended from posting for 12 hours, many of her followers and celebrity

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63 DeAnn Welker, “With @Alyssa_Milano often rightfully calling out the wrongs against women, her silence in support of Charmed co-star @rosemcgowan is deafening,” (@deannw, October 8, 2017), https://bit.ly/2KwWfPu.

64 Alyssa Milano, “@rosemcgowan I hope you don’t feel that I haven’t been supportive. I love you and all you stand for. Text me if you need anything.” (@Alyssa_Milano, October 8, 2017), https://bit.ly/2TI4ah2.


68 https://bit.ly/2Re7sXV.

69 “@jeffbezos I told the head of your studio that HW raped me. Over & over I said it. He said it hadn’t been proven. I said I was the proof.” (@RoseMcGowan, October 12, 2017, http://bit.ly/2Sp31KC.)


72 Rose McGowan (@rosemcgowan), “TWITTER HAS SUSPENDED ME. THERE ARE POWERFUL FORCES AT WORK. BE MY VOICE. #ROSEARMY #whywomendontreport,” Instagram photo,
friends, such as the now deceased Celebrity Chef Anthony Bourdain and Actor Jessica Chastain, began to criticize Twitter’s corporate actions. Kelly Ellis, a software engineer, proposed a boycott of Twitter, which quickly caught on and was set for October 13, 2017, prompting mainstream media outlets to pick up the story:

Individuals opting out doesn’t seem to make a dent. What if #WomenBoycottTwitter for one day (along with men who stand for us? (@justkelly_ok, October 12, 2017).

The organization of this boycott was quickly met with pushback from women of color and prominent black women activists, such as filmmaker Ava DuVernay.

DuVernay’s criticism is representative of an aspect of the #MeToo story that is insufficiently discussed in either the mainstream media, or academia, which illustrates that hashtag feminism events


74 Michelle Castillo, “Some Women Call for a Boycott of Twitter After Actress Rose McGowan is Partially Suspended,” CNBC, October 12, 2017, https://cnb.cx/2DPyp0M.


77 For example, Angela Onwuachi-Willig’s timeline of when black women first started criticizing the idea of a Twitter Boycott on to support Rose McGowan’s harassment is incorrect. Onwuachi-Willig reports: ‘Just months before the October 2017 resurgence of the #MeToo movement, black women strongly criticized what they viewed as a doubled standard,” namely that thousands had quickly organized in solidarity for Rose McGowan, but no such organization occurred for actor Leslie Jones or ESPN journalist Jemele Hill, both of whom were harassed on Twitter. See Angela Onwuachi-Willig, “What About #UsToo?,” 111.

erupting over sexual violation, always involve, what Nancy Fraser above calls, ‘counterpublics,’ that is contestation of certain strategies (in this case, boycotting Twitter) for combatting sexual violation and meanings of feminist solidarity (e.g., ‘white women solidarity’). In Deweyan terms, DuVernay’s tweet is exemplary of democratic communication that recovers or retrieves important, vital, and presently missing data necessary for problem-solving. Despite the growing momentum for #WomenBoycottTwitter and the likelihood that many women would sign off on October 13th, DuVernay nonetheless decided to tweet the following on the designated boycott day:

Calling white women allies to recognize conflict of #WomenBoycottTwitter for women of color who haven’t received support on similar issues (@ava, October 13, 2017).  

Some initially responded positively to DuVernay’s tweet with criticisms of the very idea of ‘silence’ as anathema to feminist activism, essentially that silence was a particularly counterproductive strategy for feminist activism. But those criticisms missed DuVernay’s target, which was to bring awareness to the ubiquity of harassment that women of color face on social media, including Twitter. Clarkisha Kent, a journalist for The Root, expounded on DuVernay’s point:

I caught wind of this boycott Thursday evening (the night before) and briefly considered it when I thought: What sense does it make to protest being silenced . . . by being silent? It sounds like some rhetorical circle jerk, but think about it: If the powers that be want you to shut the fuck up (especially in online spaces like Twitter), why would you do that? Why give them what they want?

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To black femmes like me, it appeared to be counterintuitive, but also showed one thing:

*White women are often the only people who can afford to stay silent.*

That silence was an option to begin with proved that point, but it also showed the immense cognitive dissonance white feminists display when they try to engage in matters of social justice.

For black women, silence is often equatable to death. We go through enough silencing, suppression and harassment over our voices day in and day out . . . So who exactly thought it wise to tell us that we should totally volunteer to give up our voices for the day? Hmm?\(^{81}\)

DuVernay’s tweet garnered valuable responses that the mainstream media mostly missed,\(^{82}\) for example, the paltry attention being paid to people still suffering in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria,\(^{83}\) the inhumane abuse Leslie Jones endured on Twitter after the remake of *Ghostbusters*—especially from Milo Yiannopoulos who though

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82 See Anna Codrea-Rado and Amie Tsang, “Twitter Split on Boycott Over Platform’s Move Against Rose McGowan,” *New York Times*, October 13, 2017, https://nyti.ms/2gCMXUy. These journalists nod to DuVernay’s tweet but focus mainly on the criticisms that silence is not the way to protest sexual violence. Less mainstream outlets paid some attention to these counter-protests, or in Fraser’s terms, counterpublics, such as, *Huffington Post, NBCBLK, Bustle, and Vox*.

83 For example, Rosa A. Clemente, former Green Party candidate for Vice President, tweeted in response to DuVernay, “And at this time? When how many women in Puerto Rico are in full crisis right now and they are radio silent? #PRontheMAP” (@rosaclmente, October 13, 2017), https://bit.ly/2QK11i5.

banned from Twitter nonetheless earned a lucrative book deal, and the suspending of Jemele Hill from ESPN for political comments she made on Twitter, including:

Donald Trump is a white supremacist who has largely surrounded himself w/ other white supremacists (@jemelehill, September 11, 2017).

DuVernay's tweet enables me to focus on two important things that I will discuss in turn. First, many women of color, either responding to her criticism of the boycott or motivated by their own concerns, created a counter-protest, or counterpublic, on October 13, 2017 with various hashtags crafted to celebrate women of color, such as #AmplifyWomen, #WOCAffirmation, #WomenShoutOnTwitter, and #HappyBlackGirlDay. Secondly, DuVernay's tweet inspired a discussion of the importance of intersectionality as crucial for effective solidarity efforts, a discussion that returned again when Milano tweeted #MeToo.

The night before DuVernay's tweet, April Reign, former attorney and media presence, famous for starting the #OscarsSoWhite, decided to respond to #WomenBoycottTwitter with the following set of tweets:

What I would like to do is amplify the WOC #OnHere who are doing the work. I don't know if that is threads or convos or businesses or what. (@ReignOfApril, October 12, 2017).

And then she followed with the next two tweets that opened up an opportunity for women of color to celebrate their accomplishments during the #WomenBoycottTwitter day:

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So that's what I'm going to do. You on your sh*t? You doing something you're proud of? You selling stuff? Hit me. I'll retweet. Let's go. (@ReignOfApril)

and

The hashtag I'll be using is #WOCAffirmation. Shout out sistas that are doing the damn thing. Promote them. Hit me so I can RT. Lift us up. (@ReignOfApril)

Reign’s #WOCAffirmation unleashed a procession of voices from women, who typically feel erased, ignored, certainly underrepresented, stereotyped, and underestimated. Under the #WOCAffirmation, women shared their unrecognized achievements; it opened a space of celebration as one kind of response to what felt like yet another betrayal by white feminists asking for their solidarity without ever rallying around, defending, or uplifting women of color when they desperately need it. Among the responses to Reign’s call, women shared their podcasts, journalism, gamer blogs, video production companies, Ph.D. areas, photography, art, children’s literature, activism to change various professions to be more representative, film companies, culinary talents, beauty products, comedy writing, activism on prison reform, marketing firms, etc. Among the many uplifting and inspiring tweets on #WOCAffirmation was this:

I am affirming YOU, @ReignOfApril, 4 starting #WOCAffirmation hashtag. I’m literally sitting here w/ gr8ful tears threatening to spill over. (@MorenikeGO, October 13, 2017)

Writing for theGrio.com, Demetria Irwin characterized this
‘counterpublic’ day as follows:

“[w]hile decidedly non-woke white feminists took the day off of Twitter, women of color had a bountiful day affirming themselves and their sisters.”

The other direction of counter-protests was aimed squarely at the failure of the mostly white women who promoted and organized #WomenBoycottTwitter to reach out and build great coalitions and solidarity with women of color. Journalist Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff, after first admitting her initial support for Rose McGowan’s unjustifiable treatment by Twitter Security, went on to further explain why she ultimately decided to reject the boycott:

when awful things have happened to women of colour [sic] in the past, there hasn’t been the same levels of support. It reminded me of what the amazing mother of Heather Heyer said after the death of her daughter, who was killed by a white supremacist in Charlottesville earlier this year: ‘A white girl had to die for people to pay attention.’

Brinkhurst-Cuff’s highlight of Heather Heyer’s death symbolizes well the variety of criticisms that many of black women and women of color expressed about #WomenBoycottTwitter, namely, that groundswells for feminist solidarity are motivated by abusive or deadly actions to white women, especially famous white women. The daily, downright quotidian abuse and harassment that women of color face—these protestors were making plain—never transform into, what Rebecca Traister, who was describing the #MeToo movement,

as “an extremely hot match” that gets dropped on a “tinderbox.”

Assaults on women of color never boil over into a movement that spills into national media to result in meaningful political change. Among the tweets expressing this frustration were:

> Just getting caught up on #WomenBoycottTwitter & my first thought was what about Jemele? Where WERE they? Why not the same robust support for her/US. I was conflicted & scrolling. Then I saw this tweet. THANK you for addressing the giant pink elephant. (@SweetKixx, October 13, 2017).

and more pointedly:

> Remember Leslie Jones was abused right off Twitter & not a word from WW. Proving 1 again WW r allies 2 only women who share their skin color. I lack any trust in their allyship anymore, not after helping elect 45. They need 2 step it up or b painted with same brush (@PrezObama4eva, October 13, 2017).

Years before this counter-protest to #WomenBoycottTwitter, blogger Mikki Kendall, coined the potent #SolidarityisForWhiteWomen, which aptly captured the tone deafness of the call for this boycott. Many black feminists pointed out important facts they wanted white feminists to reckon with, namely, that 52% of White women voted for Donald Trump, whereas 94% of African American women and 69% of Latino women voted for Hillary Clinton; moreover, among Weinstein’s accusers, he publicly denied

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only one of his victims, Lupita Nyong’o; and, that the stakes for women of color speaking out publicly about sexual misconduct are much higher than for white women.

Within the #WOCAffirmation thread, a predictable quarrel surfaced wherein white women either took offense to DuVernay’s tweet or expressed confusion. Consider the following discussion as an example of one white woman’s confusion and resulting frustration:

When was there a similar issue where a women of colour’s [sic] twitter account was suspended? (@LibbyFelicity, October 13, 2017)

Four days before #WomenBoycottTwitter, ESPN suspended Jemele Hill for a tweet that supported the Dallas Cowboy players who had been told they would be benched by Jerry Jones, their owner, should they “disrespect the flag.” Hill’s tweet suggested that those who support the players boycott Jones’ advertisers. ESPN then suspended her for violating their internal social media policy. Libby Felicity’s question thus got the following two responses:

Jemele hill was suspended from her career and there was no mass call for a boycott lol (@CampKaf, October 13, 2017)

and

Wow. So many. The fact that it never hit your radar is exactly the point Madam Ava is making. (@Ivy_Tarte, October 13, 2017)

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The naiveté on display in Libby Felicity’s tweet does get straight to the heart of DuVernay’s criticism, as well as the deep problems with contemporary feminism, namely, the privilege white women have to simply not know the unabating cruel realities facing women of color, bi and trans persons, migrant women, or indigenous women. Ashley C. Ford offered, what I think is one of the most even-handed analysis of the problems with #WomenBoycottTwitter:

The women who are boycotting Twitter today are not bad or wrong. The women who have decided not to boycott Twitter today are not bad or wrong. This isn’t a moment to make accusations of divisiveness or maliciousness. This is a moment to recognize when the women with the most power forget or choose not to organize with those who have the least. The Twitter boycott may be just as effective as they’d hoped it would be. The people in charge who have never listened to us before, might just listen to us today. This may very well be the moment they decide to take harassment concerns seriously and ban trolls even if they hold the highest office in the nation. But imagine how effective it could have been if the people who had organized this protest considered their sisters who had a different point of view, and a darker shade of skin. Imagine what that kind of care could have inspired, and how it could have moved well beyond Twitter, and online conversions (my emphasis).105

Ford’s point here is getting at what I want to argue concerning the hopefulness in hashtag feminism, following Dewey’s conception of publics and democratic communication and drawing on feminist work from Fraser, Manne and Alcoff, namely, the platform of Twitter creates opportunities for counterpublics to contest the default ‘white feminist’ perspective. In fact, during the counter-protest to #WomenBoycottTwitter, counter-protestors spent some time and energy trying to remind white feminists—once again—of the value of intersectionality, which is a prominent body of feminist theory that

emerged from the work of Critical Race Theorist, Kimberlé Crenshaw. Crenshaw argues that sexual and racial discrimination law assumes that in cases of sex, the plaintiff is white and in cases of race, the plaintiff is a black male; in other words, the concept, ‘sex discrimination,’ though seemingly generic and capacious, when practically applied in court decisions, demonstrates the base assumption that one can substitute the experience of any given middle-class able-bodied, heterosexual white woman to accurately represent the experience of all women and vice versa along the lines of race, which becomes even more problematic if one considers the experience of black men to be indistinguishable from black women, especially trans or queer black women. Using multiple concrete metaphors to demonstrate how ineffective these assumptions are to adequately address and remediate harassment and sexual assault, Crenshaw argues that until we change the image in our head of what constitutes a typical case of sexual assault then our current practices will only, if they even accomplish that, help white women.

Consider the following metaphor:

Imagine a basement which contains all people who are disadvantaged on the basis of race, sex, class, sexual preference, age and/or physical ability. These people are stacked—feet standing on shoulders—with those on the bottom being disadvantaged by the full array of factors, up to the very top, where the heads of all those disadvantaged by a singular factor brush up against the ceiling. Their ceiling is actually the floor

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107 Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex,” 141-150.

108 The recent special hearing of the Senate Judiciary concerning Dr. Christine Blasey Ford’s testimony that Brett Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her demonstrates that we are far from effectively addressing sexual violation. Dr. Blasey Ford was, many would argue, one of the most credible witnesses insofar as she was white, upper-class, married, well-educated, and from the same social circles as Judge Kavanaugh.
above which is only those who are not disadvantaged in any way reside. In efforts to correct some aspects of domination, those above the ceiling admit from the basement only those who can say that ‘but for’ the ceiling, they too would be in the upper room. A hatch is developed through which those placed immediately below can crawl. Yet this hatch is generally available only to those who—due to the singularity of their burden and their otherwise privileged position relative to those below—are in the position to crawl through. Those who are multiply-burdened are generally left below unless they can somehow pull themselves into the groups that are permitted to squeeze through the hatch.

As this analogy translates for Black women, the problem is that they can receive protection only to the extent that their experiences are recognizably similar to those whose experiences tend to be reflected in antidiscrimination doctrine. \textsuperscript{109}

Intersectionality as an analytical framework for understanding the complex, multi-dimensional sources of oppression and thus, to put this in Deweyan terms, as a framework for better elaborating plural experiences of women who experience sexual violation has moved out of rarefied academic articles, textbooks, college classrooms and into live Twitter hashtag streams. \textsuperscript{110}

In response to DuVernay’s tweet, several of the counter-protestors revived the important discussion of intersectionality—the need for white women to remember to ‘check their privilege’ before rushing headlong into political organizing and protesting on behalf of all women. For example, in response to some white feminists making pleas that “all women stick together,” were the following responses:

\textsuperscript{109} Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex,” 151-152.

“Recognizing issues that affect women of color, in the context of intersectional feminism, is more uniting than dividing” (@NoTotally, October 13, 2017)\textsuperscript{111}

and

“Not reflecting on these things excludes WOC, dividing women” (@NoTotally, October 13, 2017)\textsuperscript{112}

Unfortunately, many of these calls to think and act intersectionally were and continue to be responded to with defensiveness. To illustrate the texture of defensiveness, consider the following exchange:

“Women are women. There are no colors . . . just equals.” (@aesports, October 13, 2017)\textsuperscript{113}

Predictably, this tweet did not ingratiate its author, Kathe Evans, to the majority of women in DuVernay’s thread. Her tweet essentially reinforced the idea that the middle-class, able-bodied, heterosexual, white woman’s experience was the generic woman’s experience—to deny that women’s experiences are dramatically plural, especially given multiple axes of oppression—is to reinforce white supremacy. Another dispute within DuVernay’s hashtag discussed directly the fact that 55% of white women voted for President Trump, initiated by a white woman with the following:

Don’t let race divide women from each other. Excepting the inexplicable 55% white women who betrayed all of us by voting for Trump (WTF?), we are all in the same fight. Personally I will try harder to lift up all women of color who’ve been so repeatedly disrespected & abused. (@Melissa Jo Peltier, October 13, 2017).

\textsuperscript{111} https://bit.ly/2S5jMFx.
\textsuperscript{112} https://bit.ly/2EnxkwC.
Peltier’s tweet is important because while she is trying to show understanding and solidarity, her failure to really reckon with the fact of the “inexplicable 55%” is a serious obstacle to building solidarity. One, very understated, but effective response to her tweet goes as follows:

That 55% is a pretty huge thing tho (@originalspin, October 13, 2017).\textsuperscript{114}

Chatelaine Tayo Bero, writing for \textit{Flare}, further elaborated on the significance of the 55%:

[i]n 2016, the majority of white American women voted for Donald Trump, a man who had been accused of sexual assault and literally been caught on tape saying powerful men could do with women’s bodies as they pleased. It didn’t make sense how anyone could justify making this guy the president. And then it hit me. To a certain segment of the population, Trump is, at worst, a predator and misogynist and, at best, badly behaved and impetuous. The reality is that white, straight, middle-class women will simply never face the consequences of that political decision in the same way as their counterparts of colour [sic].\textsuperscript{115}

Essentially, one of the clear messages of the women who refused #WomenBoycottTwitter, and who thus decided to focus energies once again on pointing out that women do not experience oppression in the same way and therefore the strategies for combating oppression require a diverse set of voices and experiences, was a reminder that solidarity must be forged on far more than a shared gender/sex identity.

Returning to the “extremely hot match” on a “tinderbox,”

\textsuperscript{114} https://bit.ly/2UTuVQd.

which is how Traister described Milano’s #MeToo post, we see again hopeful signs of counterpublics pushing against the default #SolidarityIsforWhiteWomen trajectory of activism around sexual violation. Above, I mentioned the ‘official story,’ wherein Milano, with her Hollywood platform, popularized Tarana Burke’s important phrase for promoting healing and solidarity for survivors, “me too.” The fact that Milano could turn this hashtag viral without any knowledge of the decade-long work of Tarana Burke certainly did not go unnoticed among women of color on Twitter. Burke herself was quoted saying:

[‘me too’] wasn’t built to be a viral campaign or a hashtag that is here today and forgotten tomorrow . . . It was a catchphrase to be used from survivor to survivor to let folks know that they were not alone and that a movement for radical healing was happening and possible.116

Given that what many participants and onlookers alike have found valuable in the #MeToo movement, namely, the sharing of hitherto private moments of violation in search of solidarity—a specific kind of cooperative action in service of opposing a violent culture—the persistent blind spots of white feminism, which fail to consider the experiences of women of color or trans/queer women, for example, threaten to prevent necessary communication as long as the movement continues.

