

**The John Dewey Society  
and  
the *Journal of School & Society*  
announce:  
A Call for Public Scholarship**

**Issue #4.2: How Can Neo-Liberal Ideologies Be  
Resisted?**

The John Dewey Society, founded in 1935, created the *Journal of School & Society* in order to meet one of its central aims: to support a vibrant public education system by fostering intelligent inquiry into problems pertaining to the place and function of education in social change, particularly among teachers, parents, and community activists.

**We invite all those interested in engaged public  
scholarship to contribute to this exciting new  
venue!**

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In 1935, John Dewey wrote that:

the actual corrosive “materialism” of our times . . . springs from the notion, sedulously cultivated by the class in power, that the creative capacities of individuals can be evoked and

developed only in a struggle for material possession and material gain.<sup>1</sup>

As true today as it was in 1935, Dewey's critique of liberal economic theory reminds us of the profound impact that the creed of competition can have on the development of the young.

Throughout his life, Dewey stressed that it is the *form* of social association in which we find ourselves that shapes who we are and who we might yet become: "Liberalism that takes its profession of the importance of individuality with sincerity must be deeply concerned about the structure of human association."<sup>2</sup>

Today, nearly all institutions are under threat from ideologies that stress competition over cooperation, consuming over acting, and scarcity over abundance. All of these values—as Dewey might be the first to note—have their place in a democratic society. Yet the fact remains: institutions that seek to secure shared public goods—pure water, healthy food, clean air, beautiful art and music, as well as strong bodies and intelligent minds—have come under sustained attack.

Public schools, therefore, might work towards a newly cooperative social ethos, one that takes as its primary aim the creation of a society where all are their sisters' and brothers' keepers. This issue of the *Journal of School & Society* therefore seeks to explore the creation of such an ethos in at least three realms:

**Competition.** Whether it be parents seeking to "opportunity hoard" for their own children; teachers who, intentionally or not, maintain grading systems where students come to see learning as a zero-sum

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<sup>1</sup> John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1935), 89.

<sup>2</sup> John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1935), 41.

game with “winners” and “losers;” administrators who rate faculty as “highly effective” for their compliance and high test scores; or children who view the talents of another as a threat to their own self worth—institutions that promote competitive social relations distort the human capacity for harmonious growth through humane and intelligent feedback.

*We therefore seek contributions from teachers, parents, and community activists who have built educative spaces dedicated to cooperation and growth through mutually enriching dialogue.*

**Consumerism.** Schooling has become a commodity. The aims of education have become commercialized. We go to school to get a good job, a nice home, and a large paycheck. Things that are difficult to justify in purely economic terms, such as art and music, are the first things cut from the school curriculum.

Should we appropriate the hours spent by children taking standardized tests and re-dedicate them to serving elders and neighbors, stewarding the environment, and making goods that enrich life, making it more interesting and lovely—schools would become sites of social production and entrepreneurialism.

*We therefore seek contributions from teachers, parents, and community activists who have built educative spaces dedicated to making and serving.*

**Scarcity.** Classical economics is, of course, built upon the idea of scarcity—that resources, capital, labor and time are inherently limited. To a certain extent, the rise of the “knowledge economy” has challenged this notion. Yet poets and mystics have always rejected the notion that the great goods of life are limited.

Hierarchy is, in some ways, a response to the challenges of a perceived scarcity—those at the top receive more, those at the bottom less. The rejection of hierarchy is in this sense the rejection of fear—the fear that the perception of scarcity induces.

*We therefore seek contributions from teachers, parents, and community activists who have built educative spaces decided to the shared enjoyment of life's many abundances.*

### How to Contribute to the Issue

We view our work as broadly educative, in that we want to help connect practitioners in public dialogue. To do so, we work closely with a wide range of folks working in public p-12 education, including teachers, administrators, researchers, parents, and concerned community members. The writing that will be included in each issue includes opinion pieces, experiential accounts, as well as historical and theoretical explorations of the theme as it relates to progressive education in general, as well as the writings of John Dewey in particular.

Based on the theme of each issue, the editorial board will reach out to different actors and invite them to work with us. That said, those wishing to contribute to the journal need not wait for an invitation to do so. They may contact the Editor to communicate their interest, ask questions, and receive feedback.

Please refer to the journal website for [formatting guidelines](#). For manuscript submission, work is accepted via two broad paths:

#### **Invited Pieces**

Work from educators and other communities members are welcome. This work may take either standard article form or may be submitted

in alternative formats, such as a video interview or presentation. A grounding in scholarship is not necessary, although the author will want to situate their work clearly within the scope of the theme of the issue. Ordinarily, articles in this category will range from 2,000-5,000 words, although both longer and shorter submissions may be appropriate. Authors should expect to work closely with the editorial team to produce their submissions. Therefore, those planning to write for the journal should inform the editor of their intention early in the writing process.

### **Peer-Reviewed Scholarly Articles**

Submissions for the peer-reviewed section of the journal are expected to conform to scholarly standards in their use of theory and research literature. Expected article length is ordinarily in the 5,000-8,000 word range, but both longer and shorter pieces can be considered. Reports of original research are appropriate for this journal, though elaborate discussions of research methodologies and intricate reviews of specialized disciplinary fields should be avoided.

In addition, given the flexibility offered by our online format, supporting files (in both data and audiovisual format) may be integrated with the text. In addition to the Editors, articles in this category will be read by a minimum of two peer reviewers.

Again, authors should expect to work closely with the editorial team to produce their submissions. Therefore, those planning to write for the journal should inform the editor of their intention early in the writing process—in order to receive feedback on the general approach they plan to take for reaching a broad audience.

All statements of interest, queries, and submissions should be emailed to Kyle Greenwalt, Editor of the *Journal of School & Society*

and Associate Professor of Teacher Education at Michigan State University. Kyle's email is [greenwlt@msu.edu](mailto:greenwlt@msu.edu).

Submissions for this issue should be received by September 15, 2017.