

# THE WORLD EMERGING FROM THE PANDEMIC

GIUSEPPE SPADAFORA

University of Calabria

ELI KRAMER

Institute of Philosophy

University of Wrocław



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## **The Gravity of Our Situation**

**O**ver the last 3 years our “chickens are coming home to roost”. The consequences of our long developing ecological devastation, with its correlate increased likelihood of the emergence of new deadly viral strains, growing authoritarianism, and educational atrophy and disruption, have finally fully manifested and created a deeply problematic world situation. The pandemic situation has brought more fully to our attention the contradictions in our social and global systems that we all too often were able to ignore during the “old normal”. Given this context, we find ourselves at a moment of serious reckoning and also one ripe for real learning and transformation.

Philosophy, both East and West, was made for such moments. During periods of war, plague, and social and political upheaval, Socrates and Confucius took up the task of the times and offered guidance for better living and for a

more robust politics. The philosopher, educational theorist, public intellectual, and reformer John Dewey, alongside Jane Addams and others, offered a way of living and social policy for his time, a period also of pandemic, war, vast global inequality, and social strife. Dewey provides a modern guide for philosophy as the reflective reconstruction of social life. Today, a new generation of philosophers can take up his call to address the tasks of the present. A Deweyan approach to the pandemic and the world to come can be part of the solution, spreading over the world from the nation from which it was generated to inoculate us against dualistic thinking and dead habits.

Toward this end, in this special issue of *Dewey Studies* we bring together leading American and European Deweyan inspired philosophers and scholars to reflect, by drawing on Dewey and his approach to philosophy, on the problematic pandemic situation as the nexus of a wider constellation of global challenges. To begin to address these challenges we offer a variety of approaches: some essays assess the pandemic from a Deweyan perspective; some offer critiques of our response to it; yet others offer

ameliorative proposals to address it; a few return to Dewey to find new resources and insight to address this situation. Finally, some essays philosophically memorialize our situation, offering Deweyan consolation for the tragedy we have experienced, and reasonable hope for living meaningfully now and in the times to come. In true Deweyan spirit we believe such a pluralistic collection of voices and perspectives is needed to address, in an intelligent way, how to make meaningful *change for the better* from our predicament. Our primary aim is not to advance an interpretation of Dewey or pragmatism, although many readers may think we have contributed to that goal. Rather, we aim to apply what pragmatism, and especially Dewey and Dewey studies has already achieved in thought by making it directly relevant to the current problematic situation. We hope that by speaking to a diverse audience we can foster new dialogue, insight, and collaboration in the Deweyan spirit.

We see three areas which the COVID-19 Pandemic has catalyzed ongoing problematic trends that need to be addressed through philosophical reconstruction. The first

area is in education. In particular, as K-20 education increasingly becomes privatized under neoliberal logics, at the same time that the distinction between in person and online learning increasingly is blurred, COVID-19 came on the scene to completely disrupt learning as we know it. With millions of students learning remotely (often for the first time), and regular learning trajectories and putative plans for development thrown off kilter, we have a new terrain in education. The Deweyan task before us is to rethink public education and schooling as the landscape between the home and the social sphere, and the so-called “physical” and “virtual”, become increasingly blended.

The second area that calls for ameliorative reconstruction is in science and ecology. Many long-predicted that due to our increasing infringement on diverse non-human environments, our increase of Co2 in the atmosphere disrupting the ecological equilibrium on which we rely, all while mass factory farming techniques incubated ever new viral variants, a large-scale pandemic moving across the globe was almost inevitable. Some had hoped that the neoliberal technocratic regime of experts in public

health would be able to address the crises quickly and efficiently. But as would be no surprise to Dewey, if there is no shared democratic inquiry, solutions from one isolated branch of culture often will not be successfully implemented across society. Thus, we have authoritarian populism rejecting expertise culture on one side and trusting their “common sense”, and frustrated experts and technocrats on the other, whose policies are not as effective as they hoped and do not have the broad support and insight of the public they need. This same dichotomy can be seen on a variety of issues, the climate crises being an all too acute example. A new relation to and understanding of science and democracy is needed to address the monumental challenges that we face.