On the theme of solidarity, Milano, reflecting on the potency of #MeToo—especially given its viral status, explains

. . . when you see a friend, maybe a friend you’ve known for 35 years, post the words, ‘Me too,’ it opens up a dialogue. It allows you to say, ‘I didn’t know that. Tell me about it, if you want to. How can I support you?’ To be able to take your experiences out, dissect them and share your stories with others is a powerful thing. We have communities of like-

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mindedness for pretty much everything—religious communities, Fantasy Football, everything of interest to human beings. But because we’ve been silent—and silenced—about this issue, we don’t realize there is a community out there that’s ready to embrace and support us.\footnote{Alyssa Milano, “How We Can Help Women Come Forward,” \textit{Time}, October 18, 2017. https://ti.me/2AysDxU.}

Milano here rightly points out that the starting point for solidarity is dialogue. She also rightly notes that such dialogue has the power to create a community—a Deweyan public. However, what Milano and many other prominent white women so-called blazing this movement missed about solidarity is that the community they build will be very small unless you are willing to dialogue with those who are not just your friends, nor who simply like-minded. Gillian B. White, reflecting on the many missteps of #MeToo movement asserts:

\begin{quote}
[s]olidarity, at its most basic level . . . requires a level of trust and an understanding of shared goals that are not always present. Demanding it without attending to the nuances of privilege ignores the spotty track record that white women have when it comes to being allies to people of color.\footnote{Gillian B. White, “The Glaring Blind Spot of the ‘Me Too’ Movement.”}
\end{quote}

Moreover, as Burke points out above, ‘me too’ was a grassroots, intimate, catchphrase to be passed from survivor to survivor, specifically the most vulnerable from underprivileged communities, and in being appropriated by a powerful white woman, who originally did not know its function or originator, everything that she tried to build felt erased, ignored, and ripped off only in service of helping the women, as Crenshaw put it, closest to the ceiling get through the so-called hatch.\footnote{Zahara Hill, \textit{Ebony}, October 18, 2017.} Burke noted:

\begin{quote}
In this instance, the celebrities who popularized the hashtag didn’t take a moment to see if there was work already being
\end{quote}
done . . . I don’t fault them for that part, I don’t think it was intentional but somehow sisters still managed to get diminished or erased in these situations. A slew of people raised their voices so that that didn’t happen.  

Here Burke stresses what should not be lost as we evaluate the success of #MeToo Movement—something that at the time of this writing is far from clear—namely, Twitter enabled a counterpublic to successfully impact the shape, face, and trajectory of this movement. Of course, in saying this, I am not saying that Twitter ensured, once and for all, that #MeToo would not devolve into another form of ‘white feminism.’ However, no oppositional movement, understood in Deweyan terms is ever static or finished.

In this article, I have attempted to argue that the specific social media platform Twitter has thus far provided more optimal conditions for a Deweyan public to emerge to oppose sexual violation and misogyny, as articulated by Alcoff and Manne respectively. As I argued above, Twitter significantly lowers the material barriers for individuals to participate in conversations, and thus typically marginalized voices have a greater likelihood to shape and alter the direction of feminist discursive activism unfolding under a given hashtag. By no means am I claiming here that Twitter or #MeToo have solved, once and for all, the obstacles facing the cultivation of desperately needed democratic habits of communication and intelligent inquiry for problem solving. My claim is that we can see, in real-time, a Deweyan public emerging on the open platform of Twitter that is responsive to criticism and contestation over important meanings of concepts being addressed. As such, we have some occasion for hope.

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WILL WHATEVER IT TAKES BE ENOUGH? DEWEY, THE CRISIS OF THE EU, AND THE NEED FOR AN (INTER)NATIONALIZING OF EDUCATION

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The purpose of this paper is to argue that the ideas marshalled by Dewey in his writings during World War I can be useful to engage with some challenges currently faced by the European Union. In particular, in the first part, I will examine – through a philosophical-educational lens – his articles published to support the US intervention: while not denying that Dewey may have indulged in too rosy a view of American history, an emphasis is rather laid on the fruitfulness of his notion of internationalism as a kind of American principle of nationality in opposition to the typically European nationalism. In the second part, I will endeavor to show how a Deweyan conceptual platform can be serviceable both to make sense of the post-war EU project in terms of a process of cosmopolitan Europeanization and to offer some perspectives from which to look at its contemporary predicament.

Keywords: principle of nationality; internationalism; process of Europeanization; cosmopolitanism.
Introduction: How World War I broke (into) the Chicago Pragmatism

In a valuable volume on George Herbert Mead, Mary Jo Deegan (2008) has highlighted the split that World War I caused in both the personal bonds and worldviews of John Dewey, Mead and Jane Addams. From the pages of Deegan a sort of gamut of positions comes to the fore, with Addams occupying the pacifist pole, Dewey the more interventionist side of the spectrum, and Mead standing more in the center. The main thrust of Deegan’s narrative is that Dewey and, to a lesser extent, Mead were wrong in comparison with Addams and needed “a deep and painful struggle to understand war’s impact on their thought and practices” (p. 5) and, accordingly, to return to positions more in keeping with their pre-war pacifism and lifelong engagement for democracy. While finding Deegan’s reconstruction insightful and stimulating and recognizing that Dewey’s engagement with the outlawry movement (see Howlett, 1976) was a sea change in comparison with his views penned during the war, in this paper I will try to elicit the ‘positive’ side of the kind of arguments that Dewey deployed to support US intervention in World War I.

To those, also Deweyans, who are uneasy with Dewey’s theses during the war my reading could appear to be an excessively charitable interpretation. Rather than investigating the views of Dewey as an instance of “patriotism and international progressivism” (Cywar, 1969), I will address them from a European perspective and I will argue that, in his attempt to make sense of America’s participation in the war in terms of “the great experience of discovering the significance of American national life by seeing it reflected into a remaking of the life of the world” (MW 10: 280), he elaborated on concepts that may be instrumental in understanding the arrangements

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1 An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2018 John Dewey Society annual meeting in New York (April 13-14, 2018).
made by Europe after its 20th century Thirty Years' War in order to avoid relapsing into a new cycle of war.

The paper boils down to two very simple theses: First, Dewey was fundamentally right in pinpointing the dismantling of the ‘European’ nationalistic mindset and the promotion of ‘internationalism’ (I’ll speak rather of cosmopolitanism) as the major aims of the war. In this respect, despite the strengths of some of the vitriolic criticisms of Randolph Bourne, one can even venture to say that Dewey’s positions in the early war years were not alien from an endeavor to invent new values and, indeed, these new values, to a certain extent, are the ones that have presided over the slow but so far never arrested history of development of the EU (obviously without any reference to Dewey). Secondly, Deweyan pragmatism would be a better framework within which to reconstruct the meaning of this history than other (Continental) philosophies (chiefly Kantianism).

1. The ‘rounding out’ of the world and “the principle of nationality”

There is a trope that recurs in several writings of Dewey during the war, namely “that the world for the first time now finds itself a round world, politically and economically as well as astronomically. That nations from every continent on the globe are engaged in the war is the outer sign of the new world struggling to be delivered” (MW 11: 70. See also MW 11: 100). The phenomenon to which Dewey points could be appropriately (and literally) defined as “globalization,” the world turned into one real globe, in which isolation is no longer possible. Therefore, the challenge is what to make of this new condition, of this ‘circular’ and possibly unavoidable unity. Regarding the meaning of this situation for America, Dewey starts with two assumptions: on the one hand, “[w]hether for better or for worse, America is no longer a people unto itself. America is now in the world” (MW 11: 70); and, on the other, there are essentially two options:

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2 Following Dewey’s use, I will use ‘America’ and ‘American’ to refer to “USA” and “US American.”
either “other nations accept and are influenced by the American idea” (*Ibidem*) or the US will be influenced “by the European idea” (*Ibidem*). Only to the extent that the former prevails will the engagement of the US with the world consist not merely in a being ‘englobed’ but rather in a positive contribution: “But unless our contribution to the present world struggle is to be confined to military and economic force, it must be that we have an idea to contribute, an idea to be taken into account in the world reconstruction after the war” (*MW* 11: 71).

There is a sense in which the two assumptions could be construed in terms of the most typical argumentative pattern of Dewey, namely that we should ward off any dimidiated modernity and match the ‘material’ overhauling of the world (= the scientific, technological, industrial, and commercial ‘globalization’) with a spiritual globalization (and as democracy is “not so much an addition to the scientific and industrial tendencies as it is the perception of their social or spiritual meaning” [*MW* 4: 39] this amounts to the possibility of democracy the world over). Fundamentally, the confrontation between Germany and America is at this level:

The war has, in addition to specific inventions, made it customary to utilize the collective knowledge and skill of scientific experts in all lines, organizing them for community ends. It is unlikely that we shall ever return wholly to the old divorce of knowledge from the conduct of social affairs—a separation which made knowledge abstract and abstruse, and left public affairs controlled by routine, vested interest and skilled manipulation. The one phase of Prussianism, borrowed under the stress of war from the enemy, which is likely permanently to remain, is systematic utilization of the scientific expert. Used for the ends of a democratic society, the social mobilization of science is likely in the end to effect such changes in the practice of government—and finally in its theory—as to initiate a new type of democracy. (*MW* 11: 99-100)
Dewey provides a key to a reading of this passage in his (possibly too unjustly) infamous *German Philosophy and Politics*. The typical German move is that of uncoupling science and the moral-political domain so that it is possible to make constant progress in the former (and even to exploit its methods in order to improve the efficiency of the social machinery) without overthrowing the grip of the old ways of thinking in the latter. If philosophy is “a conversion of [a] culture as exists into consciousness, into an imagination which is logically coherent and is not incompatible with what is factually known” (LW 3: 9), the Kantian system was the philosophy of the ‘German’ way to modernity. However, it risked sanctioning the *status quo* and obstructing the road to “a new type of democracy.” At stake in World War I was also this need to shift from a German to an American approach in the articulation of science and political life.

However, when Dewey speaks of the “American idea” in the aforementioned passage, he wants to refer to the invention of a kind of political organization that allows the making of *e pluribus unum*, allegedly without erasing plurality in this movement of unification. Once the world has turned into a globe, by “discover[ing] [...] the interdependence of all peoples and [...] develop[ing] [...] a more highly organized world, a world knit together by more conscious and substantial bonds” (MW 11: 100), then “an international state is on its way” (*ibidem*). And in the construction of the international state the American lesson is, in his view, more instructive and incomparably more progressive than the European one:

One of the greatest problems which is troubling the Old World is that of the rights of nationalities which are included within larger political units--the Poles, the Irish, the Bohemians, the Jugo-Slavs, the Jews. Here, too, the American contribution is radical. We have solved the problem by a complete separation of nationality from citizenship. Not only have we separated the church from the state, but we have separated language, cultural traditions, all that is called race, from the state--that is, from problems of political organization and power. To us language, literature, creed, group ways,
national culture, are social rather than political, human rather than national, interests. Let this idea fly abroad; it bears healing in its wings. Federation, and release of cultural interests from political dictation and control, are the two great positive achievements of America. From them spring the other qualities which give distinction and inspiration to the American idea. We are truly interracial and international in our own internal constitution. (MW 11: 71)

It could be the case that Dewey indulges in too rosy a view of American cultural integration during this period. However, what I am interested in is his emphasis on the need to uncouple nationality from statehood and to cultivate the cultural dimension of nationality. The analogy that he establishes between this separation and that of the church from the State is no less significant: one could even conjecture that Dewey would be ready to see in ‘nationality’ a no less deeply ingrained and humanly meaningful attitude and impulse than those which are present in relation to religion. In this respect, we could read by analogy the difference between “the national” and “nationalism” through the lens of his distinction between “the religious” and “religion” (LW 9: 8). Nationalism would consist in construing ‘the national’ in essentialist terms and will result in the building up of national states “through conflict. [...] The development of a sense of unity [...] has been accompanied by dislike, by hostility, to all without. [...] Without exaggeration, the present world war may be said to be the outcome of this aspect of nationalism, and to present it in its naked unloveliness” (MW 10: 202). By contrast, the idea of nationality is rooted in:

the consciousness of a community of history and purpose larger than that of the family, the parish, the sect and the province. The upbuilding of national states has substituted a unity of feeling and aim, a freedom of intercourse, over wide areas for earlier local isolations, suspicions, jealousies and hatreds. It has forced men out of narrow sectionalisms into membership in a larger social unit, and created loyalty to a
state which subordinates petty and selfish interests. (MW 10: 202)

This understanding of nationality makes it a sort of middle term between the ‘closure’ of the blood/family ties and the impersonality of societal bonds. In other words, Dewey overthrows the most important dichotomy of the German sociology (from Tönnies [1935] on): nationality is properly neither a Gemeinschaft nor a Gesellschaft phenomenon. The antithesis between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft is a further instance of that separation between the realms of existence that Kant had epoch-makingly elaborated. I cannot expatiate here on this topic, by showing how the Tönniesian dyad re-activated the Kantian stance and made it a powerful tool in the sociological and, then, political domain (see Oliverio, 2013). What I want to highlight is that with his move Dewey, on the one hand, frees the ‘national experience’ from any parochialism and withdrawal into a self-encapsulating dimension and makes it, instead, a vector of emancipation and openness to a broader horizon. In other words, nationality is not the primary group writ large. On the other, he thus identifies a ‘space’ in-between the immediate gemeinschaftlich relationships and the ‘contractual’ bonds in society as Gesellschaft. In this way, he shuns two risks of homogeneity: first, the homogeneity etymologically understood as the belonging to the same stock (homo-genos), which is the mark of the Gemeinschaft; secondly, the homogeneity resulting from the process of homogenization carried out by most modern European states, which have built up their unity through strategies of the anthropophagic assimilation or anthropoemic exclusion of strangers (Bauman, 1997: 18 ff.).

The “principle of nationality” (MW 10: 285 ff.) may represent a pivot of a reconstruction of a plural community only to the extent that it points to this in-between dimension and is disentangled both from the emphasis on a definition “upon the basis of race” (MW 10: 285) and from the appeal to the uniformity provided by the State (to put it in a formula: both from the ‘German’ volkischer Staat and from the ‘French’ view of the public domain as a neutral realm in which no cultural differences should obtain). Indeed, as to the former, the “racial
definition is founded upon a precarious foundation; it works fairly well in some cases, but in others it breaks down. The concept of a nation of one race and one blood has mainly been invented after the event to account for certain unclear ideas of nationality, rather than to state the presence of a physiological fact” (MW 10: 285). Regarding the latter,

[t]he concept of uniformity and unanimity in culture is rather repellent; one cannot contemplate in imagination that every people in the world should talk Volapük or Esperanto, that the same thoughts should be cultivated, the same beliefs, the same historical traditions, and the same ideals and aspirations for the future. Variety is the spice of life, and the richness and the attractiveness of social institutions depend upon cultural diversity among separate units. In so far as people are all alike, there is no give and take among them. And it is better to give and take. (MW 10: 288)

In Dewey's view, if Europe had been unable to fully valorize this principle of nationality, America had fared much better. For this reason in World War I what was at stake was the possibility of creating the conditions for the realization of a real nationalism that is fundamentally a form of internationalism. I would suggest interpreting Dewey in terms of an opposition between a narrow-minded nationalism (by adopting the contemporary political vocabulary we could speak of “sovereignism”), thriving upon separateness and engendering a sense of belonging “by appeal to [people's] fears, [...] suspicions, [...] jealousies and [...] latent hatreds” (MW 10: 203) and “real nationalism” that, instead, fosters inclusion and national integration by “mak[ing] the measure of [one's] national preparedness [...] [one's] fitness to cooperate with [other nations] in the constructive tasks of peace” (Ibid.: 204). In Dewey's understanding, America could offer Europe a positive example of this latter version of nationalism as:

the American nation is itself complex and compound. Strictly
speaking it is interracial and international in its make-up. It is composed of a multitude of peoples speaking different tongues, inheriting diverse traditions, cherishing varying ideals of life. This fact is basic to our nationalism as distinct from that of other peoples. Our national motto, “One from Many,” cuts deep and extends far. It denotes a fact which doubtless adds to the difficulty of getting a genuine unity. But it also immensely enriches the possibilities of the result to be attained. [...] Our unity cannot be a homogeneous thing like that of the separate states of Europe from which our population is drawn; it must be a unity created by drawing out and composing into a harmonious whole the best, the most characteristic which each contributing race and people has to offer. (MW 10: 204)

One year before Dewey’s essay from which I have drawn the last quotation, George Herbert Mead in an article devoted to “The Psychological Basis of Internationalism” had noted that there was already an “international fabric of European life” (Mead, 1915: 64), rooted in “an international life of commerce, industry, and intellectual interchange in social ideas in literature, science, education, and even sport, which was beyond comparison more vivid and intimate than the national life in any country of Europe one hundred years ago” (Ibid.: p. 63). However, this had not prevented war because “the problem of war is on the one hand ethical and on the other, psychological. It is not a problem of institutional mechanisms, nor of an apparatus of universal ideas, nor of means of international communication and acquaintanceship. It is not a question, in other words, of creating an international society. All of these exist. It is a question of relative values. [...] The problem is an ethical problem because it is a conflict of values” (Ibid.: 67-68). In the terminology introduced above, it was the problem of shifting from sovereignism to nationalism as internationalism. The ‘German’ mindset (in the Deweyan acceptation of the adjective) had maintained separate the plane of civilization (evolving towards internationalism, in the sense depicted by Mead) and that of culture, of spiritual values, which
continued to be dominated by the appeal to a national identity understood as conflicting with any cosmopolitan openness. The American nationalism, instead, could embody a more promising option in that it showed how a kind of nationalism adequate for the era of the world turned into a globe had to be a nationalism originating from and animated and sustained by a cosmopolitan tension.

In the same years Dewey’s student Horace Kallen expressed this idea in a way slightly less severe towards Europe: “‘American civilization’ may come to mean the perfection of the cooperative harmonies of ‘European civilization’ – the waste, the squalor and the distress of Europe being eliminated – a multiplicity in a unity, an orchestration of mankind” (Kallen, 1915: 124). Both Dewey and Kallen spell out their view of the specific kind of ‘American’ nationalism by re-signifying the debate on hyphenism. The chauvinism of the British Americans disparaged immigrants as not belonging to the English stock by hyphenating them (Afro-American, Italo-American and so on) and, thus,

the hyphen has become something which separates one people from other peoples—and thereby prevents American nationalism. Such terms as Irish-American or Hebrew-American or German-American are false terms because they seem to assume something which is already in existence called America to which the other factor may be externally hitched on. The fact is the genuine American, the typical American, is himself a hyphenated character. This does not mean that he is part American, and that some foreign ingredient is then added. It means that, as I have said, he is international and interracial in his make-up. He is not American plus Pole or German. But the American is himself Pole-German-English-French-Spanish-Italian-Greek-Irish-Scandinavian-Bohemian-Jew-and so on. The point is to see to it that the hyphen connects instead of separates. (MW 10: 205)

In a similar (but not identical) vein, Kallen argued that “the greater the hyphenation, the greater the unanimity. [...] culture is
nothing more than spiritual hyphenation – it is humanism in the best sense of the term” (Kallen, 1915: 62-64), where the mentioned unanimity is not the homogeneity of the European modern states but the orchestrated unity drawing upon and resulting from the plurivocity of the give-and-take of different nationalities. The depoliticization of the notion of nationality (better: its disentanglement from the fusion with statehood) and its valorization in cultural terms is the ideal contribution that America could and had to give to the war.

Dewey (and Kallen for that matter) lays a stress upon the question of the federation as the crucial dimension of the real Americanism as the “real nationalism” and the major lesson that Europe had to learn from America (MW 11: 71). Although this is still nowadays one of the leading thrusts of the EU debate, I do not think that it is the fundamental point. Europe would learn the American lesson to the extent that its citizens felt themselves Italo-European, French-European, Spanish-European much in the sense in which Dewey and Kallen understood hyphenism. As a matter of fact, this is what has (at least partially) occurred after World War II and no federation has been necessary but rather a cosmopolitan view of how to arrange nationalities (see below § 2). For this reason, I have stated at the beginning that Dewey was right in his way of making sense of the American intervention and his categories are of major import for the interpretation of the meaning and destiny of the EU.

