Edutainment and Panexperiential Learning in the Radically Empirical Classroom

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It is a new kind of entertainment that goes far beyond simply "amusing" its audience. This picture is vital entertainment—it treats on a subject that directly affects every man, woman, and child, in America. With dramatic action it exposes the basic ideas that will rid the mind of confusion and clarify the war thinking of the public.

—Walt Disney[1]

Despite all of the challenges and uncertainties facing higher education, traveling and tourism continue to be used as a primary means to immerse oneself in the adventures of learning. Given the monopolization of technologically-generated virtual times and spaces "to have gone there," to be exposed to the cultural foods, dress, vernaculars, history, customs, and jokes is still regarded as more fundamental, with longer-lasting appeal.

Perhaps the vision that one of the great fathers of modern education, John Amos Come-nius (1592-1670), imagined in his manifesto *Way of Light* is coming to fruition: the world has become its own laboratory and classroom.[2] Whereas Comenius' baroque views on education were religiously missionary in nature and pursuing a kind of "pedagogical gnosis," it is my contention that American edutainment provides a marque example of how education "travels" in this decentralized climate.

> To entertain is to abide with a proposition in a manner that is hospitable and open.

Education and entertainment reinforce each other to form the genuine nucleus of that life-long *scholae* or leisure. Entertainment broadly conceived—sports, movies, music—are the dominant rituals of American ways of life. But it has a richer and more complex meaning. In the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, entertainment is the power to engage "lures for feeling," in the mode of the *interesting rather than the true*. In the same spirit of that great American author Mark Twain who said: "I never let my schooling interfere with my education," Whitehead wrote "*in the real world* it is more important that a proposition be interesting than that it be true. The importance of truth is that it adds to interest."[3]

Therefore, the danger of education is that it will become static, underutilized, or "inert" without being "tested or thrown into fresh combinations."[4] To entertain is to *abide* with a proposition in a manner that is hospitable and

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[1] Interview with Alexander de Seversky. See Richard Shale, *Donald Duck Joins Up: The Walt Disney Studio During World War II* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1982), 69. See also,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Educational_entertainment.

[2] John Amos Comenius, *The Way of Light*, trans. E. T. Campagnac (London: The University Press, 1938 [1641]).
[3] Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, Corrected Edition, eds. D.R. Griffin and D.W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1978 [1929]), 259, emphasis added.
[4] Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays* (New York: Free Press, 1967 [1911]), 1.

open. Classrooms and laboratories are nothing but the encapsulations of entertaining propositions, for the sake of adventurous living. Education is the "art of living," however, in Whitehead's philosophy, and expands beyond each of these domains.

As a high school student, like many American teenagers during that time, I can recall entering "Homeroom" every morning to watch the Channel One news telecast (Anderson Cooper and Lisa Ling were its young reporters) about current global events. Before starting our day, my classmates and I were brought to bear with tragedies like Genocide in Rwanda and Yugoslavia, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, or Princess Diana's funeral. There were also stories of innovation that sparked the imagination, like cloning Dolly the sheep or tracking images captured by the Mars Pathfinder.

Television productions and media were joining forces with the teacher to fulfill a more robust educational mandate. Being able to present the complexities of history and the world, in acoustic and visual "real times," started to take precedence over our attention spans. Today's classrooms have been transformed into megaplex entertainment studios generating learning tropes and methods in multifocal and polythematic styles. A fusion between education and entertainment—*edutainment*—has manifested itself as commonplace in the American curriculum. Home and school have merged into one. It turns out the same installations needed for good learning, in the American sense, can best be co-produced through good entertainment.

Of course, intertwined with this positive nexus is a negative one—academic capitalism. Profiteers in the school trade have long opted for infotainment rather than edutainment. It is no mystery that American universities are the most diverse hubs of the country and we should embrace and promote it. It is a strength, not a weakness. And it is not education alone that contributed to this positive uniqueness of the American campus—the athletic and extra-curricular ethos have kept so many schools honest when it comes to meeting their diversity mandates.

It is through the arenas, concerts, and theatres that Americans, of all ethnicities and creeds, from around the world, come together to celebrate not just a school, but the culture. Colleges and universities aim to tap into this rich and impactful spirit of diversity. Part of their cause is to increase and enhance the number of "underrepresented" groups who have been marginalized historically and culturally. This reality is inevitable given how much our experience has been saturated in virtual integration. The goal of any education worth its dollar should be not to turn us merely into students, but into civically-minded global citizens.

