Part I
The Scientific and the Transformational

Theory in the traditional sense established by Descartes and everywhere practised in the pursuit of the specialized sciences organizes experience in the light of questions which arise out of life in present-day society. The resultant network of disciplines contains information in a form which makes it useful in any particular circumstances for the greatest possible number of purposes. The social genesis of problems, the real situations in which science is put to use, and the purposes which it is made to serve are all regarded by science as external to itself.

—Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory*

Pedagogically, philosophically, and politically, ideology is the primary focus/object of any inquiry or critique which claims to be exploring the social construction of the lived world or human be-ing, e.g., education and schooling. Because education has a teleological or developmental orientation, the ideological matrix for an educational praxis has certain definable characteristics. I have identified the pillars of Dewey's social theory as democracy, science, nature, and experience. In Part One, two of these cornerstones will be examined.

Democracy

Dewey's idea of democracy is the ideological key to his entire philosophical/pedagogical/political *oeuvre* and, ironically, a source of paradox in liberal theory. In general terms democracy is a political tradition in which the establishment and securement of individual rights—involving the consultation and discussion of an informed public concerning those rights—effect an equitable distribution of such rights.[1] While Dewey maintained that an *idea* of democracy could not be embodied and secured only by a historic moment, he obviously identified a democratic process being carried forward by the industrializing nations (particularly America) and enlightened reason (particularly Jefferson). "Democracy [is] the crucial expression of modern life . . . not so much an addition to the scientific and industrial tendencies as it is the perception of their social or spiritual

meaning."[2] Democracy is (epistemologically) the result of a changed conception of intelligence, an evolution of intelligence in interaction with "a change in intellectual conditions. . .the ordering of life in response to the needs of the moment in accordance with the ascertained truth of the moment."[3] Dewey saw in American democracy

> the conception of a social harmony of interests in which the achievement by each individual of his own freedom should contribute to a like perfecting of the powers of all, through a fraternally organized society, [and] is *the permanent contribution of the industrial movement to morals.*[4]

Along a similar ideological track, he stated in *The Public and Its Problems* that "it is even more important to realize that the conditions out of which the efforts at remedy grew and which it made possible for them to succeed were *primarily non-political in nature.*"[5] For Dewey democracy was largely a social idea and understood (in part) as the "improvement of the methods and conditions of debate, discussion and persuasion."[6] He maintained that American society has been the most significant manifestation of this evolution, but "because the conditions of life change,"[7] democracy is always a continuing experiment; there has never been complete democracy. He would have no part of an indoctrination into some metaphysical notion of democracy; there is never enough democracy.

> Since it is one that can have no end till experience itself comes to an end, the task of democracy is forever that of the creation of a freer and more humane experience in which all share and to which all contribute.[8]

Dewey regarded democracy as a highly cooperative, integrated form of social organization which had evolved in modern industrial times capturing both the autonomy and collectivity of individuals. In this sense he saw "democracy" as an "ideal" and wished to secure a perspective on its historical, philosophical meaning. He sought to develop a democratic ideology and referred often to the special values, purposes, and aims of a democratic society which

> must receive such distribution that they become part of the mind and the will of the members of society. . . to the democratic idea of making knowledge and under-

> standing, in short the power of action, a part of the intrinsic intelligence and character of the individual.[9]

He stated that democracy is a social idea "wider and fuller... than can be exemplified in the state even at its best. To be realized it must affect all modes of human association, the family, the school, industry, religion."[10] He understood it as a generation of "a general will and social consciousness: desire and choice on the part of individuals"[11] involving a "community" towards the shared appreciation of goods and concomitant access to them.[12]

The expansion of rationalism along more explicitly scientific categories (the natural sciences) in the nineteenth century precipitated a social, political, and epistemological release from the clerical domination of private life.[13] The rights of participation in the organization of socio-political activities were claimed, thereby engendering a new notion of "freedom" which Dewey felt could unify the relation between the individual and society. According to Charles Frankel, Dewey's approach to the concept of democracy has an analogy to the Greeks and the evolution of those qualities imbued in the notion of *Paideia.*[14] Dewey (in more modern guise) sought to shape the social vision inherent to Plato's *Republic*