2. The cosmopolitan Europe and its challenges

In 1941, while confined within a Fascist prison on the isle of Ventotene, Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi penned what is unanimously considered one of the main sources of inspiration for the project of a unified Europe: For a Free and United Europe. A Draft Manifesto, more widely known as The Ventotene Manifesto. It is an extraordinary document, where with farsightedness the two Italian political activists and intellectuals drew the lesson of the 20th century

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3 For the English translation I will draw upon the version retrievable on http://www.federalists.eu/uef/library/books/the-ventotene-manifesto/.
Thirty Years’ War and proposed the idea of a federal Europe. As has been highlighted (Dastoli, 2012), the core of the Manifesto is the abandonment of the “passive pacifism” of the liberal ideology, according to which the mere development of society will result in more peaceful arrangements, and the embrace of a perspective of “active pacifism,” according to which peace will be attained only insofar as a new organization of the interdependence of states will be devised, replacing the notion of the “balance of powers.”

Like Dewey, Spinelli and Rossi:

a. recognize that, while the emergence of the nation states had represented an overthrow of narrow-minded parochialism, once they had been divinized, they had represented the major impetus behind the tragic European history of the 20th century;

b. and highlight the need for the abolition of the European nation state to be replaced with a European Federation, which will be both a protection for all nationalities and “the only conceivable guarantee ensuring that relationships with American and Asiatic peoples will work on the basis of peaceful co-operation, waiting for a more distant future when the political unity of the entire world will become possible.”

Whenever the EU faces some crisis, the Manifesto’s appeal to the creation of a federal Europe is invoked as the only way of bringing the EU project to completion. As aforementioned, also Dewey seemed to recommend the American lesson in terms of the discovery of the political federation. However, it could be asked whether this is the most significant contribution of his reflection on the orchestration of nationalities. Or to put it differently: is his interpretation of nationalism in terms of internationalism the best way of fully valorizing his cultural take on the “principle of nationality” and the uncoupling of the latter from the question of statehood?

To clarify my point I will introduce some ideas of Ulrich Beck and Edgar Grande (2007), who have spoken of a “cosmopolitan
Europe.” I cannot expatiate here on the grand narrative on the second modernity in which their theories are situated or on the detailed political and sociological analyses of the way in which the EU has taken on the form it has. I will just outline the main coordinates of their proposal, in order to show how it can interact with the Deweyan conceptual platform presented thus far. It is to note that the Deweyan framework is not alien to Beck and Grande, who refer to the Dewey of *The Public and Its Problems* in order to explain in what sense we should understand the emergence of a European public sphere: “To the question of how political action is possible in multi-ethnic, transnational and cosmopolitan contexts, Dewey answers that the political – its binding power, its sensorium and nervous system, which generates and binds attention, morality and the willingness to act – emerges only in public controversies over consequences. Its scope does not correspond with national borders; rather, the public world includes everything that is registered as a disturbing effect of civilizational decisions” (Beck & Grande, 2007: pos. 1196 ff.). My attempt is, however, slightly different from that of establishing a dialogue between these two perspectives: I would like to show how the European project as Beck and Grande help us to see it responds to some of the concerns and ideas that dictated Dewey’s articles during the war, which I have been reading, possibly in a charitable way, as a repertoire of themes and conceptual tools to appreciate the project of the EU.

The starting point of Beck and Grande is the former’s reflection on the cosmopolitan outlook as distinct both from the modern emphasis on the national (or its reverse, the universal) and the postmodern stress on differences in their ‘intransitive’ incommensurability. The national outlook (dominating the modern social sciences) espouses a logic of either-or, whereas cosmopolitanism embraces the logic of both-and. In this sense, where the first modernity had to think either in terms of nation states or of universalism, the effort of the cosmopolitan outlook does not aim at gainsaying the national Europe but at “cosmopolitiz[ing] it from within” (Beck & Grande, 2007: pos. 637). As they note, “[t]he national outlook acknowledges two, and only two, versions of the European
project of regional integration: either the confederation of states \([\text{Staatenbund}]\) (intergovernmentalism) or the federal state \([\text{Bundesstaat}]\) (supranational federalism). Both models are not only empirically mistaken; currently, Europe is neither one nor the other” (Ibid.: pos. 1525 ff.).

Cosmopolitanism should not be construed, then, as a kind of supranationalism (this was fundamentally the position of the Ventotene Manifesto), which risks perpetuating the disjunctive logic of the first modernity. The question of a cosmopolitan Europe is how to recognize and orchestrate differences without lapsing into either their erasing in a super-state or their preservation in a national ‘closure’. The cosmopolitan outlook endeavors to capture the dynamics of difference and integration that presides over the history of the EU: “Thus, a cosmopolitan Europe means simultaneously both difference and integration. It offers an alternative to the existing concepts of European integration, which either locate Europe above the nation-states and combat national particularities as obstacles to European unification, or want to subordinate Europe to the nation-states and national interests and regard every step towards further integration with skepticism” (Ibid.: pos. 602 ff.).

In order to escape the fixed alternative (either a plurality of nation states or some kind of supranational state), Beck and Grande invite us to think of European integration not towards a single state (in all the meanings of the word) but rather as what they call a process of Europeanization:

[I]ts ‘unity’ is the process; ‘integration’ arises from the permanence of change and it does so in a number of respects: first, through interweaving – horizontally among the national societies, vertically among states, and diagonally among states, societies and international and transnational organizations; second, through transformation: the national units themselves change, the states and societies are becoming Europeanized and cosmopolitanized from within; third, through the shifting of borders: borders between states within the Union are being dismantled and a new kind of European border is being
established, but one which is at the same time being moved ever further. (Ibid.: pos. 1860 ff.)

Europe, as Beck and Grande construe it, has learnt the lesson of the age of the extremes: “[A]fter two world wars, the avoidance of war was the main imperative of European politics” (Ibid: pos. 1930). It is interesting that they spell out this lesson in fairly Deweyan terms (I mean, the terms which I have commented upon in the previous section):

Just as the religious civil wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were brought to an end by the recognition of sovereignty and the separation of state and religion with the peace treaties of Westphalia, so a separation of nation and state [...] could be the response to the national world wars of the twentieth century. Just as the confessionally neutral state permitted various religions, so the cosmopolitan Europe would have to guarantee the cross-border coexistence of different ethnic, national, religious and political identities and cultures through the principle of constitutional tolerance. (Ibid.: pos. 1890 ff.)

I would suggest that the guiding interpretive hypothesis of Beck and Grande is precisely the “American idea” as Dewey presents it in his article “America in the world” (see above § 1) with the difference that he interpreted it in terms of federation while Beck and Grande invite us not to straitjacket the European experiment in a political conceptuality or vocabulary that could perpetuate the horizon of the national outlook. However, there are significant convergences of the two theoretical devices on each other and this explains why at the very beginning I have stated that one thesis of this paper was that Dewey was fundamentally right in the way in which he attempted to make sense of the American contribution to the war. This statement is not to be understood in the sense that he was right with respect to Jane Addams’s staunch pacifism or the more moderate position of Mead (this has not been the focus of the present reflection). Nor do I want
to gainsay that, when examining European history and culture, some accents in his war writings may sound unfair, simplistic and sometimes indulging in those kinds of “[i]mpersonal abstractions” which Robbie McClintock (2017: 555) – within a completely different reflection – has imputed to him. However, when intervening in the debate about the war, Dewey marshaled ideas and conceptual tools that effectively disclosed some weaknesses of European culture and political life and – perhaps with a grain too much of complacency for the American experiment – identified correctly some aspects in need of reconstruction. In this respect, at least partly, the EU undertaking, insofar as it has been successful, can be considered as having moved in a ‘Deweyan’ direction.

For this reason – this was the second thesis aired in the introduction – I would tend to suggest that Dewey’s pragmatism may be an adequate framework within which to understand the EU post-war experiment. If we avoid the traps that the phrase “real nationalism as internationalism” may bring with it and we re-appropriate Dewey’s legacy in terms of rooted cosmopolitanism (which is a major interpretive vector of the most recent Dewey scholarship: see Hansen, 2009; Waks, 2009), the panoply of notions that Dewey makes available to us are of major significance in order to make sense of the EU adventure. I will here confine myself to two examples: first, his specific way of looking at cultural nationality, which is pivotal if we accept Beck and Grande’s interpretation that the process of Europeanization “cannot subordinate the multitude and variety of different national cultures and identities to a standardized ‘European’ culture” (Ibid.: pos. 1882); secondly, his emphasis on the need to ‘internationalize education’. In particular, we should re-read the latter in terms of an education for cosmopolitan-mindedness (as structurally coupled to and emerging from national-mindedness, according to the dynamics between socialization and education, reflective loyalty to the known and reflective openness to the new, beautifully described by Hansen [2011]), which can give us indications on how to proceed to the cultivation of that “cosmopolitan common sense” (Beck & Grande, 2007.: pos. 2355), without which the EU experiment is doomed. Indeed, it is precisely a failure in the process of Europeanization, that
is, of the promotion of a cosmopolitan Europe (which does ‘not abolish national Europe but cosmopolitanizes it from within’) that both results in and is testified by the contemporary ‘Fascist’ revival in Europe.

The cosmopolitan revisitation of Dewey's tenets could also help us to address the question of the many movements emerging in contemporary Europe (from Scotland to Catalonia, just to mention the most famous cases) precisely on account of the success of the EU project but, paradoxically, ultimately putting it at risk. On the one hand, Dewey can teach us that these movements can be beneficial for a cosmopolitan Europe, insofar as they appeal to a recognition of cultural nationality, but they lapse into forms of vetero-European nationalism when they claim to couple the cultural dimension with statehood. In this respect, the EU-cosmopolitan challenge is to create new institutional arrangements that can orchestrate the national plurality (and the aphasia of the EU in the Catalonia crisis was a sign of still underdeveloped cosmopolitan imagination). On the other hand, there is also a psychological-ethical dimension, as Mead teaches us (see above § 1). The Spanish psychologist Adolf Tobeña (2016) has spoken of a “secessionist passion” and, by marshalling neurobiological notions, has compared it to a kind of falling in love. The volume of Tobeña is meritorious in that it has attempted to engage with these movements not by treating them as a kind of pathology but by showing how they are rooted in deep instincts and impulses of human beings. However, his analyses sometimes risk capitulating to the “mereological fallacy” appropriately denounced by Deron Boyles and Jim Garrison (2017) and should be, therefore, complemented with the Deweyan (and Meadean) social psychology. In particular, while Tobeña invokes an education for citizenship that pre-empts these “vectors of group communion that show a powerful tendency to the monopolization of beliefs and to explosive synergies” (Tobeña, 2016: 177), the idea of a cosmopolitan-mindedness that informs national-

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4 The mereological fallacy is the tendency of some neuroscientists (and, more calamitously, one can say, of our neuroscience-oriented culture on the verge of neuromania [Legrenzi & Umiltà, 2011]) to ascribe only to the brain psychological concepts which involve the whole organism.
mindedness and the impulses that undergird it seems to be a much more promising strategy. To put it in a formula: to engage with the challenge of the secessionist passion we need to deploy the Deweyan-Meadean ideas about internationalism as the real nationalism and international-mindedness by re-reading them through the lens of the most recent reflection about educational cosmopolitanism (Hansen, 2011).

Along with the specific lessons that we can draw from Dewey's reflection upon nationalism (see Waks, 2017), it is also at a more general level that he can teach us something important: indeed, his very non-dualistic frame of mind is most welcome. Speaking as a European, there is always the risk that the problems of the EU are imputed to the fact that European Union is merely a phenomenon relating to the level of civilization, that is, in Dewey's words, "a natural and largely unconscious or involuntary growth. It is, so to speak, a by-product of the needs engendered when people live close together" (MW 8: 168), whereas what we would need – this is the typical argument – is Kultur as the cultivation of the inner life, which is often coupled with expressly nationalistic and populist overtones. In contrast, equipping ourselves with Dewey's conceptual tools to recognize how far the very fact of operating at the level of civilization has helped Europe over the last seven decades to experience the most peaceful period of its history and to raise the question of the European culture in terms of an orchestration of the 'hyphenisms' could be the most important lesson for us as European to learn from Dewey.

The title of this paper implicitly refers to a well-known statement of the Head of the European Central Bank Mario Draghi in 2012, which is recognized to have saved the Euro. In saving the Euro he has saved the possibility of maintaining the project of a cosmopolitan Europe. Obviously, the Euro per se is not enough (something on which, I am sure, Mario Draghi would completely agree). The most burning issue in contemporary Europe is how many are ready to do whatever it takes to continue the process of Europeanization. And this is also, if not predominantly, an educational and cultural issue, as this paper has attempted to show by emphasizing the positive lesson which we can draw from Dewey's
writings during World War I, as controversial as they may sound in other respects.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{5} I want to express my deepest gratitude to the reviewer of \textit{Dewey Studies}, who provided valuable suggestions to improve the paper.
References

Citations of the works of Dewey are to the critical edition published by Southern Illinois University Press. Volume and page numbers follow the initials of the series. Abbreviations for the volumes used are: EW The Early Works (1882–1898); MW The Middle Works (1899–1924); LW The Later Works (1925–1953).


This essay engages with the Indian thinker Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar’s thoughts on war and violence and how these are intertwined with his notions of nationalism. For Ambedkar, critiquing violence amounts to a simultaneous critique of the idea of the nation. However, in bringing these two registers together, this article follows the trope of an intellectual history that incorporates Ambedkar’s encounter with the American pragmatist thinker John Dewey, his reading of Bertrand Russell’s thoughts on war, his criticisms of Marxist ideas on the necessity of violence in revolution as well as his scathing criticism of the question of violence in the Indian epic battle of Kurukshetra. In so doing, I hope to underscore how Ambedkar’s ideas on violence were deeply influenced by both Dewey and Russell. In addition, I want to emphasize Ambedkar’s novel vision of morality that, while specific to the context of an Asian sub-continental cultural ethos, remains profoundly cosmopolitan in nature.
The most “humane” governments, which in peaceful times “detest” war, proclaim during war, that the highest duty of their armies is the extermination of the greatest possible number of people.


...the responsibility for an intelligent control of force rests on us all. In short, the point is that to achieve anything we must use force: only we must use it constructively as energy and not destructively as violence.

—Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, “Mr. Russell and the Reconstruction of Society” (1918)

Thoughtful contemplations on war and violence might be anomalous absurdities in light of their grim subject matter. Since the brief interlude that separated the two world wars (or especially since the Cold War), we live in perpetual anxiety.\(^1\) This is even more so in a world afflicted by the gory materiality of war; it seems that “thoughtfulness” and “war” are concepts in strict opposition. Given the apparent binary nature of these terms, we are prompted to ask a difficult question: what does it mean to think about war, an event that instantiates a crisis that is itself thoughtless?

Even though it is an event of materiality, physicality, or action, war triggers thoughts—not simply in the aftermath but also during the course of the war. However, the range and nature of thoughts about war differ as radically as the means of warfare. In *Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man*, anti-war poet Siegfried Sassoon takes refuge in a nostalgic recollection of a world of innocence that is lost forever due to war. In George Orwell’s *Homage to Catalonia*, he provides a political aesthetics to counter incendiary prose and hate speech. The exactitude of their contexts do matter as much as the abstracted discussions of their views. However, for the present purposes I restrict myself to those thinkers who, after being engaged in witnessing too many wars, started pondering over the assumed “innate” tendencies that lead humans to war or philosophies that tend to willy-nilly justify war or its constituent element—violence. Here, I do not draw a distinction

\(^1\) An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2018 John Dewey Society annual meeting in New York (April 13-14, 2018).
between more apparent causes of war and more “innate” or intrinsic aspects of war. Doing so is more likely to be counterproductive for the very choice of thinkers and philosophies that I discuss here as they are, for the most part, thinkers who avoided a hard distinction between thought and action.

In this essay, I focus upon the ancient war of Kurukshetra in the Indian epic or mahakavya – Mahabharata, especially its most “philosophically” famous component – The Bhagavad Gita which features dialogues between war hero Arjuna and his advisor Krishna. Risking a nativist argument, let me take a cue from the Indian philosopher Arindam Chakrabarty to point out the difference between Indian and Western epic traditions. Understanding this is important to realize why we need to blur the lines between “action” and “thought” especially in a context like Kurukshetra war. According to Chakrabarty, Indian verse narratives of epic length cannot be easily characterized as “epic” in the western sense of the term. The crucial difference is that western epics are centered around the grand moment of action in a time of war, while Indian epics are centered around dialogues. In the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna and Arjuna are not directly engaged in fighting a battle. They are engaged in a philosophical conversation. Consequently, it would be foolhardy to think of such strict binarisation of thought and action or “words about war” and “wars as such” in such a non-western context. To expand upon this, it is worthwhile to look to the work of philosophers – some of whom never participated in the battlefield (unlike Sassoon or Orwell) and some who did and yet, all of them remained passionately engaged to philosophically preempt future possibilities of war—Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, and Leon Trotsky. For perspective, I invoke Dr. B.R.Ambedkar who brings Dewey, Russell and Marxism together as interlocutors on issues like war, force, violence, and nationalism. Through this, I also reveal possible ways in which Ambedkar’s ideas were shaped by their respective philosophies. While the context of Kuruskshetra war and its incessant invocation in modern Indian political world serves my rationale as to why I put such

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widely disparate thinkers on the same platform, the textual connections I make here serve as my ultimate justification. I put these complex thinkers in conversation also because war and violence need not be thought through a single philosophical prism or ideological perspective. It requires, as Bertrand Russell suggests, a radical recuperation of “common sense” that cuts across “isms.” In the preface to Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare, Russell writes:

What is needed is not an appeal to this or that –ism, but only to common sense. I do not see any reason why the kind of arguments which are put forward by those who think as I do should appeal more to one side than to the other or to Left-Wing opinion more than to that of men of conservative outlook. The appeal is to human beings as such and is made equally to all who hope for human survival.³

Such a clarion call to “common sense” beyond strict ideological affiliations and the assemblage of these thinkers look especially relevant in discussing a thinker such as Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar whose pragmatic concerns often speak to a broad spectrum of philosophical streams beyond the limits of the East and the West. Such scattershot critical cosmopolitanism in Ambedkar, however, is placed within the specific reference to the war of Kurukshetra.

**Why Kurukshetra?**

The war of Kurukshetra or Krishna-Arjuna dialogues in particular or The Mahabharata, in general, can actually be considered as a rather anomalous illustrative example to cite in an essay on issues like violence or violence in war in particular. Just as it is difficult to define the most appropriate genre of the Mahabharata (purana/lore, katha/narrative or itihasa/history?), it is almost impossible to resolve the tensions between the philosophic battle between “violence”/“himsa”

and “non-violence”/“ahimsa” in a text that reaches its narrative apotheosis in the crisis of a war. For billions of modern readers of the Gita or the Mahabharata, the text(s) sends out a strong message against violence. That “ahimsa paromo dharma” or “non-violence is the highest principle” is a much cherished maxim in these texts/text is so dominant in the aggregated “interpretive load” of these narratives that it might even seem strange as to why I choose such a text in the present context. Firstly, the “philosophic” issues that these narratives apparently espouse are almost always retrospectively cited in contemporary times in an inexhaustible fashion. In a sense, the Mahabharata is a text that brings the apparent extremities of Indian political scenario closer than we can imagine and The Gita is hardly monopolized only by the Hindu right wing to justify their political decisions or to reimagine themselves as rightful heirs of the morally superior brigade in that great war of Kurukshetra- Pandavas. While the Indian foreign minister Ms. Sushma Swaraj has been busy in distributing the Gita among foreign diplomats as the latest example of India’s soft skill exercise, the President of India National Congress Mr. Rahul Gandhi recently reimagined his party as a team of Pandavas and his political opponents as Kauravas-the two belligerent parties in the Kurukshetra war. This suffices to conclude that the apparitions of the “literary unthing” or “literary monster”- the Mahabharata or the Gita are hardly exorcised from the political graffiti of present India. Secondly, the text of Gita also creates possibilities of retrospective reading that foregrounds the emergence of a discourse of nationalism in India. This essay will keep engaging with the twin registers of violence in war and nationalism by taking the Gita as the textual hotbed where Ambedkar deployed several ideas of John Dewey, Russell and Trotsky as well as commented on Indian texts like Jaimini’s Purba Mimamsa or Badaranya’s Brahma Sutras.