My formative years of K-12 education underwent a great shift through the "virtualization" of such experiences beyond one's local and familiar preferences. The birth of the Internet marked an exciting time that presented boundless possibilities, at least according to many of my teachers. Scholars and journalists have hastily employed critiques against the "popularization" of science, religion, philosophy, and so on, without recognizing a necessary distinction that is crucial to remember in the information age. Education is supposed to keep us mindful and alert to reflect on methods that will keep our knowledge fresh and dynamic.

As French philosopher Bruno Latour once remarked, "facts are like frozen vegetables" because they need a host of support networks to "strive and thrive." Education "freezes" as well and demands we find ways to warm it up. Entertainment is the power to follow and take on the different modes of experiential reference and cultural symbolic meaning, across a wide

array of anthropological dimensions, while showing the interplay of such modes.

Infotainment, on the other hand, belittles the value of epistemic awareness and honesty through a weaponization of knowledge—pseudo-knowledge for the sake of ideologues and anti-ideologues alike! School becomes a kind of indoctrination base camp designed to conceal how propaganda is used to fuel the "culture wars" of identity politics. This flavor of "learning" is whimsically passionate on the surface of things, without taking us beyond our real differences. It sterilizes us against hearing a diversity of viewpoints, while only being able to take itself in the serious and heavy mode.

> … consumer-students will avoid "education as boredom" at all costs and make themselves ripe for joblessness.

Gossip and sensationalism are the mainstays of infotainment, which relies on the cult-like worship of celebrity fashions and dramas. It is concerned *merely* with the peripheral experiences of college, such as "rankings" and how many talking heads it can land on TV. Consumerist-affluent trends have conflated education with infotainment. Such consumer-students will avoid "education as boredom" at all costs and make themselves ripe for joblessness. They are the ones who are likely to tell you, "it is not *what* you know, but *who* you know." Little to no thought is given to what they *love* to do, Whitehead's "romantic" stage of education, they are more concerned with being recognized as a member in the cult of success.[5]

Given this vulgarly pragmatic mindset, universities are no longer the centers of gravitas they use to be. They are widely revered as big business, making them largely indistinguishable from corporations. Although it is true that American higher education is at a crossroads to meet the new challenges of learning in the digital age, a larger problem with regards to its aims and values looms. Universities mostly represent an academic capitalism adjusted to an entrepreneurial, post-industrial economy. "University culture, like American culture writ large, is ever more devoted to consumption and entertainment, to the using and using up of goods and images."[6]

Higher educational institutions are havens of a vulgar pragmatism more concerned with branding a product for consumer-students who want the credentials necessary to obtain a career for upward mobility in socio-economic terms. Emphasis seems to be placed on education only secondarily as the inflated financial commitment to athletic complexes, coaches, and administrators indicate. Scholars Sheila Slaughter and Gary Rhoades explain in their work, *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy: Markets, State, and Higher Education*, how college plays a mundane and unfulfilling role once focus shifts away from faculty and students to market opportunities. "The idea of a college or university as a space for public discussion, debate, commentary, and critique is pushed to the background. Instead, colleges and universities focus increasingly on preparing students for new economy employment."[7]

Whitehead warned against the vulgar pragmatism of academic capitalism when he reflect-

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[5] Whitehead's three stages of educational development are: 1) Romance; 2) Precision; and 3) Generalization. See, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays*, 17-19.

[6] Mark Edmundson, "On the Uses of Liberal Education," *Harper's Magazine*, 1997 (September), 40.

[7] Sheila Slaughter and Gary Rhoades, *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy: Markets, State, and Higher Education* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2004), 333.

ed on his long career "plunged into the *principalities of education*":

> One of the great fallacies of American thinking is that human worth is constituted by a particular set of aptitudes which lead to economic advancement. *This is not true at all.* Two thirds of the people who can make money are mediocre; and at least one half of them are morally at a low level. As a whole, they are vastly inferior to other types who are animated by the economic motives; I mean the artists, and teachers, and professional people who do work *which they love for its own sake* and earn about enough to get along on.[8]

The commodification of education largely performs the function of "certification," which does not emphasize a lifelong quest for knowledge or commitment to the cultivation of character. Commodification is concerned more with performative skills of appearance and the ability to run certain software.

> We would be amiss as educators if these broadcasting and dispatching trends were not recognized.

But students demand to be given, in Whitehead's sense, personal "assemblage" and *not* more bureaucracy nor grand program initiatives designed around the corporate ethos of the university. A service-oriented, student-based approach focuses on the skills necessary to contribute to the achievement of the individual's "self-development"—something universities as corporations seem to be little concerned with.