> to the themes and perspectives of a massive industrial democracy with Puritan traditions and a Hobbesian frontier experience in its recent past... [and] continuous with Jefferson's belief that America was a promise not simply to itself but to mankind.[15]

In this summarization of Dewey's notion of democracy we might consider *The Public and Its Problems* where he elaborated the social and political ideal (towards his notion of the Great Community) along the following principles: 1) the fluid or "experimental" nature of practice and policy to better accommodate the fluctuation in human desires; 2) the integration of shared knowledges to facilitate desired ends; 3) activity shaped by purposes of fraternity, liberty, and equality; 4) the associated activity of the public conditioned by moral purpose into the formation of "community"; 5) the recognition of the primacy of "meaning" in human affairs; 6) the awareness of personal power and responsibility in forming communities; 7) the predisposition of care in activities; 8) the governmental or political organization of the state designed to serve the needs of its constituents; 9) the

participation of the public in the transformation of government policies.

We certainly can appreciate these functional characteristics and aims, and their political and historical significance for social justice. Liberal democracy, indeed, opened up new relationships of power, but my argument is that "democracy," *as the empirical ideal,* is too laden with associations to economic freedom and concomitant themes of growth, of evolution, of development, of progress, and the universal panacea assured by scientific method to deal satisfactorily with the burgeoning paradoxes of modernity. American life is concerned primarily with "freeing" the individual with the pseudo-promises of opportunity, and replacing the authority of the supernatural with the control affected by "the modern gaze." Democracy today is "inauthentic" to use Alan Wolfe's term. "Inauthentic democracy," he explains, "exists when the structure of choices present in an otherwise open political system either does not allow such fulfillment or actually works to negate it."[16] Liberal democracy is being construed today, as a result of the necessities of cold war rationality, as a

> social contract in which people receive the benefits of modernity, in return for not asking too many awkward questions about it. . . . If the quality of public life must be sacrificed a bit to keep the quantity of private life plentiful, it seems a small price to pay.[17]

But Dewey did not arbitrarily select "democracy" in a visionary or historic manner. Democracy was a pragmatic reality.

Pragmatism

When Dewey argued in *Democracy and Education* that "the conception of education as a social process and function has no definite meaning until we define the kind of society we have in mind,"[18] the inference is that not only a philosophical-historical *idea* of democracy existed, but an empirical approximation as well. For Dewey and contemporary neo-pragmatists, social planning begins by rejecting "objectivity," or the appeal to absolute or transcendent principles, that "truth" has some intrinsic nature, or that there are "real" essences.[19] Dewey, who Richard Rorty suggests found "truth" to be simply a complement to that which works,[20] nonetheless required that a past model,

a socio-historical account—"it has to be in *some* vocabulary"[21]—be used to guide and direct. Having proposed a philosophical basis for democracy Dewey's pragmatism further required that democracy be empirically and historically identified from *some* concrete source. I believe that a major paradox of liberalism may be located in this curious circularity.

Both Dewey and Rorty refer us to what is historically "available" as both source and end—liberalism as an ideological designation expressing in part the "free play of intelligence," a theory of life[22] and, empirically, what is called democracy in America. Rorty has written that

> no other American writers have offered so radical a suggestion for making our future different from our past, as have James and Dewey. . . . They asked us to liberate our new civilization by giving up the notion of "grounding" our culture, our moral lives, our politics, our religious beliefs, upon "philosophical bases". . . a permanent ahistorical matrix. . . and the "nonhuman nature of reality". . . . There is no epistemological difference between truth about what ought to be and truth about what is, nor any metaphysical difference between facts and values, nor any metaphysical differences between morality and science.[23]

Dewey's pragmatism and "metaphilosophical" relativism rejected theorization which attempted "to ground some element of our practices on something external to those practices."[24] By following this line of reasoning, and everything I have read of Dewey indicates he condemned the barren soil of metaphysics as a basis of the "true," one source of the paradox of the liberal model is exposed. In the broadest terms, Max Horkheimer outlines the issue in his 1947 *Eclipse of Reason:*