As is evident from his short acerbic essay “Krishna and His Gita,” for Dr. Ambedkar, the Bhagavad Gita is to be considered merely as a “philosophic defense of certain dogmas” and the text does not hold much importance beyond the status of a “counter-revolutionary text” that refuses to acknowledge its philosophical debt to the creditor – Buddhism. Despite the apparent celebration of the texts as upholding
“ahimsa” in modern times by his contemporaries like Gandhi or Tilak, Ambedkar mounts his attacks precisely because the text of Gita defends and justifies violence in war and even validates a violent war against one’s own kith and kin. This is, according to him, one of the “dogmas” on the basis of which he disqualifies it as a philosophic text. Born as an untouchable Mahar and a son of an army person in British Indian Army’s Mahar Regiment, Ambedkar was certainly opposed to how Gita legitmised the varnashram dharma (that constitutes another “dogma” that the text defends). While criticizing the text of Gita for upholding varnashrama dharma or denouncing it for legitimizing war is important for him, Ambedkar also attacks it on the basis of how the text inflates the meaning of key terms like “karma yoga” (by reading it as “action”) or “gyan yoga” (by reading it as “wisdom”) and paves the way for nationalist reconfiguration subsequently. Therefore, for Ambedkar, the Gita or the conversation between Arjuna and Krishna in Kurukshetra war constitutes a central concern for his moral as well as political philosophy. This essay is an attempt to engage with such a moral philosophy and to see how Dewey contributed to one of his illustrious student’s understanding of war, violence, force and how all these can figure in the “democratic ethos” of a polity that constituted a significant concern in their shared universe of moral philosophy.

Means versus Ends: Dewey, Trotsky and Russell

In July, 1938 issue of the American journal The New International, Leon Trotsky wrote a lengthy essay titled “Their Morals and Ours.” This text had a section completely dedicated to what Trotsky called “dialectics of means and ends.” For Trotsky, morality was a contentious domain and there has to be some understanding of the “class nature of morality” instead of taking it at face value. In this text, Trotsky tries his best to differentiate his Marxist ethos from those of Jesuits, utilitarian philosophy of Bentham and Mill as well as the bureaucratic socialism of Stalin in the USSR. Against the backdrop of

Dewey Commission’s investigations into the allegations against Trotsky and his followers in the Mexico City, Trotsky clarifies his stand on the philosophical conflicts between means and ends. For him, it is important to philosophically diffuse this by showing why means can use justifiable violence if the end is that of the dictatorship of the proletariat and focusing too much on the moral worth of means adopted to do it might actually become counter-productive for the revolution. Too much moralism on means might actually be a powerful method for destroying the revolutionary zeal of the proletariat. This is why Trotsky opines: “Morality is a function of the class struggle.” For Trotsky, any generalizable moral value actually plays into the favors of the bourgeoisie. That is why he is immensely weary of the Kantian *categorical imperative*.

In the August issue of the same journal, John Dewey responds to Trotsky’s concerns for the dialectics of means and ends in a short piece called “On Their Morals and Ours.” Here, Dewey points out the problem of foreseeing the end that is supposed to justify the means. According to Dewey, the anticipation of an end might not meet the real end at the end of a social or political revolution and this “end-in-view” always differs from “end-in-reality.” Moreover, there can be a multiplicity of ends, instead of one particular intended and anticipated end. There is always a possibility of also destroying other necessary ends in the process. The end-in-view, in this whole debate, must also be seen as a means in itself as it acts as an incentive for the end to be realized. While Trotsky does realize the dual nature of “ends-in-view,” his perceptions are somewhat insensitive to dispositional changes that Dewey sees as necessary. Although Ambedkar does not mention this Dewey-Trotsky debate in particular, his criticism of Marxists methods that are likely to implement violence in bringing about a revolution, is heavily based on Dewey’s moral philosophy that did not foreclose the possibility of dispositional change in lieu of an unbridled usage of violence as violation. A few months before his demise in 1956, this ardent Indian admirer of Dewey wrote a text called “Buddha or Karl

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Marx?” where he cites Dewey and raises the debates between means and ends. Ambedkar asks: “whose means are more efficacious?” while comparing Buddha with Marx. Commenting on the Buddhist understanding of Ahimsa, Ambedkar says that Buddha never deployed an absolutist understanding of ahimsa or non-violence. According to Ambedkar, Buddha’s pragmatic mindset allowed him to recognize how violence is an integral part of our existence and then refers to Dewey:

There are of course other grounds against violence such as those urged by Prof. Dewey. In dealing with those who contend that the end justifies the means is morally deprived doctrine, Dewey has rightly asked what can justify the means if not the end? It is only the end that justifies the means.⁶

A little later he says:

As Prof. Dewey has pointed out that violence is only another name for the use of force and although force must be used for creative purposes a distinction between use of force as energy and use of force as violence needs to be made. The achievement of an end involves the destruction of many other ends which are integral with the one that is sought to be, destroyed. Use of force must be so regulated that it should save as many ends as possible in destroying the evil one. Buddha’s ahimsa was not absolute as the ahimsa preached by Mahavira, the founder of Jainism. He would have allowed force only as energy. The Communists preach ahimsa as an absolute principle. To this the Buddha was deadly opposed.⁷

Such Deweyean understanding of violence, force and energy is again cited by Ambedkar in another text. This time it is a longish review article that he wrote on Bertrand Russell’s anti-war book Principles of

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⁷ Ibid.
Social Reconstruction, also known as Why Men Fight? In this 1918 essay “Mr. Russell and the Reconstruction of Society”, published in Journal of the Indian Economic Society, Ambedkar expresses his understanding of the dialectics of means and ends, force and violence. This demands a quotation in extenso:

The gist of it all is that activity is the condition of growth. Mr. Russell, it must be emphasized, is against war but is not for quietism; for, according to him activity leads to growth and quietism is but another name for death. To express it in the language of Professor Dewey he is only against “force as violence” but is all for “force as energy.” It must be remembered by those who are opposed to force that without the use of it all ideals will remain empty just as without some ideal or purpose (conscious or otherwise) all activity will be no more than mere fruitless fooling. Ends and means (= force in operation) are therefore concomitants and the common adage that ‘the end justifies the means’ contains a profound truth which is perverted simply because it is misunderstood. For if the end does not justify the means, what else will? The difficulty is that we do not sufficiently control the operations of the means once employed for the achieving of some end. For a means when once employed liberates many ends- a fact scarcely recognized- and not the one only we wish it to produce. However, in our fanaticism for achievement we attach the article ‘the’ to the end we cherish and pay no heed to the ends simultaneously liberated. Of course for the exigencies of an eminently practical life we must set an absolute value on some one end. But in doing this we must take precaution that the other ends involved are not sacrificed. Thus, the problem is that if we are to use force, as we must, to achieve something, we must see that while working for one end we do not destroy, in the process, other ends equally worthy of maintenance. Applying this to the present war, no justification, I think, is needed, for the use of force. What needs to be justified is the destructive violence. The
justification must satisfy the world the ends given prominence to by one or other of the combatants could not be achieved otherwise than by violence i.e., without involving the sacrifice of other ends equally valuable for the stability of the world. True enough that violence cannot always be avoided and non-resistance can be adopted only when it better way of resistance. But the responsibility for an intelligent control of force rest on us all. In short the point is that to achieve anything we must use force; only we must use it constructively as energy and not destructively as violence.  

Ambedkar’s perceptions on the use of violence clearly imply that he considers force or even violence as an unavoidable part of our lives on earth. Referring to the British conservative political thinker Edmund Burke, Ambedkar in this review article reminds us that force and violence, even if it is deployed for a noble cause, might not sustain a revolutionary moment for long. Therefore, people need dispositional change through education and democracy. Here, Ambedkar is directly influenced by Dewey’s idea of democracy that went beyond the usual definition of it in terms of universal adult franchise and he embraces Dewey’s idea of democratic ethos and education as more efficacious ways of addressing inequality in human society. However, his understanding of violence or himsa follows his Buddhist comprehension of it in non-absolutist ways.

**Ambedkar - A Modern Dharmavyadh?**

In the *Aranyakparvan* (The Forest Chapter) of the *Mahabharata*, 

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9 For a profound analysis of violence in the *Mahabharata*, see how its “Souptik Parvan” has been explored by Professor Anirban Das. See Anirban Das, “Of Sleep and Violence: Reading the Sauptikarparvan in Times of Terror”, in *Mahabharata Now and Then*, edited by Arindam Chakrabarti and Sibaji Bandopadhay (London New York New Delhi: Routledge, 2014), p 203-218. I am grateful to my friend Samrat Sengupta for leading me to this brilliant piece.
comes across an unusual term—**anrisamsa** or “non-cruelty” as a substitute for **ahimsa**. In this chapter of the epic—the quintessential virtuous man, leader of Pandavas and a prominent protagonist of the epic—Judson— is engaged in a conversation with Dharma, the incarnation of goodness. Dharma asks Judhisthira: “What is the best principle in life?” To this Judhisthira answers: “anrismsa paromo dharmo” (non-cruelty is the highest principle). However, **anrisamsa** or non-cruelty, as a more practicable principle, is not philosophically presented by Judhisthira. In Aranyakparvan, this maxim comes from Dharmavyadh of Mithila—a sudra—a man of low caste origin or a dalit in modern parlance. He is a fowler or a vyadh who sells meat in the market and in that sense, lives a life that depends on violence. Dharmavyadh, as Professor Sibaji Bandopadhyay shows, finds a more pragmatic solution to the philosophical rigmarole apropos of **ahimsa**. For Dharmavyadh, **ahimsa** or non-violence is, at best, an impossible ideal. Bandopadhyay explains:

Dharmavyadh reckons the ‘state of violence’ to be an irremediable, unavoidable factor of the ‘human condition.’ In his system of Ethics, ahimsa obtains the precarious status of an unrealizable ideal.¹⁰

He, like Ambedkar, recognizes the presence of violence or force as energy and concludes that “ahimsa paromo dharma” must be supplant ed with “anrisamsa paromo dharma.” **Anrisamsa**, Bandopadhyay shows, can be understood as leniency or non-cruelty. The fowler in this story recognizes non-cruelty as the more cherished path. Instead of dillydallying about an absolutist notion of non-violence, Ambedkar and Dharmavyadh both prescribe **anrisamsa**. In “Krishna and His Gita”, Ambedkar’s rejection of violence in the Gita is premised not on an absolute rejection of force. Rather, his path is a **majjhim pantha** (middle way) on the trajectory of Dharmavyadh’s “non-cruelty.” Such a path was only possible when Ambedkar

recognized the distinction between “force as energy” and “force as violence or violation.” In recognizing this distinction Ambedkar acknowledges his intellectual debt to John Dewey. While it is important for Ambedkar to use some level of persuasive force either through his rhetorical schema or pedagogical deployment of the Deweyean idea of democracy as a social ethos, it is equally significant for him to perceive violence in rather non-absolutist sense. But, in my opinion, this distinction between “force as violence” and “force as energy” does not fully exemplify Ambedkar’s appropriation of Dewey’s thoughts. Also, we need to ask why and how Ambedkar brings his criticism of Krishna and his rebuttal of Marxist thought together in the context of violence and means/ends debate. Is Ambedkar hinting at something more outrageous here? Is it possible to put Brahminical delineations on violence and Marxist endorsement of violence as an inevitable means for revolutionary praxis together on the same philosophical footing? If Ambedkar’s intellectual allegiances to Dewey is anything to go by, such speculations invariably find basis in Dewey’s moral philosophy.

While Scott Stroud has recently emphasized on the similarities between Ambedkar’s interpretations of Buddhist idea of ahimsa/himsa and his appropriation of the pragmatist visions of violence, the philosophical basis of this apparent similarity between Ambedkar’s critique of violence as legitimized by the Gita and his criticisms of the Marxist’s deployment of violence is not underscored by Stroud.11 For Stroud, the only distinction that differentiates Marxists from Deweyean- Ambedkarite (read pragmatist-Buddhist) is the fine line between “force as energy” and “force as violence.” In order to find such a deeper philosophical conflict between Dewey and Marxists, one needs to look at the last section of his response to Trotsky. In my opinion such fundamental philosophical critique attempted by Dewey subsequently paved the way for Ambedkar’s simultaneous debunking of Krishna’s and Marxist legitimization of violence (in the form of violation). According to Dewey, there is in

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Marxist orthodoxy, a solid, rooted perception that the means follow from the principle of class struggle. By saying that the means are deduced from the principle of class struggle, they foreclose the possibility of understanding human problems through other ways or negate the possibility of examining the means adopted to materialize Trotsky's noble goal/end – “to liberate men from the control of other men and from the dominance of nature.” Ambedkar shares a similar opinion about both Krishna and the Marxists. In “Krishna and His Gita”, Ambedkar’s primary concern about himsa does not come merely from a morality that rejects violence absolutely. His criticism of the Gita, in my opinion, comes from the fact that Krishna asks Arjuna to nullify his capacity to think and perform what varna system has assigned him to perform. Placing the onus on such a priori principle (varna or class struggle) is rejected by both Dewey and Ambedkar as they think it does not allow further examination of means adopted. This becomes clear from Dewey's closing statement in “On Their Morals and Ours”:

Orthodox Marxism shares with orthodox religionism and with traditional idealism the belief that human ends are interwoven into the very texture and structure of existence—a conception presumably from its Hegelian origin.

**Critique of Himsa qua a critique of Indian nationalism**

Just as the maxim “ahimsa paramo dharma” is reimagined in our contemporary times as the seed message of the *Mahabharata* that helps Hindus to see themselves as a community of “non-violence”, the seed *sloka* (verse) of the *Gita* is also thought to have supplied them with the most necessary philosophical lesson needed to survive in this modern world. The forty-seventh *sloka* of the second chapter (2:47) of the *Gita* is widely understood as the essence or kernel of the whole text and its philosophy: “karmanye ba dhikaraste ma phalesu kadachana.” Simply translated this goes like: “You are supposed to perform your duties and not think of the fruits of your actions.” This interpretation of the *sloka* has apparently given us the idea of “niskama karma” or “desireless
action.” But how is this oxymoron possible? In the pre-modern interpretations of the Gita, the notion of karma is very different from the idea of “worldly action” implied in this modern reading. The Indian non-dualist philosopher Adi Shankacharya’s Gita commentary as well as all such pre-modern commentaries interpret karma as mere “ritual actions” (this meaning is also described in various other brahmanic texts). In this sense, the idea of “karma” could never be compatible with “gyan” or “wisdom.” However, in the era of Indian nationalist movement, this idea of petty ritual action got replaced with a new interpretation.

The famous Bengali novelist and nationalist intellectual Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, in his 1888 book Dharmatattva, gave us this modern interpretation of “karma” for the first time. This nationalist/ writer went on to explain that Indians needed to merge karma and gyan in order to sustain themselves in the modern times. Here we must note that the anti-colonial movement was based on the construction of a discursive space of “difference” as well as a construction of “modern self” among Indians.\(^\text{12}\) This paradoxical project, as Partha Chatterjee shows\(^\text{13}\), could only be possible when Indians could convince themselves that the construction and articulation of difference in the domain of “spirituality” as something “essentially Indian” could be found compatible with a pursuit for worldly action. It is to make this project successful that they needed to inflate the meaning of these terms, especially “karma.” In the nineteenth century revival of non-dualist philosophy, Indian nationalist thinkers even went beyond the interpretive limits set by the founder of this school of Indian philosophy – Sankaracharya. While for him, “gyan” and “karma” were like water and oil, for Bankim, these were intertwined and they implied “desire less action.” The notion of niskama karma (desire less action) could then be extended to render this question asked by the Indian theosophist


\(^\text{13}\) Partha Chatterjee, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse? (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).
Annie Besant merely rhetorical- “Is spiritual Progress Inconsistent with Material Progress?” However, Ambedkar’s “Krishna and Gita”, as Sibaji Bandopadhyay shows, became an anomaly among this massive enthusiasm for neo-non dualist Gita interpretations that fueled the construction of the nationalist discourse. Ambedkar, the leader of the untouchables and the primary architect of the Indian constitution, became almost the lone voice in saying that such a marriage of “gyana” and “karma” is impossible and to do so would mount to a deliberate act of misreading:

Most translate the word Karma Yoga as “action” and the word Jnana Yoga as “knowledge” and proceed to discuss the Bhagabag Gita as though it was engaged in comparing and contrasting knowledge versus action in a generalized form. This is quite wrong.14

Ambedkar’s observations, thus, not only attacked his contemporary celebration of the Gita through the registers of war, violence or varnasharama dharma/caste system, his interpretations questioned the very claims upon which the edifice of Indian nationalist discourse would be constructed. The notion of karma and how it is inflated to serve such purpose is an example among many similar instances.

But such a reading does not immediately give us any concrete idea as to how Ambedkar himself thought of nationalism. Out of the previous paragraph it is evident that a committed reader like him could see through the implicit politics of such retrospective readings of the Gita. But how did he himself conceptualize the nation-state, especially when he put in such massive intellectual as well as political efforts to create the Constitution of the newly independent country. It is true that his contributions on the construction of the modern Indian nation-state can never be overestimated. It is now common knowledge that he was the principal architect of the constitution, the

first law minister of independent India and he is also well known for giving us rigorous accounts of how the nation-state can have a stable life. But, contrary to the popular perception of Ambedkar as “a maker of modern India” (to borrow Ramachandra Guha’s phrase) he was also a thinker who saw through the contradictions of the very idea of nation-state or nationalism. In articulating these thoughts about the inner contradictions of such a cherished idea, Ambedkar never explicitly quoted Dewey or cited him. But in his statements he is unmistakably Deweyean. Let us compare their thoughts. Dewey, as Leonard J. Waks’ essay “John Dewey on Nationalism” in *Dewey Studies* shows, did recognize how certain social contradictions in a given society can be overridden through the construction of a horizontal comradeship and yet, nationalism inculcates a strong sense of hatred among fellow nationalists against the citizens of another nation:

Dewey grants that nationalism has been a ‘two-sided’ ethical force, a ‘tangled mixture of good and bad.” On the positive side, nationalism was a “movement away from obnoxious conditions”: narrow parochialism and dynastic despotism. . . But on the negative side, nation states have been built up by and sustained through violent conflict. Internal unity and fellow feeling has been accompanied by hostility to the people of other nations.¹⁵

It is this curious interplay of love and hatred that marks the paradoxical existence of nation-states. Dr. Ambedkar, in his book *Pakistan or the Partition of India*, gives us a similar definition of nationalism:

This national feeling is a double edged feeling. It is at once a feeling of fellowship for one’s own kith and kin and anti-fellowship for those who are not one’s own kith and kin.¹⁶

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¹⁶ Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India*, in Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches (BAWS) ed. Vasant Moon (New Delhi, 2014),
At a time when nationalist jingoism is rising, hatred for other communities is equally strong both in Indian and the United States, the realization of duality in the very idea of nation-states or how nationalist claims of ancient origin are located not in remote unintelligible (yet “glorious”) past but in recent, deliberately distorted readings of pre-modern texts or how war, violence and nationalism can be subtly and intricately thought through—are absolutely important. Both Dewey and Ambedkar can be our guide in helping us see through such intricacies. However, the fact that I have put Trotsky, Dewey, Ambedkar and Russell in conversation with each other in this essay, should not conveniently imply an easy subscription to any of their particular philosophical affiliations.\textsuperscript{17} Rather, my concerns concerning war, violence and nationalism in this essay reflect how all of them inhabited future points of criticism that their philosophical inclinations would encounter.