The widening of our cultural experiences allows for more personal discretion over one's means of education. It is as if universities will face the same difficulties that consumer-students have faced for decades.

As Jennifer M. Gidley writes in a recent paper:

> While the juggernaut of old-paradigm thinking keeps its hold on educational institutions, the burgeoning of new knowledge "paradigms" is breaking through from the periphery. A plethora of private providers, social movements, niche research institutes, open source resources, edutainment and, of course, the ubiquitous information kaleidoscope of the world wide web, make it increasingly difficult for the former bastions of knowledge production and dissemination—formal educational institutions—to compete for "market-share."[9]

The vulgar pragmatism contrived in academic capitalism seeks to monopolize the market to be well-insulated. But the expansion of virtual reality has enfranchised many certification and training authorities. Universities are now competing in consumer-driven markets, as if education were a commodity. Education becomes utility or is viewed as what is merely useful—in the sense of infotainment or the scoop. It is no surprise, then, to hear students claim they don't need to take *this* class or worry about *that* material given that they "will not have to use it in the future."

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[8] A. N. Whitehead, *Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead as Recorded by Lucian Price* (Scranton, PA: Little, Brown and Company, 1954), 251-252. Emphasis added.

[9] Jennifer M. Gidley, "Re-imagining the Role and Function of Higher Education for Alternative Futures Through Embracing Global Knowledge Futures," in *European Higher Education at the Crossroad: Between the Bologna Process and National Reforms, Part I*, eds. Adraian Curaj, Peter Scott, et. al (New York: Springer Press, 2012), 1031.

Would you say it is presumptuous to believe you actually know what you will or will not need to know in your future experience?

Students and teachers are no longer regarded as the breadwinners of most universities, they are simply used to justify its existence. Concerns over marketing strategies, job placement, and social prestige have reduced the broader meaning of liberal education found in Whitehead's philosophy, which values education as an end-in-itself. Universities have increasingly treated education in consumerist fashion as a means to individual success and materialistic progress. As a result, cynical attitudes about the college experience have been normalized and it is widely believed that education is a money-making hustle.

Universities have largely betrayed edutainment in Whitehead's robust sense for infotainment. But it does not follow from this that our experiences of edutainment are without value or unimportant, especially when it can both enliven us to resist "inert ideas," and deepen our purposes or goals of so-called trivial pursuits. Whitehead's philosophy commits itself to a radical empiricism concerned with an aesthetics and adventure of education that embraces the wide and diverse cultural trends of edutainment. From the standpoint of Whitehead's philosophy, edutainment represents a "generic novel contrast."

Entertainment rituals make up much of the psycho-social attitudes and beliefs around the globe; it is where we engage in intense exchanges of political, religious, and economic activisms and much of our learning concerns these aspects of culture. We would be amiss as educators if these broadcasting and dispatching trends were not recognized. It might not be the preference of those immersed in liberal education, but opportunities and symbolizations of freedom in the dramas of sports, movie, and music stars comprise much of our public solidarity.

The Odysseus and Achilles of today are examples lived out in the public scandals and viral stories that take on wall-to-wall coverage. Social media dominates the social discourse. Moral and life lessons are learned through its use on a daily basis. It is usually in a secondary or analogical sense that the characters from Dante's poem or Charles Dickens' tales will be referenced, but this is not insignificant. Great figures from the canon of Western learning are more commonly understood through their portrayal in cinema. Even that master teacher of the human condition Shakespeare knew that art is not for amusement. "Shakespeare fully understood that art should entertain us *as well as* move us, frighten us, educate us and so forth. Half his audience were illiterate! His plays beautifully combined the high *and* low [cultures]."[10]

Whitehead agrees with this and I suspect so do you.

Hence, there is a thin line between edutainment and performance, or infotainment as commodification.[11] Much of what the world expects these days is that you have the capacity to "learn on the fly" and be able to follow on-the-job training. Along with academic capitalism there is the tendency to view the university as outdated, and slow or unable to respond to the challenges that these transformations generate.

Following Whitehead's warning that "learning solidifies" and "the danger is that education

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[10] Jules Evans, "High Culture in the Age of Mass Entertainment," in *Philosophy for Life and Other Dangerous Situations*, http://philosophyforlife.org/high-culture-in-the-age-of-mass-entertainment/. Accessed October 10, 2017.