> Man has gradually become less dependent upon absolute standards of conduct, universally binding ideals. He is held to be so completely free that he needs no standards except his own. Paradoxically, however, this increase of independence has led to a parallel increase of passivity. Shrewd as man's calculations have become as regards his means, his choice of ends, which was formerly correlated with belief in an objective truth, has become witless.[25]

Pragmatists, Rorty maintains, fill this void by stressing that our loyalty is to other human beings, not our hope of getting things right.[26] Democracy, then, or the designation used to describe certain identifiable practices originating in the "concrete details of the culture in which. . .[it] grew up and developed," is legitimate or valid, or true, only to the degree that its practices ("the successive stages of European thought")[27] are agreed to. The fear of parochialism and the "relativism" in the modern symptoms of irrationalism and nihilism, which premise Horkheimer's condemnation of pragmatism (and Dewey), may be dismissed by recognizing that the pragmatist's "inquiry into the nature of knowledge can. . . only be a socio-historical account of how various people have tried to reach agreement on what to believe."[28]

The aspect of the paradox (accepted as inevitable by both Dewey and Rorty) undermining liberal reform is its pragmatic requirement that a past model/discourse/history be acknowledged, ideologically secured, and from which guidance and direction may be drawn. Rorty states:

> The pragmatists' justification of toleration, free inquiry, and the quest for undistorted communication can only take the form of a comparison between societies which exemplify these habits and those who do not. . . . Such justification is not by reference to a criterion, but by reference to various detailed practical advantages. . . . We must, in practice, privilege our own group, even though *there can be no noncircular justification for doing so.*[29]

It would be "utopian to try to imagine the details of a social state such has never existed" Dewey told us in *Freedom and Culture.*[30] Yet, by his own admission democracy—"the best means so far found"[31]—does not exist. What does exist is a set of ideas, historically determined, philosophically rendered, and ideologically reproduced which by virtue of their ownership in the minds and hands of the few have exercised remarkable hegemonic control. Ideologically operative in Dewey's employment of democracy, as the remarks above suggest, is what Williams refers to as the

> *selective tradition:* that which, within the terms of an effective dominant culture, is always passed off as "*the* tradition," "*the* significant past". But always the selectivity

> is the point; the way in which from a whole possible area of past and present, certain meanings and practices are chosen for emphasis, certain other meanings and practices are neglected and excluded. Even more crucially, some of these meanings are reinterpreted, diluted, or put into forms which support or at least do not contradict other elements within the effective dominant culture.[32]

The paradox existing in Dewey, liberalism, the resurgence of neo-pragmatism and the progressive spirit of reform, then, is barely concealed: what historically is being selected, why, and how is it being legitimated and reproduced? In order to appeal to or defend one's own cultural language of "solidarity" and the "self-image our society should have of itself,"[33] the ideological terrain of our social construction must be grounded by various references, standards, practices, and beliefs hegemonically selected, ordered, and disseminated. Pragmatism, as a philosophy of *present* experience, assigns ontological status to the "natural" and the "social" or "functional." By describing the "present" as the evolutionary empiric, its analysis and/or diagnosis is dependent upon continuity with a "selected" past. Pragmatism cannot, however, deal with the fundamental questions of structure and determination other than to relativize them (to be discussed in Part Two.)[34] Consequently, as a recent essay by Cornel West argues, Rorty's neo-pragmatism and by extension what I take to be Dewey's position as well, only satisfy "a self-conscious post-philosophical ideological project to promote the basic practices of bourgeois capitalist societies while discouraging philosophical defenses of them."[35]

Where have these "ideals," this terrain, predominantly come from? What was the historical context which defined them and continues to shape them? And which are the philosophical premises used to articulate them? Dewey stated that "We cannot set up, out of our heads, something we regard as an ideal society. We must base our conception upon societies which actually exist."[36] He acknowledged that "the chief source of social welfare and the ultimate spring of social progress"[37] was in the bourgeois movement of the eighteenth century. Democracy, characterized in the social sense as "the liberation of a greater diversity of personal capacities [was] caused by the development of modes of manufacture and commerce, travel, migration, and intercommunication which flowed from the command of science

over natural energy."[38] Indeed, if "freedom is something to be achieved and the state has the responsibility for creating institutions under which individuals can effectively realize the potentialities that are theirs,"[39] then the contemporary problem was to *continue* the notion of freedom (and democracy) he believed inherent in the *socially* enlightened projects of Jefferson, Rousseau, Mill, Spencer, and T.H. Green with the *economic* structures requisite to modern bourgeois industrial organization. In Dewey's view, "as economic relations became dominantly controlling forces in setting the pattern of human relations, the necessity of liberty for individuals which they proclaimed will require social control of economic forces."[40]