In politics we find ourselves caught in habituated patterns of governance so stultified that many proposed adjustments and alternatives are as toxic as the forms of social life and nation-state organization that they criticize. The plundering of world resources through colonialism (even as the old empires collapsed) and economic hegemony have funded the welfare states of the West since the World

Wars. In the generations that followed a neoliberal policy of privatization and a cult of the market, as exemplified in Thatcher and Reagan, ate away at welfare-states, while former colonies became central powers onto themselves, with China, India, and Brazil being particularly important leaders. China and independent city-states such as Singapore now provide an alternative to Western style social democracies, or perhaps more honestly in the case of the US, a hypercommodified, late stage capitalistic, and individualistic oligarchic republic. While China has been rightfully been accused of sickening human rights abuses, with concentration camps across Xinjiang and Tibet, Western democracies continued their own human rights abuses through proxy wars, coercive economic neocolonialism, as well as their over-reliance on cheap outsourced labor to create their commodities.

To make matters worse, these same modes of governance have struggled to meet the needs of growing global inequality and shrinking middle classes across the Western world. Further, as national states become multiculturally blended, and as they themselves blend into,

for both good and ill, hyper-complex global economic, social, and political networks, there is a desire for an imagined old-world order. With the rise of social media, the human penchant to find a coherent rational order, that although perceived as coercive and cruel is one that can be understood and mastered, has led to the rise of populism, left, and especially authoritarian right, which resists the technocratic neoliberal order, with its own putative commonsense and conspiracy theories. This commonsense is ironically manipulated by the neoliberal order, but with an ability to undermine or perhaps destroy it through violence against perceived “enemies”. Most recently Russia as relied on such a perverse reactionary populism to seek to reestablish its colonial sphere of influence. While Putin and his cronies have in many ways thrown this far-right axis off kilter with their disastrous war in Ukraine, and unified a crumbling Eurocentric politics, it remains to be seen if new alternatives can shift the worst trajectories in our political life. In true Deweyan spirit the task before us is not to find a perfect form of government, but ameliorative social



practices to lead to new forms of grassroots political organization, especially during this precarious moment.

These three areas can be better understood and addressed with thorough philosophical analysis. In addition, philosophy itself may offer therapeutic, consolatory support as we navigate this difficult terrain. As we will show later, the authors in this special issue lay out the situation in these domains and frame the task before us to address them. Before we do so however, we explore how in a broad fashion Dewey can help us find new ameliorative routes forward out of this pandemic situation.

### **The Relevancy of Philosophical Reconstruction**

Dewey's philosophical approach is well resourced to address our current situation, including its increasingly global and digital dimensions. There are many aspects of Dewey's philosophy that can help us address the problems of today. We will focus on two: his vision of democracy and his account of the role of science and technology in society.

To understand these aspects, his thought should be contextualized in his time, in the historical events which

determined it. The structure of historical events, inevitably, determines the new orientations of a particular *Weltanschauung* (view of the world), but also determines the transformation of scientific theories matured in other cultural traditions. For instance, the year 1929 was important for Dewey, for his situation afforded the opportunity to explore the meaning of the social action of liberalism, as adapted to democracy after the financial collapse of that year. Dewey's ideas were quite continuous and stable throughout his professional life, as is demonstrated by the different biographies dedicated to him,<sup>1</sup> with the exception of "From Absolutism to

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<sup>1</sup> See: Jane M. Dewey, ed., "Biography of John Dewey," *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, Library of Living Philosophers, vol. 1, Third Edition, ed. Paul Arthur Schlipp and Lewis Edwin Hahn (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1989 [1939]), 3-45; Sidney Hook, *John Dewey, An Intellectual Portrait*, intro. Richard Rorty (New York: Prometheus Books, 1995); George Dykhuizen, *The Life and Mind of John Dewey*, intro. Harold Taylor (Southern Illinois University Press, 1973); Robert B. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991); Steven R. Rockefeller, *John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Alan Ryan, *John Dewey and the High Tide of American Liberalism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995); Jay Martin, *The Education of John Dewey* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); Thomas C. Dalton, *Becoming John Dewey* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002).

Experimentalism,” as he admitted in his autobiography of 1929.<sup>2</sup>

In this interpretative and historical frame, his vision of democracy, adapted to different cultural and political traditions and social and political models of the first half twentieth century, and using the means of science and technology to improve the life of the individual in community (as part of a social democracy), is perhaps the most dominant strain of thought in his corpus. Taking into consideration these themes, one can see the potential relevance of Dewey’s philosophy for addressing the problems of our contemporary digital and global world, as well as to our tragic and mysterious pandemic situation.