[11] And yes, many scholars and teachers do pursue interests as public intellectuals and infotainers. But this is more for the sake of fame or celebrity and the desire to be "liked." Such concerns are of secondary importance to edutainers on my view.

will freeze," German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk defines teaching as that profession that "attacks the inertias" of our habits.[12] He traces how the first philosopher-pedagogues' obsession with habits was really meant to "show how that already present within humans, namely the *hexis*, the *habitus*, the *doxa* (joined in the eighteenth century by prejudice), hinders or entirely prevents the absorption of the new."[13]

In other words, the effects of education can be paralyzing if they are not *relaxed* or *loosened*. A "block" of "irreversibly embodied properties" has to be broken through in order to start the new education. The Asian-speaking world has known this much longer than the West, through the example of the great Zen master:

> who, to the amazement of his pupil, poured a cup of tea and did not stop when it was full, rather continuing to pour; this was meant to show that a full spirit cannot be taught anything. The course of study, then, consists in pondering the question of how to empty the cup. Whether one should subsequently fill it anew or cultivate its emptiness, once reached, as a value of its own, is another matter.[14]

Education as the "art of living" is about channeling novelties for the sake of renewing and resetting ourselves afresh.

More importantly, the unthawing of inert ideas is needed to ward off overstatements that lead to dogmatic, non-empirical claims. But, even more importantly yet, it is to channel an "inner verticality" toward the higher in our ascetic or moral practices and exercises. Hence, the ultimate task of education is to work at the task of non-mastery—"All education is conversion (*metanoia*)."

This is the guiding maxim of Peter Sloterdijk's *You Must Change Your Life*. He argues that the historical transmission of knowledge takes place and results through transformative processes, for better and worse. As educators, we work to invite participation in Whitehead's "art of living" as conducive, which is to see meaning in the mundane and to give meaning to it!

For example, polytechnic engineers are becoming more sensitive to the needs of the classroom. It is now common knowledge that our students will display a *neurodiversity* with regards to how they register on the "spectrum" of learning disabilities, from Asperger's to autism. Recognizing this fact makes the classroom more life-like, realistic, and radically empirical. The differentiation of aptitude and challenges every class presents are as vast as the student bodies on American campuses, which reveal some of the rarest pockets of diversity in the world.

Classrooms are customizing themselves to the needs of every person. Our appreciation of neurodiversity can make for a more *intense* (Whitehead's term) learning environment, as Steve Silberman details at the conclusion of his must-read book *NeuroTribes*::

> The physical layout of such a world would offer a variety of *sensory-friendly environments* . . . An inclusive school, for example, would feature designated quiet areas where a student who felt temporarily overwhelmed could avoid a meltdown. In classrooms, distracting sensory input—such as the buzzing of fluorescent lights—would be kept to a minimum. Students would also be allowed to customize their personal sensory space by wearing noise-reducing headphones, sunglasses to avoid glare, and other easily

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[12] A. N. Whitehead, *Dialogues of Alfred North Whitehead as Recorded by Lucian Price*, 63, 165.

[13] Peter Sloterdijk, *You Must Change Your Life*, trans. Wieland Hoban, (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 187.

[14] Sloterdijk, *You Must Change Your Life*.

affordable and minimally disruptive accommodations.[15]

Perhaps no other discipline has been guilty of harboring a negative attitude toward entertainment more than philosophy. Philosophers are worried about the "dumbing down" of culture and the perceived irrelevance of philosophy itself. The philosopher's seriousness holds in contempt the superficial fads that shape much of the mainstream. Entertainment is seen as nothing more than Adorno's "culture industry" or Heidegger's "chatter," for example. But this outright rejection treats education and philosophy ideologically. Ironically, in America, a larger public has been exposed to philosophy through the pop culture and philosophy books series. Those who deny any genuine value or claim that this is not *real* philosophy promote a thin and vulgar snobbism. They treat philosophy as "inert ideas," the kind that Whitehead teaches we should resist with "broad intellectual tolerance." Rather than serving as conduits for the learning possibilities of others, they act more as self-appointed gatekeepers.

For the past thirteen years, Claremont, California has hosted the Whitehead International Film Festival, which is dedicated to "films that promote the common good." Not only do they show, on average, ten films a year, but they offer classes with philosophers and religious scholars familiar with Whitehead's philosophy and the common good within the interconnectedness of the world. As the Festival's website rightly claims,

> Films are the common language of people around the world; we share our cultures through film; we share our perceptions of

what it is to be human, our trials and our transformations. Through film, the "strangeness" of other cultures can turn into appreciation and understanding. And through appreciating and understanding one another, we exercise care for one another, doing what we can to seek and promote the common good.[16]

Intercultural engagement through film is a remarkable application of Whitehead's philosophy—and who would deny that it has the potential to have immense educational value?