The designation for this ordering is liberal democracy. C.B. Macpherson states that liberal democracy has typically promised "to reconcile the claims of the free market economy with the claims of the whole mass of individuals to some kind of equality. It...is strictly a capitalist phenomenon."[41] In Macpherson's terms:

> With a liberal state guaranteeing a free market, everyone's natural desire to maximize his own utility, or at least not to starve, would bring everyone into productive relation which would maximize the aggregate utility of the society.[42]

Dewey was not entirely blind to the problems of this association though due to his ideological position he regarded the worker-capitalist division (for example) to be socially natural, not economically determined, and functionally necessary even if the relations were hierarchical. In *Individualism Old and New* (to which we will turn in greater detail below), Dewey theorized that

> it would be in accord with the spirit of American life if the movement [between capital and labor] were undertaken by voluntary agreement and endeavor rather than by governmental coercion....A coordinating and directive council in which captains of industry and finance would meet with representatives of labor and public officials to plan the regulation of industrial activity.[43]

Now, in a utopia, such a partnership makes perfect sense. In a society that has been stratified along class, race, and gender

relations, Dewey's position is extraordinarily naive.[44] He assumed that the moral progressiveness of rationality and the goodwill of the state to control technology and the marketplace would ultimately promote the "new" individual. In this respect, following Mill, Dewey had sought to "turn away from the market"; but he also was left with Mill's problem:

> helpless, unable to reconcile his notion of values with the political economy which he still believed in. The world's work had to go on, and he could see no way in which it could be carried on except by competitive private enterprise.[45]

Dewey clearly spoke from the pulpit of liberal pragmatism: "For in the long run democracy will stand or fall with the possibility of maintaining the faith and justifying it by works."[46] Thus far, democracy "has worked to keep factional disputes within bounds."[47] What is urgently needed, Dewey pleaded in 1939, was "a faith based on ideas that are now intellectually credible and are consonant with present economic conditions, which will inspire and direct action with something of the ardor once attached to things religious."[48] Liberalism was that faith; it has been "associated with generosity of outlook as well as with liberty of belief and action."[49] He felt that a socially evolving intelligence towards scientific, industrial and technological values and structures would provide not only the securities of life, but individual movement and invention.

This political and philosophical framework, I am arguing, has historically been utilized by reformers—liberal and conservative—not only with the zeal of secular faith, but to monitor and control political participation. Women and people of color, for example, remain in peripheral roles, analogous to the limited democratic reality of ancient Greece and the unresolved racist/sexist/classist presuppositions of "revolutionary" America. The opportunities to enter the system and fully embrace the ideal had been narrowly defined, and where entry presently occurs, the concomitant prerequisition prevails to conform or adapt to its socially and economically stratifying rules. Equal opportunity, insofar as it has come to define democracy in America, continues to be a principle of ("natural") aristocracy, a concessionary adjustment to an essentially unfree society.[50] Equal opportunity is based on the somewhat fallacious premise that social equality exists, as well

as on the premise that opportunities for all exist. Pragmatism attempts to unify the dialectic of liberal democracy. Picking pieces of Locke, Bentham, Mill, and Green as if they constituted some evolutionary continuum, Dewey was not defining American life so much as the ideals of a philosophic tradition concerned with humanizing *but not changing* the structures of power. Social justice, as I will suggest below, posits that democracy begins only after reasonably egalitarian conditions and structures have been prioritized, after the absence of discrimination toward women and minority populations, the gross disparities of economic distribution are rebalanced, and the welfare of the planet to sustain life is insured.