But how so? Dewey continuously worked on the application of science and technology to improve the democratic situation of individuals in communities and broader society. The concept of experience is the expression of the “doing” and the “undergoing” between the individual and their environment. In the second edition of *Experience and Nature* (1929) Dewey affirmed that only an

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<sup>2</sup> Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*, 387-402.

experimentalist attitude in philosophy can enlighten the meaning of experience, and therefore is the method of intelligence composed by human action, and the scientific process which can solve the problem of experience.<sup>3</sup> In this perspective, Larry Hickman theorized that the meaning of Deweyan philosophy is based on the reversal of the Aristotelian view of philosophy.<sup>4</sup>

In particular, for Dewey the concept of *téchne* is defined as a human action grounded in *poiésis*, a process which produces different practical actions based on reflection (in this perspective the metaphor of the craftsman's action considered in the Aristotle's philosophy subordinated to praxis and *theoria* is very meaningful). The *poietic* action is an expression of the combination of theoretical and practical action linked to the

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<sup>3</sup> See: John Dewey, *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925 - 1953: 1925, Experience and Nature*, vol. 1, The Collected Works of John Dewey, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988), 10-41.

<sup>4</sup> See: Larry A. Hickman, *John Dewey's Pragmatic Technology* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990); Larry A. Hickman, *Philosophical Tools for Technological Culture: Putting Pragmatism to Work* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001).

solution of the problems of each individual. It is a philosophy quite different from dominant traditions that divide theory and practice. Dewey's philosophy is an expression of an experimentalist reconstruction of experience, represented also by an aesthetic dimension in the context of American philosophy<sup>5</sup> and a technological approach in which education<sup>6</sup> is probably the most important tool to discover experience and reconstruct it as a model of democracy to support and foster around the world.

This philosophical approach pointed Dewey's work in the direction of experimentalism as the basis of democracy. And it is here where Dewey can best help us

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<sup>5</sup> See: Thomas Alexander, *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience and Nature: The Horizons of Feeling* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1987); Randall Auxier, *Time, Will and Purpose: Living Ideas from the Philosophy of Josiah Royce* (Chicago: Open Court, 2013); Jim Garrison, *Dewey and Eros: Wisdom and Desire in the Art of Teaching* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2010); Steven Fesmire, *John Dewey and Moral Imagination: Pragmatism in Ethics* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> See: Steven Fesmire, ed, *The Oxford Handbook of Dewey* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); Leonard J. Waks and Andrea R. English, *John Dewey's Democracy and Education: A Centennial Handbook* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

address our current situation and what comes after. Human activity is linked to the application of science and technology to the reconstruction and practice of individuals, as part of the democratic community and its ever-enriching vision of its own work. The link between science, technology, and democracy needs education and schooling to be a good scaffold for society. The tragic pandemic situation has only made this clearer. In fact, in the chapter of *Democracy and Education* (1916) dedicated to the school and the curriculum, democratic schooling is exemplified by science, history, and geography.<sup>7</sup> These three disciplines represent the historical sequence of past, present, and future connected to the ecological environment and to the possibility of science to orient the individual's life in a democratic society.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> John Dewey, *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924: Democracy and Education, 1916*, The Collected Works of John Dewey, vol. 9, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), 215-239.

<sup>8</sup> John Dewey, *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925 - 1953: 1938, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, The Collected Works of John Dewey, vol. 12 (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), 481-528.

This new vision of philosophy, poetic and open to the reconstruction of democracy, is the basis upon which we can build a new educational paradigm for the world emerging from the pandemic. Our situation suggests that an experimental and technological orientation (in Dewey's broad sense) is needed to help us organize and address our situation. We still need the spirit of the experimental sciences. This kind of "vocational science" was inspired by Max Weber's work *Die Wissenschaft als Beruf* (1919), becoming a point of reference to deepen the relation between science and politics.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, the importance of culture in changing the different aspects of social life and of the human condition has been clarified within Marxist thought, becoming an original proposal against totalitarianism (especially within its own traditions and political regimes), by the concept of

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<sup>9</sup> See: Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures: "Science as a Vocation" "Politics as a Vocation,"* eds. and intro. David Owen and Tracy B. Strong, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Indianapolis and Cambridge, Hackett Publishing, 2004).

hegemony in Antonio Gramsci's work.<sup>10</sup> He, like Dewey, explored the role of intellectuals in political life for changing society for the better. Dewey in his own context, within the central idea of democracy, came to similar conclusions.