Even those familiar with the *Great Books of the Western World*, for example, will recognize their efforts to complement such cherished readings as Plato's *Republic* or F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* with theatrical productions. Cinema and videography rival the once unchallenged medium of book learning. PBS, National Geographic, Disney, and History serve as main educational hubs in the US, just as the BBC does in Europe.

Can it be doubted that the biggest platform for our moral, political, or economic debates and principles are played out on Netflix through the documentary industry it has spawned? Is there any mystery as to why the lives of intellectual giants such as Alan Turing (*The Imitation Game*) and Stephen Hawking (*Hawking*) are being portrayed on the Big Screen? Who could be so short-sighted as to deny that Plato himself, weary of poetry's dangerous delusions, used the means of entertainment, in the form of conversational dialogues, to present one of the most complete and persuasive philosophies known to humankind?[17]

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[15] Steve Silberman, *NeuroTribes—The Legacy of Autism and the Future of Neurodiversity* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2015), 471-472.

[16] Read this statement, *"Why Whitehead?"* at: http://whiteheadfilmfestival.org/about/why-whitehead/.

[17] It was Whitehead himself who famously remarked that the history of Western philosophy can be summarized as

> Little patience should be granted to those closed off to the educational opportunities popular culture can supply.

The American general public was introduced to edutainment long ago by Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac.* Just as the printing presses have always worked with the poet or the scholar, educators today would be wise to collaborate with digital engineers to enhance the virtualization of the classroom experience. Polytechnic and polythematic norms and aims can be brought together in interesting interplay. Most of what is taken for granted as hard-core science today, was once the product of imaginative fiction, considered to be a fantasy world. Little patience should be granted to those closed off to the educational opportunities popular culture can supply.

This leads me into a discussion of one of Whitehead's most important themes—one that grounds the radically empirical classroom—*style.* "Style" means to "restrain power." Style as an activity of restraint is the "ultimate morality of the mind."

In our age of the infosphere and virtual integration, one finds it rather convenient to have one's nose in the new book—mobile phones. There is a real difference between book and "cloud" people. As we immerse ourselves more in the worlds of data networks, we move from a tangible aesthetics of physical books, DVDs, or vinyl records to fingertip command. I suspect that this will radically alter the way we feel and remember our way through our experiences in the world. Unlike book culture, in the

world of cloud learners the library has become non-local, to be carried around in your pocket. The medium of a smart phone is non-static and does not portray a self-contained, all-knowing character.

In his informative essay, "The Coming Revolution in (Higher) Education: Process, Time, and Singularity," Randall Auxier writes: "Your phone says something *different* every time you consult it. It registers changes in the world, in potency and actuality, while you are not consulting it and then presents you with these changes in actuality when you check it. What a wonderous book *that* would be, no? Would you like to have a book that rewrites itself, seemingly *by itself*, at every moment, to chart and arrange the world for your convenient digestion whenever you choose?"[18]

To keep up with this kind of ever-changing book, one needs to enact *style* as a way to fend off the accelerated ways the world is moving at us. Cognitive resignation will become a more tempting option in the future as all of the world's events increasingly occur in "real time," with virtual simultaneity. This will induce overwhelming cognitive stress and demand that attention and dedication come by way of *style* in order to "master" the labor of non-mastery. We will need to internalize the reflective life that formal education helps us to cultivate without being ignorant of the ways that play can reinvigorate such a monumental task.

The branding and hype campaigns of infotainment will always remain a cheap substitute for the riches of edutainment. Our schools and communities will be better off, I contend, if we remember and pursue the adventurous life of *scholae*. Without a willingness to take the serious

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a "series of footnotes to Plato." See: Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and* Reality, 39.