Less astute than Marx, Dewey did not analyze the *politicized* conditions, the ideological and structured conditions, in which "enlightenment" can flourish. He remained wedded to a functionalist view which, "on the one hand assumes a unitary social domain, and on the other leaves unproblematized the content and take-up of those attitudes."[51] In one telling passage Dewey offered the complete scenario of the limited democracy and *aristoi* empowerment behind the pragmatic liberal vision:

> There are *few individuals* who have the *native capacity* that was *required* to *invent* the stationary steam-engine, locomotive, dynamo or telephone. But there are no one so mean that they cannot *intelligently* utilize these *embodiments of intelligence* once they are a *part of* the organized means of associated living.[52]

Hidden in this instrumentalism which is derived from an economically framed vision of "genuine industrial freedom"[53] is the same disempowering tendency which marked Lenin's vanguard cadre, the same organization of social life into the shepherds and the (knowledgeable) sheep, precisely the same typology of Plato's "republic." Yes, a degree of social unity is captured by these views, but the freedom or capacity of the individual to make critical inquiries into the system itself is denied. The ideal, glimpsed from real existing conditions, typically has been the product of limited ideological perspectives. If the real has been structured with racist and sexist assumptions then an ideal will necessarily incorporate aspects of these characteristics.

Ultimately, pragmatism and its ethnocentric presuppositions must be derived from the ideological baggage they inherit from

their sources. When it is further assumed, as Rorty states, that "there is nothing wrong with liberal democracy,"[54] what *is* wrong becomes desensitized, depoliticized, rendering its nonideological reforms lukewarm. In order to defend the concepts of liberal democracy, of rationality, of scientific method—what Rorty refers to as toleration, free inquiry, and the quest for undistorted communication[55]—a language is used and a history selected that has been primarily constructed by economic and chauvinist values and exclusive of women, people of color, and other social justice concerns. In citing Winston Churchill's defense of democracy—democracy as it has been lived—as the worst form of government imaginable, except for all the others,[56] neo-pragmatist Rorty also seems to be trying to reinvigorate a Deweyan liberalism by similarly preaching an old-time faith.[57]

Individualism

A third paradox and, perhaps, the most glaring because it reaches the heart of an American worldview, is the notion of the individual, or subject. Dewey's interactionalism sought to integrate a self (subject) with the needs of modern capitalism/production (object) thereby highlighting the interdependent, cooperative bonds of self and society. From the standpoint of Dewey's *Individualism Old and New,* the reproduction of the "possessive individual" (Macpherson's term) was an unfortunate consequence of the latent laissez-faire tendencies of liberal democracy. The original dialectic historically had separated individuals from authority, the state, and metaphysics, releasing them from their social ties, work, authority, moral standards, as well as economic constraints.[58] Democracy, as the socio-political-economic ideal, was the attempt to reconnect those individuals collectively under certain common concerns.

Our views of the world—how we should or can conduct our affairs—are manifest in our actions and materialized in forms of social organization and structure. The intellectual, emotional, psychological, and behavioral relationships we have within the prevalent ideological terrain in our lives significantly condition the responses we will make. The paradox here is exemplified by Dewey's lambasting the aberration of laissez-faire individualism in *Individualism Old and New* while still concluding that a new individuality depends upon fulfilling the preconditions of the corporate and industrial world. If that dominant terrain, as I

have suggested, has been constructed along certain unequal and/or unjust power relations (which in the postwar period has culminated in the militarization/nuclearization of the planet), then it is little wonder that pedagogical practices which left those relations in place would not succeed. Dewey, of course, bemoaned many of the results of the modernization process, as do contemporary "liberal" conservatives today; yet, one reads little if anything which suggests a transformational praxis of the social relations which bind people. While the release of the individual from external restraint obviously has been spectacular and unprecedented (quantitatively) in America, the "creativity" of these expressions also has been magnetic enough to convince many people that it must never be sacrificed or compromised. Consequently, the focus of reform has remained wedded to a *psychological* account of crisis, inevitably blaming the bad attitudes, misconceptions, and faulty reasoning (dualism) of individuals. Underlying this approach and below the discourse of Dewey's interactionalism is the assumption that our social relations are the result of mutual exchange.[59] This tension, I believe, is where the radical perspective begins.