While Trotsky's thoughts might operate as much needed correctives in negotiating with the hegemonic logic of global neoliberalism in our times, Dewey’s ‘critical liberalism’ or immanent critique of liberalism and critique of different hues of Marxist thoughts might help us see the limits of Left’s multifaceted and wider political projects. As Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau suggest, Left does not necessarily have to see liberal democratic institutions as historically necessary obstacles that need to be overcome or toppled down through a radical revolutionary moment to envisage and politically realize the ‘end of politics’ (somewhat analogous to Francis Fukuyama’s ‘end of history’).\textsuperscript{18} Just as Dewey's moral philosophy comes as a required rupture to interrogate the validation of violence in both-religious orthodoxy of the contemporary Right wing populism and the revolutionary zeal of the non-electoral Left, one must recognize

\textsuperscript{17} Richard Bernstein thinks that this particular attitude in itself is a fundamental characteristic of American Pragmatism of Charles Sanders Peirce, William James and John Dewey. See, Richard Bernstein, \textit{The Pragmatic Turn} (Cambridge, Malden: Polity Press, 2010).

how Trotsky’s insights help us see the persistent hegemonisation of a neo-liberal market economy and ‘market society’ (to borrow Michael Sandal’s phrase). Neither of these two ends of the political spectrum (in India and in the United States) perhaps fully helps us to bargain and negotiate with the rising Right populism in global politics. In many ways, these thinkers anticipated these challenges that dalit activism in India, Leftist politics at a global scale have to negotiate with in constructing what Mouffe and Laclau call ‘hegemonic’ and ‘contaminated’ universality or a certain kind of particular universality that makes the contingent moment of politics happen.

This, we must note, does not come at the expense of political antagonism as a constituent element— not only in John Dewey’s radical democracy but, most certainly, in Ambedkar’s democracy— a radical conflict-ridden democracy (as opposed to a Habermasian consensus based self-effacing democracy) in a caste ridden society beyond the mere aggregative view of democracy of votes. This is perhaps why it is important to carry the debates between Dewey and Trotsky or Ambedkar and the Indian Marxists further by revisiting figures such as George Novack. I believe such interactions then help us in a post-Marxist Left projects of Laclau or Mouffe but also help us reengage with pragmatist philosophy of Ambedkar and his mentor Dewey. However, I am not certain if this concluding caveat seems much like the ‘common sense’ as Russell saw as much needed or Trotsky saw as a counter-revolutionary bourgeois moralism of thinkers like Max Eastman. Perhaps a time has come when post-Marxism can productively interact with American Pragmatism to face our contemporary challenges.

19 For a greater elucidation of George Novack’s defense of Trotsky’s Marxism in the debate between John Dewey and Leon Trotsky, see his response to the debate in Trotsky, Their Morals and Ours, 1969.
This article examines Dewey's views on the concept of nationalism and how it should be taught in schools. Dewey was the first major American philosopher to address the positive and negative factors associated with the term, which became increasingly used for political purposes during and after World War I. Four basic aspects are addressed in this analysis. First, the authors discuss several fundamental Deweyan propositions tied to peace and citizenship. As Dewey viewed it, education is an extension of democratic ethics and healthy community-building. Second, the authors explore Dewey's goal for achieving world citizenship and lasting peace, which was based upon a social science approach to education. Third, Dewey's 1920's lectures and articles related to world peace contained valuable ideas for future implementation when addressing the mandated regulations public schools are required to discharge with respect to nationalistic allegiance. Lastly, the authors detail how Dewey's publications during this period relied on his instrumentalist technique for separating means and ends with respect to war and peace; he continuously addressed the dichotomy of means between nationalistic politics and power and that of a democratic education. The significance of this article chronicles Dewey's views for educating students to the dangers of overzealous nationalism. This type of nationalism, he cautioned, was an impediment to the development of a peace consciousness, an important by-product of his pragmatic approach to world affairs. Dewey's writings addressed this topic nearly 100 years ago and remain relevant today.
John Dewey’s role during World War I became a defining period in his life; it was at that point he became the nation’s proclaimed intellectual spokesperson uniting a romantic national idealism with a realistic progressivism supporting military intervention.\(^1\) Attaching his pragmatism to President Woodrow Wilson’s progressive war aims was part of the much larger goal for establishing international democracy. Unfortunately, this pragmatic experiment of using war as the means to achieve the desired ends failed to reach fulfillment. His calculus did not consider completely, despite warnings, how powerful the appeal to nationalism could be when the call to arms was announced. The war’s outcome caused him to take a closer look at how schools should teach nationalism in keeping with his view of democracy as a way of life. This paper is an historical synopsis of Dewey’s writings and views about the importance of developing social consciousness and social ideals among schoolchildren and how educators might respond today. He was the first major American philosopher to give the concept of nationalism serious attention in terms of its relationship between thought and social context.

Specifically, Dewey sought to distinguish between a political definition of nationalism based on state power and governmental control, which is oftentimes used for narrow and exclusive purposes, and a friendlier, positive type that promotes cultural appreciation and community understanding. Dewey was, of course a democratic patriot. But he was one who sought to distinguish between a coerced patriotic loyalty based upon political mandates and one that was motivated by a deep appreciation for democratic values and moral principles. Furthermore, how Dewey viewed nationalism and patriotism as impediments to world peace in light of World War I will be addressed. The postwar years offered him the opportunity to re-

examine the meaning of nationalism in relationship to American democratic values and educational objectives.

Pre-War Deweyan Propositions Tied to Peace and Citizenship

Prior to the war, Dewey insisted upon a benevolent role for education and schools in our society. He believed strongly that the role of the schools—driven by a collective social consciousness—would benefit all society rather than premised on nationalistic righteousness. He was ill prepared for the fact that his belief system did not match what was happening in schools. To that point, his many prewar writings consistently reflected his desire for schools to serve as instruments for community building and means for addressing social ills through pacific means.

For instance, as far back as 1897 in “My Pedagogic Creed,” Dewey argued, “all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race.” This required an ethical foundation as the basis for effective citizenship in a democratic society. He posited this view in “Ethical Principles Underlying Education.” In this lengthy essay, he observed, “Society is a society of individuals and the individual is always a social individual. He lives in, for, and by society, just as society has no existence excepting in and through the individuals who constitute it.” The ethical obligation of education, he added, is “training for citizenship,” which “develops the power of observation, analysis, and inference with respect to what makes up a social situation and the agencies through which it is modified.” In The School and Society, moreover, which he wrote at the turn of the century, he pointed out that the school and citizenship education represented the best “means of seeing the progress of the human race.” Perhaps this is one of Dewey’s most enduring concepts

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4 Ibid., 28.
and one that best connects school and society.

Furthermore, in *Moral Principles in Education* (1909) a book he wrote during the middle of the Progressive era (1900-1920), he flatly stated, “Apart from participating in social life, the school has no moral end nor aim.”6 In *Schools of Tomorrow*, which he co-wrote with his daughter Evelyn, he took special note of the contributions of the Italian educational innovator Maria Montessori, whose own ideas about learning are credited with helping to shape the development of peace education. It was her belief that children unwilling to accept the authoritarian habits of their teachers would be less inclined to obey rulers urging them to go to war. She believed a teacher’s pedagogy should free the students’ spirits to promote love and understanding and reject blind obedience to authority. According to the Deweys:

> Madame Montessori...believes that the technique of living can best be learned by the child through situations that are not typical of social life, but which have been arranged in order to exercise some special sense so as to develop the faculties of discrimination and comparison.7

Moreover, the goal behind an experimental education, which Montessori professed, was to foster the process of “learning with doing” in order to “replace the passive education of imparting the learning of others” as currently taught in the classroom. It was a fundamental theme in *Schools*. It would be this type of learning necessary for promoting “a democratic society where initiative and independence are the rule and where every citizen is supposed to take part in the conduct of affairs of common interest.”8 Clearly, all of Dewey’s prewar writings encapsulated his progressive view that schools were the instrument for shaping young minds; that is

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8 Ibid., 20.
preparing future citizens to address societal conflict in nonviolent ways in order to improve the welfare of all.

America at War

Obviously, war and societal conflict were mediums of action Dewey hoped would be eliminated. Yet, World War I diverted his attention away from the function of education as an instrument for progressive reform and peaceful coexistence. Despite his own reasoned appeal in asking educators to follow his lead in support of American military intervention so that international democratic progress could be achieved and Old World autocracy banished, it was nationalism's emotional and irrational sway over the public that his pragmatism failed to control.9 Nowhere was this more apparent than in the field of education.

Schools, in particular, quickly became “seminaries of patriotism.”10 More than 100,000 school districts became receptive instruments to all ideological forms of nationalistic propaganda. Led by the National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest teacher organization, and the Committee on Patriotism through Education, district after district banned the teaching of German and demanded loyalty oaths of schoolteachers and support personnel. Throughout the country, many teachers were unfairly accused of disloyalty because of their pacifist beliefs or lukewarm enthusiasm for war. They were summarily dismissed, suspended, or transferred to another school. Academic freedom became an afterthought, buried beneath the brick and mortar that had been used to construct the nation's halls of learning.

Nationally, moreover, over 800,000 high schoolteachers and students were introduced to the National Board for Historical Service's war study plan prepared by Samuel B. Harding, a history

professor at the University of Indiana. Clearly designed for propaganda purposes, Harding’s work deftly portrayed the callousness of German soldiers who blindly followed the militaristic wishes of its autocratic leaders while rejecting the Allies sincere desire for peace. Moreover, throughout the nation, elementary schools teachers were instructed to teach the themes of patriotism, heroism, and sacrifice as well as learning about the differences between German autocracy and the American democratic way of life. 11 Sadly, the nation’s schools were no longer considered the best instruments for furthering the progress of the human race.

Post-War Views on Nationalism and Schooling

After the war, Dewey was determined to apply his philosophical and educational views to counter World War I’s ultra-nationalistic spirit. In keeping with his concept of progressive education, schooling was considered a viable mechanism for challenging entrenched customs and beliefs, which also included how the concept of nationalism was being taught. In a rarely mentioned speech he delivered to Massachusetts schoolteachers in 1922, Dewey proclaimed that the main purpose of “our common school system of education” must be “to prepare the boys and girls and young men and women who come to these schools to be good citizens, in the broadest sense.” 12 What he meant is that students must be prepared to be active and concerned members of their schools and communities recognizing the commonalities and responsibilities of being part of a productive community. Outlined in his speech, “Social Purposes of Education,” was how the educational system had “allowed our students too largely to go out with not only a paper knowledge, but in too innocent a frame of mind about the power and source of power that has to be applied to work the governmental machinery.” 13 While he agreed that

11 Ibid., 57-58.
13 MW 15: 160.
teachers and schools do have a responsibility to educate students about the importance of nationalism, it could be better appreciated when connected to the expressed goal of community-building and interpersonal relationships.

**Transition of Thinking**

How then did Dewey, after the war, select aspects of his already posited educational philosophy, and how did he address the way schools should teach a positive concept of nationalism? Initially, he hinted at it in 1916 with the publication of his magnum opus, *Democracy and Education*. As noted educator Leonard Waks explains, “Nationalism *per se* is barely mentioned in *Democracy and Education*, but when placed within the context of his work during World War One, the book can be fruitfully be read as a program for countering nationalism through education.”14 What affected Dewey’s view of nationalism was the way in which the government converted public schooling into instruments for patriotic allegiance. Nationalism as a pathway for democratic community building through education, as he envisioned in his book, had been undermined. As Dewey viewed it, education is an extension of democratic ethics. It is the primary instrument for establishing the end: a democratic way of life guided by an ethical foundation, which formulates a code of conduct.

Specifically, to address the problem of war, Dewey believed this could be accomplished through a social science approach to education. Dewey recognized that his views on nationalism raised both ethical challenges and a backlash of indoctrination. To Dewey, history and geography were the essential subjects necessary for alleviating the existing social ills in the world; this was consistent with his earlier writings, which now took on added importance following the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914. Dewey first emphasized in *Democracy and Education* that “the segregation which kills the vitality

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of history and geography is divorced from present modes and concerns of social life.” The teaching of “geography and history for cultivating a socialized intelligence,” according to Dewey, “constitutes its moral significance.” Such “moral significance” was tied directly to the social functions of geography and history. Both subjects were not only critical to developing a national consciousness, which he understood, but also useful instruments for going beyond physical boundaries to learn about other nations’ history and culture.

For example, Dewey believed the study of geography must connect to social and political problems. By that, Dewey meant that geography would have to take into consideration the various peoples, their cultures, their habits, their occupations, their art, and their contributions to the development of culture in general. It now entailed that students not be taught simply about rivers, lakes, mountains and other physical features, which had been the common staple for years:

> When not treated as a basis for getting at the large world beyond, the study...of geography becomes as deadly as do object lessons which simply summarize the properties of familiar objects....the imagination is not fed, but is held down to recapitulating, cataloguing, and refining what is already known. But when the familiar fences that mark the limits of the village proprietors are signs that introduce an understanding of the boundaries of great nations, even fences are lighted with meaning.\(^\text{16}\)

History, as well, would have to divorce itself from its past emphasis on dates, heroes, and battles. Such teaching, as Dewey predicted, fostered a more intolerant and chauvinistic view of nationalism in the minds of impressionable students. A country’s history should not be defined by its success in wars or economic superiority on the global market. More study should be centered upon the social meaning of a country’s history to address its shortcomings and how it can become a better nation. "The true starting point of

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\(^{16}\) Ibid., 212.
history,” he insisted, “is always some present situation with its problems....[Otherwise], we get only a sugar coating which makes it easier to swallow certain fragments of information.”17 In a forceful tone, Dewey suggested that

...before starting with history as such it would be a good idea to identify the important problems of present-day society—problems in politics, social problems, economic problems, problems in diplomacy, and others. Then explore each of these problems in its historical setting; try to determine the origin of the problem; examine past efforts to deal with the problem; find out what sort of situation caused it to become a problem.18

Many of Dewey’s writings addressed the idea of cause and effect as he sought consistently to draw upon historical events in order to foster global understanding through education. In terms of cause and effect connected to historical events, what he sought to accomplish was emphasizing the negative impact on students’ thinking when teaching about military conflicts such as the American Revolution, Mexican War, and World War I strictly from a nationalistic viewpoint. Students would thus equate America’s greatness to military superiority rather than examining how history has been a powerful motivating force in community building and uniting cultures regardless of creed and ethnic differences. By relying on wars as a major frame of reference socializes students into accepting the dominant political, economic, and social realities. Instead, students should be encouraged to look at past historical events in which the concept of nationalism served to bring people together as one community. Specifically, he looked to the American immigrant experience—“e pluribus Unum”—as the most compelling example of how nationalism can counter notions of exclusivity and intolerance. People from other parts of the world settled in America found ways to cooperate peacefully with one another and continue the democratic

17 Ibid., 214.
way of life. Why this historical example can’t be used in classrooms to promote international understanding was his primary objective.

**Encouraging Peace Education in School**

In 1923, Dewey called for a school program designed to promote international cooperation through nationalistic principles. Applying the social science approach of Columbia University historian James Harvey Robinson’s “New History” to education, as well as carrying over the seeds from an argument he raised in an earlier article entitled “Nationalizing Education,” published during World War I, Dewey began to clarify his thinking. To that end, Dewey proposed that the chauvinistic patriotism found in current history textbooks be eliminated. What caused him to argue this point was his own experience during World War I, when the populace failed to heed his advice regarding the “what a real nationalism, a real Americanism, is like.”

Dewey further urged educators to cultivate two essential truths within a broader understanding of nationalism: that its composition is both global and racially diverse. Dewey insisted:

> No matter how loudly anyone proclaims his Americanism, if he assumes that any one racial strain, any one component culture, no matter how early settled it was in our territory, or how effective it has proved in its own land, is to furnish a pattern to which all other strains and cultures are to conform, he is a traitor to an American nationalism. Our unity...must be...created by drawing out and composing into a harmonious whole the best, the most characteristic which each contributing race and people has to offer.

The key for addressing nationalism is to recognize “that the peculiarity

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of our nationalism is its internationalism" and unless that was acknowledged "we shall breed enmity and division in our frantic efforts to secure unity."\(^{21}\) Thus, to nationalize our education and to write history texts in the American democratic spirit demands that it serve as an "instrument in the active suppression of the war spirit and in the positive cultivation of sentiments of respect and friendliness for all men and women wherever they live" and "to make the public school an energetic and willing instrument in developing initiative, courage, power and personal ability in each individual."\(^{22}\)

Dewey's ideas for a peace education program were outlined in a very important article, which appeared in a 1923 issue of the *Journal of Social Forces*. He began this piece by arguing that "The teachers in our schools and the communities behind the schools have a greater responsibility with reference to this international phase of social consciousness and ideals than we have realized. As we need a program and a platform for teaching genuine patriotism and a real sense of the public interests of our own community so clearly we need a program of international friendship, amity and good will."\(^{23}\) What he called for in his concluding sentences was a curriculum using the subjects of history and geography for building tolerance, communal respect, and racial understanding traversing fixed boundaries. Genuine patriotism requires a social consciousness that defines the meaning of community as one not restricted by physical terrain or elitist attitudes. In terms of


\(^{22}\) *Ibid.*, 120.

\(^{23}\) John Dewey, "The Schools as a Means of Developing a Social Consciousness and Social Ideals in Children," *Journal of Social Forces* Vol. 1 (September 1923), 514. Dewey continued to promote education as an antidote to militaristic nationalism throughout the 1920s. In a revealing letter to the president of Michigan State Normal College, Charles McKenny, Dewey noted: "In the present state of the world, with the evident proof that war is the greatest of tragedies from which humanity suffers, the necessity for employing all educational forces to create mutual understanding and sympathy is obvious....In the past, teaching especially in history, has been of a character which indirectly at least created an attitude of indifference, if not hostility, to other nations, and thus fostered a spirit favorable to war when an international dispute arose." John Dewey to Charles McKenny, November 14, 1927, *The Correspondence of John Dewey*, Vol. II, no. 21555, Electronic edition (Charlotte, VA.: Intelex, 1996).
ideals it implies the concept of what it means to be human. History is capable of teaching students how human beings lived in the past and how they adapted to change devoid of violence whereas geography has the potential to educate children about other cultures and their contributions to human development. Dewey's understanding of how to teach history and geography was to instruct students that a proper understanding of nationalism and patriotism should be premised on the belief that no particular group or identity deserved a privileged status. Thus, Dewey hoped that the school would be the primary means for developing social consciousness and social ideals in children.

Nationalism's Pitfalls: The Turkish Example

Reinforcing his philosophy further was his two-month trip to Turkey in 1924. The breakup of the old Ottoman Empire led to the regime of a modernist, Kemal Ataturk, in 1920. Ataturk and his government invited Dewey to visit Turkey and examine the school system to make recommendations for its modernization and improvement. Apart from modernizing Turkey, Ataturk was determined to nationalize the state at all costs. Dewey looked upon this visit as an extension of his interest in international affairs and furthering education as an agent of democracy.

While in Turkey, however, Dewey was troubled by the friction among its disparate population, which existed between the Turks, the Armenians, and the Greeks, each seeking to further its own ethnic and religious beliefs. In a *New Republic* article, he wrote upon his return to the United States, “The Turkish Tragedy,” he pointed out that the situation in Turkey is a sad reminder that “the fate of the Greeks and Armenians, the tools of nationalistic and imperialistic ambitions of foreign powers, makes one realize how accursed has been the minority population that had the protection of a Christian foreign power.” “[T]he end is not yet,” Dewey added, “even with the completed exchange of populations [Greeks and Armenians being deported in exchange for Turks in Greece], and the accompanying misery of peoples at least temporarily homeless, often unacquainted
with the language of their home-kin, with thousands of orphans and beggared refugees, as numerous among the Turks as among the Armenians and Greeks, even if our Christian benevolence, still under the influence of foreign political propaganda, does not hear so much about or experience the same solicitude for Turkish woes.”