The pandemic in its dramatic course has demonstrated the importance of relaunching the idea that science and technology must be linked to politics as a cultural project to help us address complex problems. The interrelationship between philosophy, education, and democracy provides the ground on which Dewey saw science and technology having the possibility to save the world from catastrophe. In this situation the scientific endeavor of Anthony Fauci, as an international symbol of the struggle of the virologists, the avantgarde of science in this period, to ameliorate the pandemic situation, represents a new paradigm of society in which science can orient politics and economic decisions and not the contrary,

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<sup>10</sup> See: Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, vol. 1-3, ed. and trans. Joseph A. Buttigieg and Antonio Callari (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011 [Italian Critical Edition: 1975]).



according to the logic of capital accrual and the protection of it.<sup>11</sup>

In other words, science and technology are not subjected completely to capitalistic economic determinism and its zealous vision of endless growth. While we can affirm that COVID-19 vaccines have come out incredibly quickly due to global risk and to the international economic interests of pharmaceutical companies, at the same time, the global danger of COVID-19 has created a worldwide alliance and a potential model of cooperation between different political models to give science and technology the centrality needed to serve human development. It is quite different in this respect than the “Manhattan Project” which constructed the atomic bomb to end the Second World War against the dictatorships of that period.

There is an important and controversial question embedded in this alternative vision for global cooperation. To change society is it necessary to have a democratic system of governance or rather a technocratic system of

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<sup>11</sup> See: Thomas Piketty, *The Capital in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

governance? In the first few decades of the last century, Dewey explored the possibility, through travel and research, of continuities between Western democracies and other traditions, and if this could serve the development of democracy across the globe. It was clear that democracy for Dewey represents “a way of life” and a system more adapted for the welfare of the individual in a richly networked community. Due to this basic idea, Dewey was against every form of dictatorship, whether Nazism, other forms of fascism, or state communism. This global work included the exploration and study of Ataturk’s Turkey, and the then emerging Modernism in China and Japan.

A central characteristic of our global world is the assumption that economic development can be produced by a technocratic plan which can overcome the limitations of old forms of democracy. This view has led to a great crisis across the world, because we cannot seem to provide a satisfactory and ethical vision of global justice, provide a fully functional vision of globalization, nor fully escape the risk of significant conflict and perhaps even all-out-war

between global superpowers.<sup>12</sup> Dewey himself was dissatisfied with the American democratic system which stood for an old individualism and the power of economic and political elites. He tried to construct a third party, a third road between liberalism and socialism, but inevitably failed.<sup>13</sup> It was this failure that perhaps drove him to provide ever deeper accounts of what a creative democracy, guided by science and technology, could do to make a better world. *Liberalism and Social Action* of 1935 exemplifies this new political paradigm. The method of intelligence is continuously tested in his theory of liberalism.

The pandemic again affords us an opportunity to return to this vision of democracy as guided by the best of thoughtful experimental inquiry (scientific and technological). This is a controversial issue. Probably to

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<sup>12</sup> See: Robert A. Dahl and Ian Shapiro, *On Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020); Francis Fukuyama, *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution* (London: Profile Books, 2017); Amartya K. Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011); Martha Nussbaum, *The Cosmopolitan Tradition: A Noble but Flawed Ideal* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> See: Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* 443-452.

overcome the challenges left by the pandemic, an auto-technocratic political system could be more efficient. The Chinese political model, for example, could be more efficient in this situation (despite their Covid-Zero policy becoming increasingly untenable). But only with an open and transparent society<sup>14</sup> can we adjust to the present situation of the public, who provide the most updated context for the present situation. As Dewey put it, “the man who wears the shoe knows best that it pinches and where it pinches, even if the expert shoemaker is the best judge of how the trouble is to be remedied.”<sup>15</sup> Our difficult challenge for the future is to demonstrate that democracy as a way of life is the most sensitive route to attending to our present situation, adjusting to the changing conditions of reality, and reconstructing it, and which can best use science and technology to improve our lot. This was Dewey’s political

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<sup>14</sup> For more, see: Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020 [1945]).