My position proposes that (contra Dewey) the social origins of the individual be further problematized. I have already stated that Dewey's project of recovery is not possible because what there is to recover may not satisfactorily service present transformational needs; hence, to construct an "individual" from what is the contemporary social ordering or what can be imagined, seems to maintain the circularity. A pedagogy of (Deweyan) democracy is less likely to encourage critical inquiry into the constructed-ness of self and society. If in fact Dewey regarded a progressive pedagogy to be

> founded on a number of new principles: society as the ultimate bedrock of the values expressed in notions of the social good; the utilitarian understanding of the maximization of the happiness of the greatest number; the health of the social body; national prosperity and the sacralization of the state. . . [then] such a foundation is both a condition and a product of the new forms of production and administration and of the new processes of subjection/subjectification.[60]

Hence, Dewey's efforts to collapse dualisms (self-society) are undermined by functionalistic designations of the respective

poles. In fact, to posit some notion of the "authentic subject," which claims agency in history, we are susceptible to yet another of the "games of truth" of which Foucault has spoken.[61] In arguing that various apparatuses,[62] institutions, and "truths" mediate social relations, I am further stating that any notion of the individual (of self) is an ideological construction intimately affixed by those social constructions. Couze Venn writes:

> Any discourse which aims to speak of the subject must at the same time speak of the social, and it must do so *not* in terms of a complementarity but on the basis of the fabrication of subjects in and for signifying material practices.[63]

On this point, Foucault's "animus against the subject," and the hermeneutic circle of inquiries "which take 'man' as their object, also have 'man' as their subject" thus producing, what Poster explains as

> a certain blindness which allows the human sciences to avoid reflecting upon their effects on practice. Foucault thinks that, by taking a point of view other than that of the subject, one can decipher the mechanisms through which the human sciences come to dominate, not liberate, the subject.[64]

From these brief considerations, let us contrast the four "individualisms" Dewey referred to in *Individualism Old and New* with Foucault's argument in "What is Enlightenment?".[65] Here as David Hiley explains, Foucault allows a *distance* between a "modern" praxis and the grip of modernity itself. Rather than regard the present as "heroic," in the sense of an evolutionary culmination, Hiley maintains that Foucault did foresee the "achievement of maturity," or freedom, or liberation, and what I am proposing is the context for social justice, only when the tables were turned on the "blackmailers" of the Enlightenment. Foucault sees "an attitude toward ourselves and the present which is an historical analysis of the limits that are imposed on us and a transgression that opens the possibility of going beyond the limits."[66] We will keep this analysis in mind while examining what sort of "individual" Dewey saw emerging from the productions of schooling.

The "old individualism" of revolutionary America possessed certain positive qualities for Dewey which had become distorted

and misdirected over the century and a half since Jefferson. The qualities of individualism Dewey appreciated in the emergence of the American state as manifested in the small farmer and businessman, craftsmanship, and the activities of leisure life have been consumed by "our materialism, our devotion to money making and to having a good time."[67] Nevertheless, he was not advocating romanticism, some return to a less complicated individual/social existence. It was useless to bemoan the departure of the good old days.[68] Rather, with "an enormous command of instrumentalities, with possession of a secure technology," his explanation in *Individualism Old and New* was that we have not developed "the means at our disposal. . . to form an equitable and stable society."[69] He regretted the loss of the "spiritual factor of our tradition" and the present orientation towards "the practices of a pecuniary culture."[70] The corporate mentality ("for better or worse, we are living in a corporate age," Dewey told us) had negatively generated "impersonal and socially undirected economic forces"[71] and removed individuals from the traditional bonds and grassroots participation Dewey recalled from an earlier age. He lamented

> that the loyalties which once held individuals, which gave them support, direction, and unity of outlook on life, have well-nigh disappeared. In consequence, individuals are confused and bewildered.[72]