With respect to the Armenians, moreover, how is it that even now “the Greeks are requesting that this group, already deported once, be removed from Greek soil” while the power brokers at Geneva are calling for “the creation of the Armenian 'home' in Caucasian Turkey—a home that would require protection by some foreign power and be the prelude to new armed conflicts and ultimate atrocities.” This situation, alone, was enough to remind all that securing peace between nations and among peoples was a long way off:

Nothing but evil to all parties has come in the past or will come in the future from the attempts of foreign nations to utilize the national aspirations of minority populations in order to advance their own political interests...If a fiftieth of the energy, money and planning that had been given to searching out terms upon which the populations could live peaceably together with the disruption of Turkey, the situation today would be enormously better than it is.

The tragedy in Turkey was illustrative of how political leaders chose to further their nationalistic ambitions for purposes of exclusivity, superiority, and prejudice rather than peaceful coexistence and mutual respect. “The Turks...have been converted to nationalism,” Dewey opined. But “the disease exists in a virulent form at just this moment.” Modernizing the Turkish educational system as part of its new national identity required that its teachers be trained to embrace all elements within the population as “an indispensable

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24 MW 15: 141.
25 Ibid., 141.
26 Ibid., 142.
27 Ibid., 142.
condition of peace, mutual understanding and harmony.”

Furthermore, his experiences in Turkey influenced his thinking about how to achieve world peace with a more intentional curriculum for educators to adopt.

**Cautionary Tale Regarding German Nationalism**

Rather interestingly, Dewey's reason for believing that education might be the means for transcending nationalistic boundaries was also found in the important and positive role it had played in the consolidation and unification of the German-speaking peoples during the nineteenth century. What most interested Dewey was how German leaders had used education to nationalize their citizens. Although in Germany, national interests captured education for narrow and exclusive purposes mainly for the perpetuation of the political state, Dewey, nevertheless, saw a beneficial side to this experience in terms of unifying people as a community. He drew upon this observation when discussing his plans for the modernization of the Turkish educational system. However, what he found most wanting in the German example was, that

> The state furnished not only the instrumentalities of public education but also its goal.... Since... national sovereignty required subordination of individuals to the superior interests of the state both in military defense and in struggles for international supremacy in commerce, social efficiency was understood to imply like subordination. The educational process was taken to be one of disciplinary training rather than of personal development.\(^{29}\)

Dewey's accurate analysis of Germany's national interests (based on an idealistic and unquestioned devotion to the state) did, unfortunately, eventually lead to its expansive militaristic aggression and the late war.

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\(^{28}\) MW 15: 148.  
\(^{29}\) Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 94.
Thus the message he had for Turkish leaders: use nationalism to modernize and unify all groups but make it an educational instrument for democratic cooperation rather than forcing communities around as part of a will to power.

In light of what happened in Germany and what was taking place in Turkey, Dewey also faced an essential question impacting his thoughts on the relationship between education and nationalism. Is it therefore not possible to initiate a new school program whereby education would enable all peoples to live harmoniously within their own state and then transcend that feeling beyond their own national boundaries? Already, Dewey pointed out, science, art, and commerce were compelling factors making it possible for peoples living in different countries to cooperate with each other, thus making the world more interdependent.

**Support for a Peace University**

These recent developments in science and technology led Dewey to call for “a new movement in education to preserve what was socially most useful in the national heritage and to meet the issues of the emerging international society.” The identification of patriotism with “national interests,” which inevitably leads to exclusiveness, suspicion, jealousy, and hatred of other nations, Dewey argued, would now have to be abandoned as well as subordinated to the broader conceptions of human welfare. Therefore, in teaching history and geography as part of the social sciences it was Dewey's primary goal to emphasize what he proclaimed previously, namely, that

...whatever binds people together in cooperative human pursuits and results, apart from geographical limitations. The secondary and provisional character of national sovereignty in respect to the fuller, freer, and more fruitful association and intercourse of all human beings with one another must be instilled as a working disposition of mind.... This conclusion

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is bound up with the very idea of education as freeing of individual capacity in a progressive growth directed to social aims.\textsuperscript{31}

“A new movement in education” to bind “people together in cooperative human pursuits” led him to endorse the concept of a peace university in 1930. The proposed concept was to construct this university, named after President Abraham Lincoln, because of his moral leadership during the American Civil War. The peace university would consist of a six-year course, admitting 200 students each successive year until reaching a total enrollment of 1,200. Apart from American students being admitted, the plan also called for accepting 120 students from other parts of the globe. The curriculum’s specific goal was to foster international understanding and to address the problem of how nationalism had been taught worldwide by various governments seeking to advance their own special interests. It was a proposal Dewey happily supported. Unfortunately, apart from the initial proposal, it never came to fruition. The onset of the Great Depression diverted the necessary funding to make it a reality.\textsuperscript{32}

Nevertheless, the idea for a peace university was in response to the developing postwar meaning of nationalism as a new type of secular religion, that the historian Merle Curti pointed out when describing Dewey’s understanding of the term. What Dewey had hoped to accomplish through enrolling students from other parts of the world was to emphasize the importance of the term “nationality,” which had no political standing. The concept of a “Nation by which millions swear and for which they demand the sacrifice of all other loyalties,” Dewey argued, “is a myth; it has no being outside of emotion and fantasy.”\textsuperscript{33} It is a man-made political creation, or in other words, a “fictitious” character. It detracts from the human element of language, cultural traditions, and ethnic background as a pathway for international understanding. Teaching about nationalism should be understood in terms of protecting “citizens against pestilence and

\textsuperscript{31} Dewey, \textit{Democracy and Education}, 99.


\textsuperscript{33} Curti, “John Dewey and Nationalism,” 1105.
unnecessary infection, to assure them a reasonable degree of economic comfort and independence” and not used as a political instrument for military measures.34

**Fundamental Principles**

The attempt to establish a peace university illustrated Dewey’s postwar views about nationalism and world peace. They were based upon five fundamental principles, which remain applicable today: (1) building a democratic community; (2) teaching cooperation; (3) creating an environment based upon moral sensitivity; (4) promoting critical thinking; and (5) empowering self-esteem to challenge established modes of national behavior. These principles were the basis for establishing a trusting environment, one which Dewey advocated would enable schoolchildren to not fear changing their minds when constantly exposed to the nationalistic and patriotic interpretations contained in social studies and history textbooks.

All of Dewey’s arguments for world peace were based upon building the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for democratic citizenship. Dewey sought to make clear the distinction between what he labeled “loyal” versus “critical” patriotism. Loyal patriotism, he insisted, is a coerced brand of attachment to one’s homeland; it is not freely given and tends to create an unhealthy attitude of superiority relative to other cultures and polities. Instead, he insisted that a healthy understanding of patriotism in a democratic society is one, which furthers the civic purposes of education that the war failed to achieve—a critical appreciation for democratic values and moral principles. Dewey’s concept of democracy as a process of collaborative social and political decision-making through inclusive dialogue, public reasoning, and careful and sustained deliberation remains the basic key to unlocking the door when defining the true meaning of democratic nationalism.35

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34 Ibid., 1106.

35 Consult the following works by Sarah Stitzlein: *Teaching for Dissent: Citizenship, Education and Political Action* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2012) and *American
Dewey's underlying motivation was to call attention to the importance of education as an extension of moral democracy. Moral democracy, to him, meant that students should become responsible citizens willing to question the status quo and usher in necessary reforms for the betterment of all society. Training docile and obedient students willing to bend to the dictates of the state will in no way further democratic change. “From the standpoint of...education, a large portion of current material of instruction,” Dewey wrote in 1922,
is simply aside from the mark. The specialist in any one of the traditional lines is as likely to fall for social bunk even in its extreme forms of economic and nationalistic propaganda as the unschooled person; in fact his credulity is the more dangerous because he is so much more vociferous in its proclamation and so much more dogmatic in its assertion.36

No wonder, he continued, “Our schools send out men meeting the exigencies of contemporary life clothed in the chain-armor of antiquity, and priding themselves on the awkwardness of their movements as evidences of deep-wrought, time-tested convictions.”37 In other words, since the United States helped win the war, it was now America's responsibility to tear away the clothing of “chain-armor antiquity” and proudly don the robes of lasting world peace.38

**Instrumentalism for Peace**

Dewey's publications during this period on the matter of nationalism also took into account his instrumentalist technique for separating

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37 Ibid., 780.

38 Ibid., 779-80.
means and ends with respect to war and peace. He continuously addressed the dichotomy of means between nationalistic politics and power as force and that of democratic cooperation for peaceful coexistence as the end. Most of his arguments were based upon building the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for democratic citizenship. His scientific model of thinking or inquiry, posited in his 1933 revised work, *How We Think*, became an important aspect of his teaching when addressing this dichotomy. In terms of developing information-processing and thinking skills, Dewey offered the following four steps: (1) define the problem; (2) suggest alternative solutions or make hypotheses; (3) gather data for supporting or negating these hypotheses; and (4) select or reject hypotheses. Historian Merle Curti relied on this study for interpreting Dewey's approach to nationalism as, "his repudiation of general definitions as means for understanding concrete issues....Since for Dewey [social] problems could be solved only in concrete, not in general terms, only by testing hypotheses, not by general definitions and categories, rules of thumb or citation of precedents the matter of defining nationalism, national honor, national interest in concrete terms was crucial." Problems such as war, militarism and disarmament, patriotic conformity at all costs, viewing nationalism in a superior way to other societies, and social injustice were just some of the problems Dewey encouraged educators to address in their classrooms. Although no easy solution to solving the problem of war was at hand, Dewey called for a process of inquiry as a learning tool. He encouraged teachers to address the problem of nationalism and its association with appeals to war in terms of its destructive experience, which should not be divorced from values clarification.

Thus, his classroom method of inquiry was designed to connect value analysis with problem solving. Critical thinking in education, he argued, must undertake an analysis of problems impacting social development; it involves testing values and applying them to real world situations. Teaching students not to fall prey to sweeping generalizations through the practice of inquiry, gathering

facts, and clarifying values should ultimately result in developing better moral judgments. Students need to think about how the idea of peace, for instance, is a more positive hypothetical development when analyzing society’s most pressing problem (war) plaguing civilization.

Dewey’s progressive education theories further highlighted the disparity between war and peace. He challenged critics who questioned his efforts as to the importance of educating publics on the possibility for lasting peace as nothing more than a utopian fantasy. In terms of war, education teaches people to accept selfish behavior, promote authoritarian methods of rule, ignore moralistic reasons for good behavior, encourage coercion in the name of patriotic conformity and nationalistic allegiance, and comply with patterns of structural violence. In contrast, education for peace fosters responsibility, openness, innovation, self-motivation, cooperative behavior, and barrier-free opportunities to pursue individual interests for the common good.\(^{41}\) In the long run, which one is a more realistic option for civilization’s well-being? Let the method of inquiry begin!

Dewey’s intent was not to intellectualize the subject. Establishing a peaceful world order would never be accomplished by simply providing information and developing intellectual virtues; it required a rigorous process of inquiry to solve it and offer appropriate solutions. What he suggested is that one of the most important responsibilities for schools is to concentrate on self-discipline and a humanistic way of life. The lesson he, himself, learned from the war was how effective schools were in promoting a singular patriotism. The final grade, however, was a failure. Teachers did not communicate to their students that the ultimate goal was not the rightness of America’s involvement in the war but the establishment of a global community rejecting the resort to armed conflict.\(^{42}\) They

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\(^{41}\) Howlett & Cohan, John Dewey, America’s Peace-Minded Educator, 111.

\(^{42}\) Ibid., 111. This was certainly the message he conveyed in a 1930 article, “The Duties and Responsibilities of The Teaching Profession,” which appeared in the journal, School and Society. In this article he called for teachers to assume greater autonomy and educate their students about the pressing social and political problems of the day. He raised a number of questions teachers should address in relation to democratic social cooperation, including “war and peace.” In terms of international relations he asked: “Does the teaching of patriotism tend toward
sacrificed the principles of self-discipline and humanism by failing to encourage their students to think for themselves and to question how their leaders glorified American nationalism to achieve military ends.

When thinking about how to establish peace, Dewey still needed to reconcile his ideas about instrumentalism after World War I. During this conflict he supported the use of military force as the means to establish international order—the end—only to witness how easily his own philosophical argument was captured by an overzealous patriotism—one defined by intolerance and unquestioned loyalty. In the years after the war, however, he was able to reconcile this argument by applying it as a means for achieving social reform and domestic justice in order to advance democratic understanding. This is an important aspect many Dewey scholars may have not paid attention to and was the basis for the book, John Dewey, America’s Peace-Minded Educator. Antiwar activists applied Dewey’s pragmatism as an instrument for change by insisting that peace required social reform as well as social order. In line with Dewey’s progressivist thinking, they often argued that in order for the United States to take a leading role in the crusade for world peace the nation’s institutions and understanding of nationalism would have to change fundamentally. Critically, relying on Dewey’s philosophy of instrumentalism, these peace reformers not only added a moral dimension to their methods but also “a theory of conflict and a dialectic of action in a struggle [crusade against war] that became an ‘experiment with truth’: testing ideas through political dialogue, exemplary conduct, and communication during conflict, rather than through political violence.” Their theory upheld Dewey’s belief that antagonistic actions were necessary for establishing an appreciation of truth and the consciousness of growth—a critical step toward

antagonism toward other peoples?...Should definite questions of international relations, such as our relation to the Caribbean region, the use of force in intervention in financial and economic questions, our relation to the World Court, etc., be introduced?” Consult, Joseph Ratner, ed., Education Today by John Dewey (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1940), 224-29.

43 Ibid., 71-75.

44 Nigel Young, “Concepts of Peace from 1913 to the Present,” Ethics and International Affairs Vol. 27, no. 2 (2013), 160.
reconciling opposite tendencies.

Primarily, when addressing the issue of nationalism, postwar peace activists applied Dewey’s method of inquiry to revise an understanding of nationalism. Relying on Dewey’s naturalistic, inquiry-based approach over an epistemological, knowledge-based approach, they called for a critical understanding of nationalism. Cognizant that they could not solve all the political and social problems of the day, they still persisted in their belief that nationalism should not be accepted passively as applied to the principle of “American First.” Rather, it should correspond to inquiry as part of a rigorous process, which examines the meaning through hypothesis testing as the basis for further human action. In this context, the most appropriate test requires tying the concepts of nationality and sovereignty (free will) to nationalism as an instrument for democratic cooperation to dissociate it from power politics. Like Dewey, they challenged the public to examine the environmental impact on nationalism’s meaning not as accepted knowledge but as an instrumental idea for continuous social reform.

Lessons for Today

Tellingly, Dewey took great pains to analyze the meaning behind nationalism in a 1927 article he contributed to the pacifist journal, World Tomorrow. The term, he insisted, is a double-edged sword. “Nationalism is a tangled mixture of good and bad,” he commented. “It is not possible to diagnose its undesirable results, much less consider ways of counteracting them,” he added, “unless the desirable traits are fully acknowledged. For they furnish the ammunition and the armor, which are utilized as means of offense and defense by sinister interests to make Nationalism a power for evil.” More to the point, Dewey insisted,

[T]he doctrine of national sovereignty is simply the denial on the part of a political state of either legal or moral

responsibility. It is a direct proclamation of the unlimited and unquestionable right of a political state to do what it wants to do in respect to other nations and to do it as and when it pleases. It is a doctrine of international anarchy . . . . Internationalism is a word to which they accursed significance, an idea to which by all the great means at their disposal they attach a sinister and baleful significance, ignoring the fact that it but portends that subjection of relations between nations to responsible law which is taken for granted in relations between citizens . . . . [T]he glorification of War through identification with patriotism is proof that irresponsible sovereignty is still the basic notion.  

Of course, in the modern world, nationalism has become the philosophy of the state and a unified nation represents the "highest value in civilization." American nationalism, like almost all nationalisms, Curti observes, "has expressed a faith in the superiority of a particular landscape, a special complex of traditions and institutions, a special mission." In a dialectical sense, a pluralistic internationalism may very well infer a superiority of a particular landscape. Yet what has presented most problems when teaching about nationalism is that it has lost its association with the root values of Americanism: namely, individualism, nonconformity, and humanitarianism. While many might argue that one of the root values of Americanism is its exceptionalism, Dewey remained steadfast in his belief that such a supposition engenders an attitude of superiority and condescension—an attitude that ignores the fundamental principles of the democratic way of life. Loyalties to past American traditions, ones which were not based upon a sense of exceptionalism and took into account the public will, have been supplanted by an almost unyielding faith in the need for national security as encouraged by the established order. Thus, the American distinction between loyalty to the government and its elected officials and loyalty to the general good

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46 Ibid., 802-803.
48 Ibid., xiv.
needs to be rekindled in the minds of students when asked what nationalism means to them. To promote a healthy definition of American nationalism as an instrument for achieving better relations at home and abroad requires an “individualistic type of loyalty, based on recognition of the services of the nation to the needs of individuals, and on belief in the right of all individuals in the nation to those services.” It should not mean that individuals must surrender their values to the dictates of the state—a bitter pill Dewey had to swallow given the failings of his pragmatism during World War I. The scope of the war, led Dewey to return over and over to the question of nationalism and how it should be defined.

Perhaps, one of Dewey’s most significant criticisms of nationalism was its penchant for developing racial prejudice towards foreigners. He addressed this in a 1922 article, “Racial Prejudice and Friction.” How peoples from other countries were perceived had been shaped by political factors, which became the basis for racial animosity and vice versa: “I think we may safely conclude that the political factor is the one chiefly responsible for converting antipathy to the foreign into definite racial friction. The matter is complicated by the fact that nationalism has spread until now antagonism is reciprocal.” There was absolutely no question that the political mechanisms attached to nationalism and used to promote support for the war ultimately brought responses of fear and suspicion towards foreigners. Thus, it becomes easier to wage a war tied to national loyalty when racial prejudice is associated with the enemy.

What is most important when discussing the concept of nationalism is that Dewey never abandoned his hope that “…all education which develops power to share effectively in social life is moral” and the duty and obligation of all educators is “to provide alternatives to the status quo in personal and social relations, in the conduct of economic and political affairs, and in the nature of

49 Ibid., 248.
50 MW 15:249. It should be noted that many scholars have accused Dewey of this very same view when it came to his own scathing indictment of German nationalism during the war. Consult, Howlett and Cohan, John Dewey, 37-40.
51 Ibid., 249-50.
international affairs."\(^{52}\) Dewey’s fear was associating nationalism with state worship as an absolute. The way to encourage a healthier understanding regarding the positive aspects of nationalism would be, as Dewey observed nearly one hundred years earlier, to develop a citizen-minded consciousness transcending entrenched political habits, which protect the status quo. This would involve teaching nationalism as an evolving and ever-changing concept not defined by geographical boundaries and political state systems. It would have to take into account an experimentally, psychologically, and sociologically educated approach to ethics and politics—one that respects all races and creeds as neighbors in a world community. Devotion would be to the nation as a cultural community within a global setting while the daily operations within each country would be left to elected officials. In this view, national security would not rest upon the shoulders of military might since there would be no need for it.

Sadly, however, educators continue to encounter what some practitioners refer to as a “selective tradition,” in which mandated state curriculums place pressure on teachers as to what must be taught in the classroom. In many cases, the curriculum is meant to continue the status quo—support the dominant political establishment—while giving the illusion of creating change. For example, the subject of history, one Dewey singled out in his time, remains constricted by institutional mechanisms so that it continues to be taught to maintain the status quo and socialize students into compliance regarding the dominant economic, political, and social realities currently in place. This is the exact opposite of what Dewey wanted in the aftermath of World War I. Indeed, as one observer argues, “State curriculum guides, standardized tests, and corporate textbooks not only regulate what is and is not taught, but also the perspective from which history is taught, the pace of instruction, instructional methods, and ultimately, determine what counts as historical knowledge.”\(^{53}\) Sadly,

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\(^{52}\) Curti, “John Dewey and Nationalism,” 1109.

the nationalistic influence found in textbooks and curricular materials continues: “Lost from textbook narratives and curricular objectives are the demands that war makes on our democratic institutions, its costs in both blood and treasure, and the myriad stories of Americans who struggled to limit war through nonviolent alternatives.”