<sup>15</sup> John Dewey, *The Public and its Problems*, in *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925 - 1953: 1925-1927, Essays, Reviews, Miscellany, and The Public and Its Problems*, The Collected Works of John Dewey, vol. 2, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), 364.

and theoretical effort, and there is a real possibility to relaunch democracy today through such work.

While democracy looks ill-equipped to deal with the pandemic and its legacy, at its best we have seen the opposite to be the case: where there has been transparency of human action, empowerment of persons, sensitivity to the present situation, and the thoughtful use of science and technology, we have seen meaningful response to the pandemic situation and what comes after. For example, through the courageous communities of scientists who shared critical viral sequencing information and preprints of their studies on strains of the virus and vaccine effectiveness with each other, and collaborated together at distance, we have seen inklings of what democracy can do at its best. Ironically technology, when in the hands of a technocratic elite, is too narrow in scope to save us in the way those elites hope it will. Instead, it is the robust technologies of communities of inquiry where we can find reasonable hopefulness and resources.

We could use lessons from the pandemic to stimulate a reconstruction of democracy that best addresses our

problems, and revitalizes a philosophy not only considered as a general view of human life, but as a synergic tension between human action and technological action. This could be the new paradigm of the post-pandemic world and could be the moment to relaunch Dewey's philosophy as a point of reference in making a richer more democratic world that can truly face its deepest challenges.

The essays in this special issue seek that end-in-view. We turn to them next.

### **Structure of the Special Issue**

Before the main sections of the special issue, we begin with a memorial on the last few years through a reflection on a particular dark chapter of them. Paul Cherlin helps us slow down and grapple with the tragedy that has unfolded before us. He reflects on the weakness in our imaginative empathy and care for others, as manifested in the murder of George Floyd and the pain and rage expressed by the black community in the subsequent protests, in the context of the pandemic. Somehow the Floyd murder and the response surely would have been different if not for the pandemic,

but it is not easy to see how such a chronic problem became so enmeshed with such a sudden problem. Cherlin provides resources from Dewey to memorialize and truly acknowledge the situation. Only through honest attentiveness to this deeply difficult situation can we ever move forward.

As indicated earlier, the main part of the special issue is structured into 3 different areas that need to be addressed to ameliorate our pandemic situation and plan for the world emerging from it: “The Educational Task Before Us”, “The Scientific and Ecological Task Before Us”, and “The Political Task Before Us”. As “good” Deweyans, no essay in the special issue isolates its domain from the other ones. For example, the issues surrounding our technocratic expertise-oriented culture of course has educational, scientific/ecological, and political dimensions. Each area is in fact informed and related to the others. For that reason, the essays are placed in their particular sections because of their dominant theme in relation the rest of the domains. They would be terribly anti-Deweyan works after all if they

did not explore problems from their interconnections across domains of culture and nature.

The volume begins by exploring the “educational task before us” with a long form essay by Leonard Waks that surveys the transformations in education and society catalyzed by the pandemic. It is broad in scope and provides the context needed to lay the groundwork for this complex special issue. It is followed by an essay by Jessica Pasca, which returns to Dewey’s pedagogic foundations for learning and schooling and shows how they are essential to develop persons capable of addressing the complex problems of today. Next, Teodora Pezzano explores a simple question with revealing consequences: Why did Dewey focus on “educational issues” and how did he end “up becoming one of the most important theorists of education and democracy in our times?” She shows how the conditions of learning and development are the foundations for his commitment and account of democracy, and how it provides the backdrop needed to support a reflective and adaptive global society. Again, we find that a return to Dewey’s own historical background and concepts provides



us new critical insights to address our situation. Following, Larry Hickman focuses on how the transition to virtual learning provides an opportunity for bigger Deweyan structural change, in particular in addressing the impact of structural racism and poverty, as well other inequities. Finally, Randall Auxier focuses on the opportunity the pandemic is affording for changes in the norms of education, changes Dewey would surely have approved of if he were alive today. In particular, Auxier looks at the reinvigoration of parental engagement in their children's schooling, the technological upgrade of learning environments, and how the returned focus to schools as a primary institution of our societies has and can serve broader positive purposes.