From these excerpts, three "individualisms" can be detected: 1) the pre-industrial individual constructed in an agrarian and petty-bourgeois context with an "ideal of equality of opportunity and of freedom for all"[73] now usurped by 2) the "present" ordering of the individual by "corporate mechanisms"[74] leaving 3) the *lost individual,* "confused and bewildered."[75] The fourth, of course, was Dewey's conceptualization of "a new individualism," a position covering the remainder of the text. Here again we recognize the pragmatic thrust of his analysis in which the "present" is always the most facilitative means for addressing the future, and "problem-solving" replaces critical theory. As mentioned above, the problem for Dewey was that the advance of industrialism and the corporate way of life have not been sufficiently accompanied by a scientific planning of consequences around social development.[76] The prescientific and preindustrial individual was not to be resurrected but reconstructed to meet "the realities of the social estate."[77] "A new

individualism," he advised, "can be achieved only through the controlled use of all the resources of the science and technology that have mastered the physical forces of nature,"[78] thereby equipping the youth "to be masters of their own economic and social careers."[79] The failure of an educational system to prepare its youth for membership in modern, scientific, industrial life was being hampered by an "old individualism" not yet cognizant of its unity with the rest of society, as well as the bastardization of the frontier individualism. Dewey's (new) individualism, a sort of secular rebirth, characteristic in all of his writing, thus required the formation of "a new psychology and moral type."[80] He argued that

> recovery of individuals capable of stable and effective self-control can be had only as there is first a humbler exercise of will to observe existing social realities and to direct them according to their own potentialities.[81]

My contention in this section is that Dewey's "new individual" remained a product of economic forces in the terms of a base-superstructure analysis, without ever coming to grips with the issues of growth, expansionism, imperialism, class, gender, and partial or incomplete democratic practices concomitant with it. Furthermore, my argument rejects Dewey's attempt to create a "subject"—no matter how ideally—from the ideologically construed "harmonious society" envisioned by the liberal discourse. The "problem," as Joel Kovel explains,

> does not lie in the workings of the economic system, but in the fact that the system is economic in the first place. And the solution is not to grease the wheels of an archaic machine, but to see to it that the machine itself is replaced by something more suitable to the well-being of life on earth.[82]

Subjectivity, or the ideological premises for the construction of the individual in a society, was settled pragmatically by Dewey and liberalism, i.e., according to the mandates of the prevailing power structures. Freedom and the development of the "new individual" could be gained "only by participating in the common intelligence and sharing in the common purpose as it works for the common good."[83] This alignment of means and end, of possibility and consequence, of self and society seems to be more deeply rooted in the Hegelian separation of consciousness from

material structures ("forces" in Dewey's usage) than Dewey was aware.[84] However, by regarding how the ideological refers to the discursively, bodily, and emotionally interpellated (to use another of Althusser's terms)[85] social formations by which individuals define themselves as subjects, we get at the deeper foundations from which consciousness and meaning are constructed. "Subjectivities," then, exist prior to the individual and define what is "American," "student," "teacher," "citizen," "democracy," "social justice," "learning," "gender," "race," "excellence," "knowledge," and "power." As Mouffe's account explains, if social agents

> are not the constitutive principle of their acts, but supports of the structures, their subjective principles of identity constitute an additional structural element resulting from specific historical practices.[86]

"The problem consists," as Mouffe continues, "in determining the *objective* relation between these subjective principles or ideological elements."[87]

My argument is that "democracy," as an ideological totality in which schools should be ordered, is philosophically unable to accomplish its own ideals let alone the more far-reaching investigation into nonviolence and social justice. To continue the ordering of values defined by liberal democracy is to be impotent before the crises facing the world's peoples. While Dewey did not regard "democracy" to be a product of a particular class (capitalists), I tend to agree with Macpherson ("liberal-democracy is strictly a capitalist phenomenon"), and it is within that political and economic ordering that its contradictions and/or failed promises may be located. The transformation of liberal democracy is the transformation towards social justice, not the abolishment of an open society. Whereas he held that the "realities of the social estate" which define, construct, and reproduce individuals could not be changed, a radical position does challenge those structures. Information, scientific rationalism, and the traditional assumptions of school practices regarding the "normative" and functional organization of society ignore this analysis. The contradictions of that attempt during the development of the American school has been illuminated by a number of works during the past fifteen years.[88] Social justice and nonviolence, as it will be sketched, imply the transformation of priorities from the pragmatics of realpolitik to the human.