Indeed, those who sought to prevent or limit war by nonviolence are just as nationalistic or patriotic in their own right as those who carried arms in combat. So, how do we define the true meaning of nationalism within a democratic construct?

Certainly, Dewey always insisted that the mission of schools is to enable students to examine key social problems. He argued that classes be structured in a problem-solving way, one not driven by a teacher-centered pedagogy as the source of all truth. It was an important element in his pedagogical beliefs:

The teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these influences.

During World War I teachers were instructed to indoctrinate students about the virtue of patriotism and were considered agents of change for immigrants. Consequently, they were not provided the opportunity to discover for themselves their own understanding of nationalism.

The fact that this nation was created through the migration of peoples from other parts of the world was even more reason to appreciate his view, stated earlier, “that the peculiarity of our nationalism is its internationalism.” Certainly, one can argue that this view remains one particularism among others in a dialectic of particularisms, which has done little to resolve the problem of war and international distrust. Yet from a philosophical position, Dewey was laying the educational groundwork for a more positive understanding of nationalism, one rooted in communal cooperation, not

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54 Ibid., 13.
institutionalized political standards. Removing the theoretical obstacles to a full appreciation for the concept of nationalism as a borderless bridge, required people to look beyond their own established political system; it called for a revision of their long-established thinking processes. His philosophy was directed at using experience, not acquired knowledge, to appreciate the distinctiveness of American nationalism as part of a much larger process.

Of course, in keeping with Dewey's philosophy, he set out to raise larger questions in order to work through the problem. Each particular problem, like nationalism, was accompanied by another set of problems. He did not offer ironclad solutions but rather a process of inquiry designed to create awareness to the issue. Simply put, it was not a matter of providing a solution to the problem of nationalism, but of offering a method for removing those theoretical obstacles to addressing it. In this context, Dewey insisted in his time, that people may very well have been able to consider its true meaning to be a “unifier” for all peoples, regardless of custom, creed, or nationality. If such had been the case, it would have reinforced Dewey's definition of American nationalism as part of the democratic way. The pathway for teaching nationalism, in Dewey's time as well as ours, is through an appreciation for democracy as a way of life:

Intolerance, abuse, calling of names because of differences of opinion about religion or politics or business, as well as because of differences of race, color, wealth or degree of culture are treason to the democratic way of life. For everything which bars freedom and fullness of communication sets up barriers that divide human beings into sets and cliques, into antagonistic sects and factions, and thereby undermines the democratic way of life….These things destroy the essential condition of the democratic way of living even more effectually than open coercion [fed by philistine nationalism] which...is effective only when it succeeds in breeding hate, suspicion, intolerance in the minds of individual human beings.56

Given that the twentieth century proved to be the most deadly in terms of death and destruction humankind has witnessed, it remains critical that educators and schools examine how a philistine adoration for nationalism—as contained in school curriculums—actually prevents students from understanding their environment. Educators need to examine mandated state curriculums and school programs, which promote the virtues of nationalism based on economic and military success, and see how they may foster entrenched habits and customs for fear of disrupting the status quo. It is a top-down, authoritarian approach to education, which discourages critical thinking and questioning—the very antithesis of Dewey’s progressive education views. Dewey and his co-author James Hayden Tufts said it best in their 1932 revised edition of *Ethics*: “Those who are devoted to peace must recognize the scope of the issue and be willing to bear the cost, largely moral and intangible, of sacrificing their nationalistic sentiments to broader conceptions of human welfare. The criterion of the greater good of all must be extended beyond the nation.”

A capacity for reflective thinking about what nationalism can achieve and what it can do in terms of building a more equitable social order—one “extended beyond the nation”—is far more beneficial than obedience to political authority marked by institutionalized injustices and fixed by the status quo. The nationalistic fervor of World War 1 contradicted Dewey’s cosmopolitan sensibilities; it violated his “principles of social growth—namely, an ability to accommodate a wider and wider membership and a wider and wider range of interactions among them.” It was employed as an instrument to accept the legitimacy of war while undercutting those virtues calling for good behavior and moral cooperation. Thus, “Is it possible,” Dewey asked in *Democracy and Education*, “for an educational system to be conducted by a national state and yet the full social ends of the

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educative process not be restricted, constrained, and corrupted?"59 Are we capable of reconciling national loyalty or patriotism with a "superior devotion to the things which unite men in common ends, irrespective of national political boundaries?"60

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WAR WITHOUT VIOLENCE?
DEWEY’S INSIGHTS ON MODERN WARFARE

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With the rise of violent, non-state actors such as Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and Al-Shabaab, and the ensuing military responses, Dewey’s 1916 essays on force, violence, and coercion are worthy of revisititation. While Dewey advocated international frameworks to prevent military confrontations between nation-states, his theories are largely silent in addressing non-state actors with agendas seemingly antithetical to democratic and pluralistic societies. If such non-actors are unconstrained by the international laws and conventions which Dewey advocated, and diplomacy is not a viable option, then Dewey might concede that military action may be the most appropriate response. Justification for military action, however, requires an accounting of both the character of the non-state actor as well as the capacities of the nation-state. Counterintuitively, Dewey’s insights on force also provide a framework for characterizing the nature of such military action as something other than violence, i.e. war without violence. In this paper I argue that it is incumbent on the modern nation state (and international nation-state community) to create bold and innovate coercions that engage non-state actors. Unfortunately, however, the U.S. is currently moving in the exact opposite direction by destroying its own capacity for coercions that would avoid war.
Dewey’s Force: Energy, Violence, and Coercion

On the eve of U.S. entry into WWI, Dewey examined the philosophical aspects of force. He characterized them as energy, violence, and coercion. Force-as-energy was the intelligent and appropriate use of force to achieve an end. Force-as-violence was the ill-considered and often excessive use of force that did not contribute to realizing a goal. Force-as-coercion was that grey area between energy and violence – the force expended in converting wasteful violence to useful energy.

Dewey used a traffic analogy to illustrate his point. Force-as-energy was the act of driving with purpose, turning left and right with an end in mind and arriving safely at a desired destination. Force-as-violence was driving at cross purposes with other drivers (running intersections, exceeding safe speeds, ignoring traffic signals, etc.) and inevitably creating collisions that prevented anyone from assurances of reaching their destination safely or efficiently. Force-as-coercion was realized by establishing rules of the road: right-of-ways, center dividers, speed limits, licensing and registration, driver’s education programs, and so on.

The international scene prior to WWI, Dewey might argue, resembled the road with no rules, and collision was the norm for nation-states to resolve disputes. Due to a lack of international dispute resolution frameworks, when nation states came to cross purposes, war was the standard method of resolving major disagreements. For Dewey, however, collisions/violence (i.e. war) could be avoided if the proper rules-of-the-road (i.e. international agreements and institutions) were in place. Dewey advocated the hard work of

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1 An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2018 John Dewey Society annual meeting in New York (April 13-14, 2018).
creating force-as-coercion in the form of international frameworks and institutions that gave nations alternatives to war. In the context of Dewey’s force framework, force-as-violence (war) was converted to force-as-energy (dispute resolution) through force-as-coercion (international frameworks).

Dewey and War

Dewey’s perspective on war is complex. Noted Dewey scholar Leonard Waks writes that Dewey considered “war in itself [. . .] completely destructive of personal freedom – a wholesale enslavement of entire populations.” In the wake of WWI, Dewey took his distaste of war so far as to promote the radical idea of outlawing war itself. And yet, despite his fundamental opposition to the idea of war, Dewey ultimately favored U.S. military action in WWI, WWII, and the Korean War (Ratner, 1988). Even with pacifist proclivities, Dewey, it seems, was not fundamentally opposed to military action.

Dewey’s examination of force was no repudiation of war either. Dewey concluded his essay Force and Coercion by indicating that war may sometimes be an appropriate course of action:

. . . there is always a possibility that what passes as a legitimate use of force may be so wasteful as to really be a use of violence; and per contra that measures condemned as recourse to mere violence may, under the given circumstances, represent an intelligent utilization of energy.

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By Dewey's definition, a force (even in the form of war) is not violence if the force is the appropriate and efficient means to achieving a given end. Similarly, a force that prevents war could be considered violence if it is not a proper use of energy. An illustration of this somewhat counterintuitive notion might be the attempted diplomatic appeasement of Nazi Germany as a form of violence (as it was an ultimately ineffective means that did not produce a desired end) and the ensuing military confrontation with Allied military forces as a form of energy but not violence (as war was perhaps the only effective means of challenging the spread of Nazi totalitarianism). As the Allied forces end goal could (arguably) not be achieved without military action, Dewey's framework characterizes the Allied military action in WWII as energy and not as violence.

Yet, while advocating both for the outlawry of war and the justifiability of certain wars, Dewey remained philosophically consistent in the context of force as energy, violence, or coercion. In the instances where Dewey advocated war, war was, specific to that time, to that place, and to Dewey's personal subjectivities, the most appropriate and efficient use of force to achieve an end. However, Dewey might have considered these same wars a form of violence if more efficient and effective alternatives to armed conflict existed. To prevent future wars, Dewey advocated the construction of international frameworks that would provide alternatives to war. These frameworks would serve as a force-as-coercion by providing alternatives to war for nation-states.

**Addressing the Nation-State**

The force-as-coercion capacities of the nation-state (and the international nation-state community) are important in characterizing military action as either force-as-energy or force-as-violence. Modern force-as-coercion capacities include frameworks and institutions such as international courts, multilateral trade agreements, inspection teams, and professional career diplomats. When these force-as-coercions are operating effectively, they often provide a means other than war for resolving disputes. War in the
presence of such force-as-coercions is unnecessary – a form of violence. When, however, these force-as-coercions are not in place or are not operating effectively, the nation-state may determine war to be the most appropriate and efficient means of achieving an end. War then becomes a force of energy (and some would go so far as to call such war a “necessary war”). Allow me to restate this point. When coercions exist and can be effective in achieving ends, war is unnecessary, and Dewey’s framework characterizes a resort to war under unnecessary circumstances as violence. By contrast, when coercions do not exist or are not effective, Dewey’s framework characterizes war as energy. What some would call a “war of necessity” is force-as-energy, while an unnecessary war is force-as-violence.

For those desiring to prevent or end a war, such an action requires changing the character of the war from force-as-energy (necessary war) to force-as-violence (unnecessary war) through coercions. This change may be neither quick nor easy. Once war is established as energy, it may be difficult for the nation-state to later re-establish it as violence. Why is this? Because the institutions and frameworks that provide coercions take time to build. Dewey noted that organization cannot be “whisked out of existence” at the end of a war, but I would also add that they cannot be whisked into existence to end or prevent war either.² Professional career diplomats take decades to develop. Effective international frameworks often take years of negotiation to establish. And in the case where a nation-state has either failed to construct coercions or systematically eliminated or degraded existing coercions, these degradations are not quickly reversed by a change in heart (or even a change in government).

The neglect and damage may take decades to overcome. Even a government bent on solutions other than war may find that, despite its best efforts, military action remains its only effective option due to the lack of diplomatic alternatives left to it by a preceding government.

The new government cannot immediately re-characterize the existing wars of the previous government as violence and withdraw, because effective options other than war have simply been neglected or eliminated. Despite intentions otherwise, war remains a force of energy because of the lack of coercions that would have made war otherwise. War may remain a necessity (a force-as-energy), rather than unnecessary (force-as-violence), for the foreseeable future.

Of course, some might argue that all war is unnecessary, and many more may profess that they desire it to be. Given his writings, it seems that Dewey did not consider war unnecessary, but that he desired to make it so. Dewey himself lived through two of the most destructive wars of human history. To end such wars Dewey advocated forceful action. In *Force and Coercion*, Dewey implied that the only way to make war unnecessary was through the application of force itself. Stated Dewey “No ends are accomplished without the use of force. [...] Squeamishness about force is the mark not of idealistic but of moonstruck morals.”

Dewey called for those idealists who would end war to put their ideals into tangible efforts that create the coercions that prevent war. He called for the construction of international frameworks that would put an end to war itself.

The Nation-State: Force and the Rational Actor

In applying Dewey’s analysis of force to the international arena, I believe an important caveat to be that such an application assumes the behaviors of a rational actor. By the term “rational,” I mean to say an actor who considers alternatives and chooses the option of most utility. In applying the rational actor to Dewey’s traffic analogy, such an actor follows the established traffic laws. As the laws create restrictions, the driver may not complete a given trip as quickly as they would like. Their movement is delayed from obeying speed limits, stopping at traffic lights, and yielding to other drivers where appropriate. But the long-term benefit of a slower arrival over many trips to many destinations is soon apparent. Thanks to the traffic laws,

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the driver reaches their numerous desired destinations with a high degree of reliably and safely. The driver follows the rules-of-the-road because they provide the most utility to the driver. Similarly, nation-states can be deterred from war by international rules-of-the-road that provide long-term benefit and utility. Individual nation-states may not resolve disputes as quickly, as fully, or as favorably as they might envision a swift military victory would, but the long-term benefit of lives saved, treasured spared, and the uncertain results of war outweigh these short-term costs.

The Non-State Actor

Given Dewey’s application of force to the entity of nation-states, what then of the non-state actor participating in the national or international arena? And particularly, what of the seemingly anti-liberal, anti-democratic non-state actor? What of the actor who, for instance, opposes freedom of religion or the education of women? What of the actor whokidnaps children to serve as child-soldiers and sex-workers? The actor who opposes coexistence with democratic pluralities exacts violence qua violence on democratic pluralities? Is military action against such an actor an appropriate response? Applying Dewey’s framework to these questions calls for an examination of both the desired ends of the non-state actor and the effectiveness of forces available to the responding nation-state.

The Non-State Actor: The Ends of the Non-State Actor

First, let us address the desired ends of the non-state actor. While the preceding paragraph lists brutal means used by some non-state actors, I contend that Dewey’s framework ultimately calls for an examination of an actor’s desired ends. Importantly, for Dewey, the ends worthy of military action were democracy. Consider Dewey’s stance in WWI. In advocating for military action in WWI, Dewey defined the end state of the war to be “...a world safe for democracy and a world in
which democracy is safely anchored . . .” For Dewey, democracy was the end worth fighting for. The preservation of democracy was an end worthy to Dewey even of war. As Dewey advocated for democracy for the word’s nation-state democracies, it only seems appropriate that the democratic ends of a non-state actor also be taken into account. If the ends of the non-state actor are democratic, the nation-state should look for opportunities to advance that cause. However, if the ends are anti-democratic, the nation state may be justified in its opposition.

But in this opposition, can war be avoided? Given an anti-democratic non-state actor, Dewey might argue that opportunities for compromise or agreement are limited because that actor’s ends are incompatible with the ends of democratic and pluralistic nations. With incompatible ends, neither the nation-state or the non-state can be satisfied, and thus, military action may be the most effective force for resolution (perhaps the only means). If the nation-state considers non-military coercions to be ineffectual, military action against the non-state actor would characterized as a “necessary war.” And, as previously discussed, Dewey’s framework characterizes “necessary wars” as force-as-energy and not as force-as-violence.

Having freely used the term “democracy” in the preceding paragraphs, it is worth pausing here to briefly explore Dewey’s concept of democracy. Democracy, for Dewey, was not about the process of voting or of political parties. David Hansen writes that Dewey considered democracy to be “more than a set of institutions […] but as what Dewey calls an “associated form of living” characterized by open, fluid channels of genuine communication and collaboration among people who may differ from one another with respect to values, interests, and aspirations.”

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10 As noted by Clarence Karier, many were critical of Dewey’s stand on the war. Former student Randolph Bourne was particularly vocal in denouncing Dewey and his pragmatic philosophy for justifying ends without fully considering the means that those ends entailed. See Clarence Karier, “Making the World Safe for Democracy,” Educational Theory 27, no. 1 (Winter 1977): 24-29.
Abowitz ties Dewey’s concept of democracy to an associated form of living that promotes both individual growth as well as social growth, and to a society that “that prizes experience, participation, experimentation, and pluralistic organizational forms.” The association and free communication of individuals within a democratic society then serves to find and promote the value of all individuals and social groups within that society. In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey summarizes his notion of democracy:

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

Conceivably, no nation-state or non-state actor fully meets the high standards Dewey sets for democracy. But many aspire to do so, even if in incomplete fits and starts. In contrast with the imperfect democratic actor, however, the anti-democratic actor seeks to repress individuals and groups within its society while brooking no voice for dissention. And it is in examining the democratic or anti-democratic ends of the non-state actor that we are able to move forward in in applying Dewey’s analysis of force.

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The Non-State Actor: Force and the Non-Rational Actor

Now, let us return to Dewey’s traffic analogy for a moment. I have previously argued that Dewey’s analysis of force assumes the behavior of a rational actor, and that nation-states can be coerced into diplomatic behaviors through rational consent to international frameworks. Such a rational nation-state is analogized as a driver who complies with the rules-of-the-road. Similarly, a non-state actor who complies with the international rules-of-the-road is similar to the nation-state in this analogy. These actors address grievances and seek solutions within the existing national and international frameworks. How then should we conceive of a non-state actor that refuses these international frameworks? What if the non-state does not display “rational” behavior and cannot be coerced through diplomatic actions? If Dewey analogized a rational actor as a safe (and sober) driver, then let us consider a non-rational, non-state actor as akin to a drunk driver. Allow me to expand on this analogy.

When confronted with drunk driving, what can a society do to address it? Dewey’s framework calls for the creation of coercions that convert violence to energy, that is, that return drunk driving (violence) to sober driving (energy). Society creates many coercions to counter drunk driving such as laws, legal enforcement, education programs, and public service campaigns. These coercions work to convert the violence of drunk driving to the energy of sober driving. And while seeking to change behavior, it is also important to note that these same coercions unapologetically seek to eliminate the behavior of drunk driving. The coercions of society are not efforts to democratically tolerate drunken driving but efforts to defeat it entirely. Society accepts no compromise with drunken drivers as the drivers’ mere presence endangers the efficient and safe trip of every other driver. Similarly, democratic nation-states with democracy in mind act to eliminate destructive anti-democratic non-state actors.

As long as the non-state actor’s ends are anti-democratic, the democratic nation-state has justification in opposing them. And the threat of physical harm by such a non-state actor may accelerate the nation-state’s sense of urgency to respond while also limiting the
force-as-coercion tools available to the nation-state. The presence of a drunk driver on the road means that the coercions of education and public service announcements have failed and that now legal enforcement is required. Just as the presence of a drunk driver on the road requires immediate and decisive action to prevent violence, a non-state actor active in physical destruction requires immediate and decisive attention. This brings us to our second consideration.

**Addressing the Non-State Actor: The Capacities of the Nation-State**

The second consideration in responding to the non-state actor is examining the responding nation-state’s (or international community’s) capacity for coercion. That is, to ask if the nation-state has the capacity to convert the violence (or potential violence) of the non-state actor to energy. What capacity does the nation-state have (other than military action) to address the actions and grievances of the non-state actor? Do diplomatic equivalencies exist for non-state actors? Are lines of communication open? How can their grievances be heard and addressed short of armed conflict? Do timelines allow for prolonged negotiations, or is more immediate action necessary? In responding to the non-state actor, it is incumbent on the nation-state (and the international community) to develop such coercive capacities. Where Dewey advocated the development of international frameworks, we should today be extending similar innovations to the non-state actor where possible. Where Dewey called for the hard work of international coercions, we should continue that hard work to address non-state actors. And while we should be idealistic in our efforts, we should not be naive. This is hard work that requires the use of force, and Dewey would advise us to not be squeamish about the application of force to achieve these goals.