Part II of the book on the “scientific and ecological task before us” begins with an essay by Orsola Iermano. Her essay works as a “bridge” showing how the education task and the ecological and scientific task before us are symbiotic. She demonstrates how Dewey's “second approach to science” is in fact another name for learning, as part and parcel of democracy. Maura Striano, follows up by exploring

the problematic limitations of the positivistic understanding of science that dominates global society, leading to ideological adherence to science or populace or conspiracy-based dismissals thereof. She also points to a second account of science, one in the tradition of Dewey which focuses on experimental inquiry as our best present means of ameliorating problems and as a broad based ethical and democratic endeavor. Next, Justo Serrano Zamora and Matteo Santarelli explore another embedded dualism in the sciences. It is one that weakens a deeper sense of scientific inquiry needed for democracy: the distance between technocratic public health experts and the public. They propose a Deweyan middle way where both work together as a part of communities of democratic inquiry. Erin McKenna concludes the section by calling for a reconstruction of the liberal, atomistic individual using insights from microbiology and One Health. McKenna thinks only an attentive relationship of humans and other creatures with their environments as a superorganism, as ecologies themselves, will help us build more thoughtful and sustainable practices that will save us from the ever-

increasing likelihood of future pandemics and other environmental damage. She also proposes a critical inquiry based on this new ecological approach to ourselves, where the mind/body dualism is ameliorated, and where our gut and environment shape how we think and who we are as well as our minds.

Giuseppe Spadafora leads the next part of the book devoted to “The Political Task Before Us”. He shows how Dewey provides a philosophical grounding “for a new paradigm of sustainable democracy” and “a new concept of globalization” emerging from the pandemic. He does so through surveying Dewey’s main three works on democracy: *Democracy and Education*, *The Public and its Problems*, and *Liberalism and Social Action*. Steven Fesmire and Heather Keith take up this task in their essay, by showing how Dewey’s and Jane Addams’ deeply democratic theories of moral and political deliberation can help address American “hyper-individualism and its anti-naturalistic distrust of experimental intelligence,” in particular, as manifested in the “morally jet lagged response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.”

The special issue concludes with a reflection on the perennial task of philosophy during hard times. Like the memorial that begins the volume, this piece asks us to slow down and attend to our perennial values, just when the world ever pressures us for immediate and difficult decisions. Eli Kramer meditates with Dewey on philosophy's role as a consummatory and enjoyable (re)consolatory activity to our cosmic and present situation. He explores how Dewey defended this aspect of philosophy as vital, especially in the worst of times to keep our imaginations from narrowing down and losing the necessary scope of insight, and joy in the adventure of inquiry, needed to make meaningful change.

### **Conclusion**

This special issue, written over several years, is a time capsule of Deweyan philosophy at a world historical moment. While we believe it offers critical insight into our situation, and where we go next, we also hope it will provide a sort of report of what Deweyan philosophers and scholars reflected upon during this difficult time. It is hard in the

throes of history to stop and think of your work (in whatever modest way) as a future historical marker of an important moment, especially when again the future of humanity seems uncertain, and we feel unsure of who will be able to look at our work in the future and what condition they will be in. Be that as it may, we keep a Deweyan reasonable hopefulness that there will be Deweyan inspired philosophy serving good purposes in the times to come and that this volume can be a reminder of all one can write, think, do, and be, toward making things a little bit better, whatever the world conditions. Beyond this volume, we see the critical need for Deweyan inspired communities of inquiry, which should establish, during and after the pandemic situation, a new paradigm, which will influence the meaning of philosophy, economics, education, ecology, and technology, for the next generations in our global world.

The editors of *Dewey Studies* are pleased to release our third special issue, on “Pragmatism for Pandemic Times: Deweyan Approaches.”

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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 Austin Rooney ([austin.rooney@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:austin.rooney@camden.rutgers.edu)), ideas for panels and special issues, interviews, research notes to Editor in Chief Paul Benjamin Cherlin ([cherlin.paul.b@gmail.com](mailto:cherlin.paul.b@gmail.com)), and book reviews and composite review articles to Reviews Editor Daniel Brunson ([daniel.brunson@morgan.edu](mailto:daniel.brunson@morgan.edu)).