[18] Randall E. Auxier, "The Coming Revolution in (Higher) Education: Process, Time, and Singularity," in *Contemporary Philosophical Proposals for the University: Toward a Philosophy of Higher Education* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), 241. Emphasis original.

into the non-serious and vice versa, education will never get off the ground. As political philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft, who argued vigorously for the co-educational benefits of the sexes, reminds us:

> Men and women must be educated, in a great degree, by the opinions and manners of the society they live in. In every age there has been a stream of popular opinion that has carried all before it, and given a family character, as it were, to the century. It may then fairly be inferred, that, till society be differently constituted, much cannot be expected from education.[19]

With the democratization of media broadcasting, everyone feels like an equal player in the global arena of meta-dispatching. Our age is characterized by a massive bankruptcy of leadership in leaders competent enough, and worthy of our confidential trust, to soak up our complaints and anger. Political parties, churches, secret societies, even immediate families are viewed with suspicion, and we lack confidence in the fact that these are still viable authorities we can confide in. The stakes in the competitions of techno-athleticism have been raised and the virtual training camps remain open around the clock. Rage combined with phobocratic, self-segregating psychosocial attitudes have no other place to go other than these digital platforms. Social media provide the new cultural "anger banks" for people to set up frustration accounts, and debit their confessionals as deposits or withdrawals.[20]

That is why social activism must be updated—literally!

> The stakes in the competitions of techno-athleticism have been raised and the virtual training camps remain open around the clock.

Practices of social resistance today will likely register, and have the potential to make a *real* difference, if they are organized around a robust design principle, providing for catalogues of improvements in community engagement, working with narrative structures that continually undergo installments—to be downloaded and updated, so to speak. The tasks of "active citizenry" lie in not only serving others by making sure their voices are heard, but by finding new and creative ways to upload and express them that are inclusive and less harmful.

Educational value can never be underestimated in this regard. Social media activism is always in need of historical authorities and the wisdom they speak through the ages. The overall goal is to resist those virtual tendencies, in the performative or aesthetic mode, that render us passive and take a reactionary stand. We have all too easily become dwellers in the pseudo-communes of reactionaries. Malcolm X nor M. L. King—two of my heroes—gave themselves over to such reactionary mass conformity.

In his book, *Experience and Education*, Dewey defines "thinking" as "a postponement of immediate action, while it effects internal control of impulse through a union of observation and memory, this union being the heart of reflec-

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[19] Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. Sylvana Tomaselli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995 [1792]), 89.

[20] Peter Sloterdijk, *Rage and Time: A Psychopolitical Investigation*, trans. Mario Wenning (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2012).

tion."[21] Like machines who operate so smoothly as if they were on autopilot mode, we are tempted to lash out in the heat of the moment, without recourse to circumspection. It is largely an effort to keep up with the increased acceleration the infosphere presents in its hyper-speeds. Our interaction on social media takes on the inert and volatile character that Whitehead and Sloterdijk warned against. It is all too easy to get "caught up in it."

The impulsive nature of social media is dangerously empowering. One's career and reputation can be ruined just as quickly—as we see justice served in the prosecution of untouchable stars. We usually have to learn the lessons of the wider and deeper implications of our actions the hard way. "Careful observation" goes along with reflective judgment, acting as a deterrent to avoid erratic behavior. Dewey continues:

> Traditional education tended to ignore the importance of personal impulse and desire as moving springs. But this is no reason why progressive education should identify impulse and desire with purpose and thereby pass lightly over the need for *careful observation*, for wide range information, and for judgement if students are to share in the formation of the purposes which activate them. In an *educational* scheme, the occurrence of a desire and impulse is not the final end. It is an occasion and a demand for the formation of a plan and a method of activity. Such a plan, to repeat, can be formed only by study of conditions and by securing all relevant information.[22]

Students can get excited about class by documenting the lessons through pictures and videos. These are not activities to be held separately from their lives but may be integral to them. Opportunities to *teach* through digital technologies cannot ignore the social impact these media have in shaping and discharging the psycho-social milieu—our broadcasting powers can be used for good and bad. We must not succumb to impulse and immediate desire.

> We have to encourage students to see beyond sheer instrumentality.

As John Dewey wrote, "Such occurrences do not provide the model for education. The crucial educational problem is that of procuring the postponement of immediate action upon desire until observation and judgment have intervened."[23] Fear-mongering is a dangerous tactic that sabotages the democratic processes of dialogue and deliberation because it makes us act on our most acute impulses. We have to encourage students to see beyond sheer instrumentality. It is not important to be "first" in the rat-race of infotainment, but to find a way to endure beyond the trivial and superficial for the sake of substantive change.

Long-lasting appeal is what can make a true impact and that is why traditional education remains so transformational.

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[21] John Dewey, *Experience and Education*, Kappa Delta Pi Lecture, Reprint Edition (New York: Free Press, 1997 [1938]), 64.

[22] John Dewey, *Experience and Education*, 70-71.

[23] Ibid., 69.

social and political philosophy, philosophy and religion, philosophy of culture, public law, the history of political thought, and philosophy and race.