In discussing the non-state actor, I have placed a heavy burden on the nation-state (and international nation-state community) which should be explained. Today, as in Dewey’s world a century ago, the nation-state remains the dominant instrument of realizing (or denying) democracy for the individual. Cosmopolitan philosopher
Kwame Anthony Appiah refers to the nation state “the primary mechanism for ensuring [basic] entitlements” such as “health, food, shelter, [and] education” are met.\textsuperscript{14} Dewey, I believe, would likely include democracy as one of those basic entitlements. In advocating for the necessity of democracy, Dewey stated that “autocracy means uniformity as surely as democracy means diversification [... and] the great hope lies with the latter. The former strains human nature to the breaking point; the latter releases and relieves it – such, I take it, is the ultimate sanction of democracy, for which we are fighting.”\textsuperscript{15} To realize international democracy, Dewey advocated for self-governing democratic nations bound by international agreements as an opposition to anti-democratic, or autocratic, forces.\textsuperscript{16} While Dewey focused on anti-democratic nation states as the source of totalitarianism, appropriate for his time (and not without precedent today), the democratic nation-state’s opposition should today be extended to anti-democratic non-state actors as well.

Also, as nation-states consider the application of force to non-state actors, it is important to acknowledge that there are limitations to the behaviors that liberal, pluralistic, democratic societies may brook. Among those limitations are the anti-democratic practices they will tolerate. Democratic nations certainly should subscribe to resolving disagreements through democratic practices (such as robust communications and international frameworks) but they should also oppose anti-democratic practices where they can. Genocide, the suppression of women and minorities, and the imposition of a single religion are among the anti-democratic behaviors a democratic society should confront.

This is not to imply that Dewey would immediately advocate military action against anti-democratic non-state actors. Except for an existential threat to democracy, surely he would not. Rather, as he did in outlining international frameworks, Dewey would advocate the difficult work of creating coercions that prevent the need for military

action. The nation-state (and international community) should be seeking creative ways of engagement with anti-democratic non-state actors. And the nation-state should also be addressing the conditions that give rise to such repressive actors and intolerant dogmas.

The limitations of this interpretation

There are several limitations to my interpretation of Dewey’s framework worth acknowledging. I address three here. The first is to imply that all of today’s nation-states are liberal, pluralistic democracies with the goal of democracy in mind. Certainly, they are not. However oppressive nation-states may be, in most cases modern international agreements act as effective coercions for resolving international disputes in a manner short of war. Additionally, since the advent of nuclear weapons and the accompanying paradigm of mutually assured destruction, the incalculable cost of war between nuclear armed states serves as a “force-as-coercion” for even the most warlike nation-state. While democratic nation states may continue to promote democratic progress, major state-on-state warfare has largely been eliminated through effective force-as-coercions and the sheer destructive scale of modern warfare.

A second limitation is to imply that all non-state actors are bad-actors or that all violent non-state actors do not have legitimate grievances. The distinction between terrorist and legitimate freedom fighter can sometimes be a difficult one to draw and may depend on one’s own positionality. Determining the character of the non-state actor is important in addressing this limitation. Dewey repeatedly, if reluctantly, called for citizens of democracies to fight to protect international democracy.\(^{17}\) It seems likely that Dewey would advocate the same for those who desired to establish or extend democracy if they have no good options outside of armed conflict. This is not to call for armed actions by frustrated non-state actors, but a call for nation-states to examine the reasons that cause such actions and to address them early. If the non-state actor has legitimate grievances in

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\(^{17}\) Howlett, “John Dewey and the Crusade to Outlaw War,” 336-55.
realizing greater plurality and greater liberty, the nation-state should do what it can to recognize those grievances. The nation-state should also work to create coercions that realize and expand the democracy that democratically minded non-state actors seek.

A third limitation I will address is the implication that all international frameworks are effective and legitimate. They are not. While international frameworks are important and provide among the most important coercions preventing war today, it is important that such frameworks continually be evaluated as a means of promoting democracy in its truest sense. International frameworks must promote a democracy that, to borrow again from Leonard Waks, “emphasizes the importance of social bonds within national and transnational groups formed through communication,” that promotes “a broad communication, and its conscious acceptance as the principle in settling conflicts,” and that aims to resolve differences “through inquiry rather than force.”¹⁸

In addressing these limitations, I believe Dewey would place the burden on the nation-state and specifically those who call themselves citizens of liberal, pluralistic democracies. The burden is on us as citizens to ensure (1) that their nation-state is in fact a liberal, pluralistic society acting with democracy as an end goal; (2) that their nation-state and the international community is considering the character and grievances of non-state actors when considering possible military action against such actors; and (3) that modern international frameworks are promoting an international form of democracy for the nation-state as well as the non-state actor.

Application (part 1)

Unlike Dewey’s world prior to WWI, the modern world is largely characterized by the international frameworks and agreements. In 1918, Dewey called for the creation of a “federated world government and a variety of freely experimenting and freely cooperating self-

governing local, cultural and industrial groups." That vision is realized, however imperfectly, in modern institutions such as the United Nations, the European Union, multilateral trade agreements (like the Trans-Pacific Partnership), and international agreements (such as the Paris Accords on climate change). Dewey’s concept is not a world government, which would undoubtedly lead to even greater concentrations of wealth and power than we experience today, but a federation of self-governing nations operating under democratically developed agreements. This federation opposes war by creating opportunities other than war in which to resolve disputes. In this regard, evidence indicates that this international federation has been largely successful.

Since the end of WWII, the world has seen a sharp decline in wars between nation states. This decline can largely be contributed to the development of international frameworks for dispute resolutions. For example, the United Nations’ International Court of Justice, established in 1945, provides a force-as-coercion in allowing nation-states to address border disputes without military confrontation. The General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs, established in 1948, and its successor the World Trade Organization, established in 1995, provide force-as-coercions in allowing nation-states frameworks to address trade disagreements. To move forward, then, and to make such frameworks applicable to warfare with non-state actors, the nation-state (and international community) should seek similar innovations and frameworks to engage and resolve disputes with non-state actors.

And yet...

Unfortunately, of late, we seem to have discarded Dewey’s wisdom and have headed in the exact opposite direction that Dewey would advocate. Rather than developing innovative ideas for addressing non-state actors, or even of continuing the hard work of building, revising, and evolving international frameworks, we instead find ourselves in the process of destroying them.

Since the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the U.S. has experienced the systematic dismantling and destruction of its own coercive diplomatic institutions. The American Diplomatic Service Association, for instance, reports that in 2017 the U.S Department of State has "lost 60 percent of its Career Ambassadors" and that its ability to hire new diplomats has been cut by 72 percent. At the same time, U.S. military expenditures have increased substantially. The U.S. Secretary of Defense presciently stated that the U.S. military would need to buy more ammunition in response to the drastic budget cuts to the U.S.'s diplomatic branch. Dewey likely would have agreed—not necessarily with buying more ammunition, but with the increased likelihood of war given the destruction of coercive alternatives other than war. As military capacity increases while diplomatic capacity simultaneously decreases, military action and war becomes more likely out of simple necessary. And even where international frameworks continue to exist, as the U.S. loses diplomats, it diminishes its own capacity to work within these international frameworks. The coercions to prevent war which Dewey sought are thus diminished or destroyed.

Meanwhile, the U.S. continues to increase military spending despite outspending every other nation three times over and accounting for over a third of all worldwide military expenditures. War becomes more likely simply because it is constructed to vastly exceed all other options. It evokes the old adage, when every tool is a hammer, every problem becomes a nail. Similarly, when all the nation-state has remaining are military options, every solution becomes war. In this paradigm, the coercive actions (other than military action) to address non-state actors, that arguably were never robust to begin with, seem less and less likely to develop in the current

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environment.

Application (part 2)

The continued work of the nation-state (and international community) is clear. We must continue the struggle of creating effective force-as-coercions. This is not the work of maintaining status-quo but of creating coercions that are appropriate to the challenges of the modern world. This work must continue the work of cultivating and modifying international frameworks and agreements, and it must also address the non-state actor in ways that are innovative, far-sighted, and, to borrow from Dewey, non-squeamish in their application of force. The creation of force-as-coercion that converts violence to energy is Dewey’s vision. Working the convert the violence of non-state actors to energy should be our goal as well.

What exactly those coercions are, I cannot say, but I believe they must take some form of increased communications through diplomatic engagement, economic development, and educational investments that revolutionize and exceed any such efforts to date. Whatever form they take will require a basic reversal of U.S. policy direction and an investment and expansion of U.S. diplomatic capacities. While I am hopeful as to what coercions may accomplish, I am not (as Dewey would say) moonstruck. Even the best coercions are not panaceas. There will continue to be non-state actors for which the democratic nation-state can never find common ends and military action is determined “necessary.” In these instances, military action should seek to install or restore effective coercions as soon as possible.

One final note. For those professional civil servants who have dedicated their lives to advancing diplomacy and preventing war, and yet are demoralized by the recent direction that their country has taken, I believe Dewey would say something to the effect of “hold on.” These are the individuals who have done and who continue to do the hard work that Dewey knew was necessary for international peace. To the extent that they can continue to serve in their capacities while keeping their principles and morals intact, hold on. These are the
individuals who continue to hold the frameworks of peace together. The nation-state and the world community need them in place should the U.S. reverse its direction. Should their conscience demand that they find work elsewhere, may they remain engaged such that that are morally and intellectually available when conditions permit. Hold on.

Conclusion

Dewey's provides a framework for examining force as either energy, violence, or coercion. It is through coercions, Dewey argues, that violence is converted to energy. Dewey sought to prevent wars between nation-states by creating robust coercions in the form of international agreements and frameworks. In using Dewey's framework to addressing modern non-state actors, particularly brutal and seemingly anti-democratic actors, the concept of coercions remains applicable. The nation-state (and international community) continues to play an indispensable role in responding to non-state actors. In determining an appropriate response, the nation-state must first consider the desired ends of the non-state actor (are the ends democratic or not?). Secondly, the nation-state must cultivate existing and develop innovative new coercions that address non-state actors. In instances where military action is still determined “necessary,” Dewey's framework characterize such action as energy and not as violence. While current U.S. foreign policy abandons much of Dewey's wisdom, I advocate a return to, and an expansion of, the hard work of diplomacy as well as the creation of effective coercions directed toward engaging the non-state actor. It is in implementing Dewey's force-as-coercions that we may find a way to contain, or even to end, violence.
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JOHN DEWEY AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: BEYOND AMERICAN AND POSTCOLONIAL NATIONALISM IN AN AGE OF CULTURAL HYBRIDITY

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This is an extended abstract of a paper that was presented at the 2018 John Dewey Society annual meeting in New York (April 13-14, 2018).

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How do we think of nationalism today? Nationalism has contributed not only to the establishment and national unity of the United States since the independence of thirteen colonies from Britain, but also the independence of other colonized countries under imperialist power in the twentieth century. However, is nationalism still meaningful, at a time of increasing transnational mobility and cultural hybridity? This paper sheds light on the American nationalism and postcolonial nationalism’s overemphasis on the nation and argues for the importance of global citizenship education, based on John Dewey’s democratic ideals.

American Nationalism and Postcolonial Nationalism

Europeans began to settle in North America in the seventeenth century, and the British colonies declared independence in 1776. The leaders of the young nation recognized their task to reinforce sense of unity among the people with diverse ethnic backgrounds in one nation for the nation’s settlement and integrity. They attempted to build their nation’s social, cultural, political, and legal norms and standards and socialize the people by transmitting it. Dewey acknowledges that the political ideology of “loyalty to a nation” was conducive to the establishment of a modern nation by encouraging unity. He mentions that it was a better than devotion to the parochialism and despotism of the past.

Dewey continues that nationalism also contributed to the independence of colonized countries and the emancipation of the oppressed under imperialist power in the twentieth century. The fighters for independence were willing to commit themselves to wars against imperialist colonizers, and nationalism inspired and strengthened the nation’s desire for independence. Focusing on national restoration, postcolonial scholars tended to emphasize the historical, cultural, and ethnic peculiarity and unity of a nation and

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argue that the postcolonial generations should retain their own cultural traditions and national values.³

**Nationalism, Globalization, and Cultural Hybridity**

Dewey acknowledges that national interests exist. However, he states that nationalism can be detrimental in the following ways.⁴ Nationalism does not encourage people to be moral and legal agents whose judgments are based on social responsibility, but rather privileges national interests. In addition, when nationalism justifies the mere persuasion of national interests, international anarchy could ensue, which all nations are irresponsible for global concerns.

Dewey's challenge to nationalism is meaningful to today's globalization that engenders cultural hybridity. Stuart Hall discusses the hybridity of culture and cultural identity; Hall’s ideas allow us to understand cultural hybridity existed in both American and postcolonial societies in different ways.⁵ Culture and cultural identity are in continuous formation and transformation, as a person is exposed to different cultures and interacts with people with different cultural backgrounds. Migrated people in American society are in reformation of their cultural identities, which are different from people both in their home countries and in their settlements.⁶ As a result, the society becomes more culturally diversified with people holding diverse cultural identities. Therefore, national identity is too simple to decide their collective identity.

On the other hand, colonization enforced cultural assimilation of the colonized and it resulted in cultural hybridity in their nations, which blended the indigenous and the imperial cultures.⁷ People in

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³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth.* (New York: Grove, 1963), 164.
⁷ Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” 231.
postcolonial societies attempt to rebuild cultural identity with their own traditions. However, the re-formation cannot be the same as their cultural origins, because colonial experience has already been part of their life and culture, which has resulted in cultural hybridity in postcolonial societies. Also, postcolonial nationalism confines the people within their national boundaries that leads to isolation, for the sake of national restoration.

Deweyan Democracy and Global Citizenship Education

In contrast to nationalism, Deweyan democracy supports individual agency, diversity, and association among individuals because it is how the society evolves. Given that participation and association are the democratic way of life, decision-making is unbounded, because diverse voices of individuals and groups, regardless of race, gender, class, and cultural backgrounds, are supposed to be reflected in solutions to social problems. Moreover, democracy does not limit individuals to national boundaries. His concerns about international anarchy and global responsibility imply that his democratic principle can be applied globally. Deweyan democracy extends “conjoint communication” to the global context and encourages cultural hybridity by interactions among culturally different others. In this way, it lends insights into both American multicultural society and postcolonial societies, beyond nationalism.

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Dewey does not use the term “global citizenship education.” However, I have imagined how Dewey, with his democratic ideals, would respond to today’s globalization and cultural hybridity.\textsuperscript{10} Expanding and applying Dewey’s democracy to the global context, I propose that global citizenship education is consistent with Dewey’s thoughts on democracy. Deweyan democracy, which emphasizes not only individual agency and diversity, but also communication and association, undergirds the idea of global citizenship education that encourages individual’s active engagement in global issues with critical minds, cultural diversity, and global associations.

\textsuperscript{10} Dewey, LW 3:157.
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CODED TO CONFRONT: JOHN DEWEY AND THE INTERSECTION OF RACE AND CLASS IN JIM CROW ERA AMERICA

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This is an extended abstract of a paper that was presented at the 2018 John Dewey Society annual meeting in New York (April 13-14, 2018).

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John Dewey has had his share of detractors, both in his time and ours. Beyond the standard accusations of idealism and romanticism, critics have censured Dewey for the role of race in his works. Briefly, scholars have charged that Dewey: (1) rarely addressed race explicitly (Sullivan, 2003); (2) was indifferent to racism (Campbell, 1995); (3) didn’t pursue the sources of racial injustices “far enough,” (Seigfred, 1998) and (4) was limited in his understandings of racial relations (Fallace, 2011).

However, critiques of scholars for what they didn’t write are generally uninspired; especially since they originate from a privileged position – as they benefit from the twin luxuries of hindsight and immersion in a more socially evolved world. Instead, it is beneficial to evaluate scholars’ work more ethnographically, i.e., to consider the ethos of the time and place in which the scholar published. Dewey’s work should be situated in its proper socio-historical context – Jim Crow America. Employing this lens, this paper argues Dewey’s writings were in fact coded. His explicit condemnations of the injustices of class-based inequality, understood in the context of his political actions, were an implicit critique of the white supremacy of his time.

Dewey, the man, should not be extricated from his work. Instead, to understand Dewey’s thinking about white supremacy, his own work on the nature of thought and human action must be employed to analyze his political actions. In How We Think (1910), Dewey explored the nature and development of intellectual thought, including thought patterns he deemed faulty. Deficiencies in how we process the world are, for Dewey, exacerbated by deficiencies in how we perceive the world. Dewey also stressed the importance of merging intellectual activity with everyday life. In order for scholarly work to incite social change, Dewey held, it must be a thoughtful and deliberate process grounded in reality. Dewey labels this process “reflection,” which he defined as, “turning a topic over in various aspects and lights so nothing significant be overlooked,” (52). To accomplish this, Dewey offers five sequential steps, the: (1) occurrence of a difficulty; (2) defining the difficulty; (3) occurrence of a suggested
explanation or possible solution; (4) rational elaboration of an idea; and (5) corroboration of an idea and formation of a concluding belief.

With this framework, I consider how Dewey’s publications do and do not address white supremacy. Across his oeuvre, the following themes recur: advocacy of an egalitarian society; condemnations of class inequality; belief in the promise and potential of democratic practices; belief in the power of an active citizenry; inclusion (assimilation) of all peoples regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or race; and belief in the transformative power of schools.

Each of these themes is predicated on a perceived “difficulty” in society. Thus, I apply Dewey’s theories about human thinking to his writings to consider how he would solve the problems he identified. If these writings are conjoined with Dewey’s personal activism, an exciting new possibility emerges. One in which Dewey’s work can be analyzed ethnographically to reveal additional nuances embedded in his work.

Here, I utilize Dewey’s “reflection” to analyze his works from a new angle. Specifically, I apply “reflection” to my hypothesis that Dewey’s work is actually coded to confront white supremacy. His work utilizes what contemporary scholars should consider an intersectional approach to challenge extant class and racial hierarchies plaguing most Americans. First, I examine Dewey’s racial activism and advocacy, as well as a sampling of his writings about race1. Second, I outline Dewey’s work on the nature of democracies2, strategically applying them to his personal activism. Building on these concepts, the possibility that Dewey was employing a systematic and multifaceted approach to confront white nationalism emerges. Finally, I explore Dewey’s notions of “the good life” and the optimal means of supporting and pursuing a more democratic society.

Historical constructions of race are not static. Instead, racial categories are social constructs situated in time and space. For Dewey, this meant addressing white supremacy during a highly racially charged period. These conditions produced a complex construction of race. Essentially race was characterized as a white/non-white binary.

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with several gradations. For instance, ethnic immigrants, despite typically white phenotypical traits, were still denied the apex of the racial hierarchy. This rejection was rationalized as a means of protecting the “national spirit” from dilution. In effect, ethnicity theories developed to deny European immigrants access to the white race and its attendant claim to represent the nation. However, over time, due to appearances, several groups would be assimilated into the white race.

Of course, assimilation was not available to all peoples. While American Indian children were placed in boarding schools in an attempt at forced assimilation via cultural erasure and socialization, Black Americans were fully segregated. With Jim Crow legislation, Black Americans were systematically denied access via a legally codified means of oppression, ostracized the Black community from mainstream society. Undergirded by nationalistic notions, the non-white categorization effectively created an under caste of people.

Dewey appears to have known that, in isolation, demands for class and racial justice would never be successful. Therefore, he advocated class reform in his texts and racial reform in his activism in an attempt to unite the oppressed against oppressor. If Dewey could expand egalitarian notions across America and simultaneously convince communities of color to ally themselves with exploited whites, then citizens could move their democracy closer to one that serves the interests of everyone.

This intersectional approach to social injustices, I contend, is a necessary point of compromise for those oppressed in contemporary America. Oppressed groups must set aside identity politics and form alliances to confront the white nationalism poisoning our democracy. As was the case in the early 20th century with mass immigration to America, white nationalists are again enforcing racial hierarchies to preserve the “national spirit”. Dewey’s prescient work is essential as we attempt to navigate these new, yet familiar, threats. Through schools Dewey sought to create spaces to explore notions of democratic equality and move our nation away from its white supremacist past and present. As an ally for people of color at the height of Jim Crow, Dewey coded his work to confront the racism
permeating the very soul of America. Pragmatically, using an intersectional analysis of Dewey's work, scholars can confront contemporary manifestations of white nationalism.
References