Democracy and Education

In developing the pedagogical dimensions of this democratic project in *Democracy and Education,* Dewey asked, "Why is it, in spite of the fact that teaching by pouring in, learning by a passive absorption, are universally condemned, that they are still so intrenched in practice?"[89] Twenty years later he asked a similar question:

> What are our schools doing to cultivate not merely passive toleration that will put up with people of different racial birth or different colored skin, but what are our schools doing positively and aggressively and constructively to cultivate understanding and goodwill which are essential to democratic society?[90]

In the fabled "Chicago Experiment" (1894–1904) to which Dewey's early educational writings *The School and Society* (1900) and *The Child and the Curriculum* (1902) refer, he identified the progressive agenda: "Let us then ask after the main aspects of the social movement; and afterward turn to the school to find what witness it gives of effort to put itself in line."[91]

It is not that reform hasn't addressed huge tears in the social fabric nor expended repairs, but that in accepting functional categories and pragmatic solutions for the problems of social reality, it fails to challenge the economic basis for organizing human life and the ideologically related structures which promote individualistic, isolated tactics. The paradox in liberalism has been well-camouflaged in Dewey's theorizing because it *does* express a social organization concerned to bridge the gaps historically dividing self and society. As we have seen: "At whatever level, state, factory, party, family, the *existing* social order is the implicit framework in whose official but unspoken terms people's actions are understood and assessed as criminal, disruptive, disloyal, naughty or whatever."[92] Of course, the ideology of reform finds *something* problematic with the existing social order, but *within* the parameters or logic of the paradigm itself. Consequently, in order to begin his (pragmatic) pedagogy Dewey had to accept America as a continuously evolving democracy in which the socialization process was an ongoing

> communication of ideals, hopes, expectations, standards, opinions, from those members of society who are passing

> out of the group life to those who are coming into it... transform[ing] uninitiated and seemingly alien beings into robust trustees of its own resources and ideal.[93]

Rather than accuse Dewey of formalism[94] I would emphasize that it is his pragmatism which is problematic. If "a part of wisdom [is] to utilize the products of past history so far as they are of help for the future" and schooling; or, if schooling is "the training of our original impulsive activities" and consists "in *selecting* from the diffused responses which are evoked at a given time those which are especially adapted to the *utilization* of the stimulus,"[95] then an ideological critique is appropriate rather than pragmatic adaptations. Dewey's concept and image of "social environment" were not only very selective, dependent upon a naive, apolitical, and idealized reading of American history, but pedagogically impotent to engage teacher-student in critical practices. To have investigated the structures of liberalism and how they are ideologically maintained would have opened a door Dewey probably was not ready to walk through. In this light, we can understand Clarence Karier's objection that the Dewey School experiment only

> emphasized social unity, cooperative living, and the rational, orderly, progressive development of technology from the spinning wheel to the modern, industrial, corporate society. The violent, bloody history of Indians, blacks, and immigrants, as well as the labor conflicts of the previous decades, were peculiarly missing in the school's history of the progressive evolution of American technology.[96]

Dewey himself stated "that this [industrial] revolution should not affect education in some other than a formal and superficial fashion is inconceivable."[97] In *The Child and the Curriculum* we are introduced to the holistic evolutionism that marked "the cumulative outcome of the efforts, the strivings, and the successes of the human race generation after generation"[98] guaged by scientific, technological, and political events. Dewey was setting forth in his early educational work a pragmatic basis for schooling which would address the experiential adaptability called for in the modern industrial state.

The "social environment forms the mental and emotional disposition of behavior in individuals by engaging them in activities that arouse and strengthen certain impulses, that have

certain purposes and entail certain consequences."[99] "The very existence of the social medium in which an individual lives, moves, and has his being is the standing effective agency of directing his activity."[100] "The inclination to learn from life itself and to make the conditions of life such that all will learn in the process of living is the finest product of schooling."[101] "The statement of aim is a matter of emphasis at a given time."[102] "In directing the activites of the young, society determines its own future in determining that of the young," and "the latter's nature will largely turn upon the direction children's activies were given at an earlier period."[103] Education, ideally, is a growth process that should "make individuals better fitted to cope with later requirements."[104] "It is the business of the school environment to eliminate, so far as possible, the unworthy features of the existing environment from influence upon mental habitudes" and "provide something like a homogeneous and balanced environment for the young."[105] Social environment is defined by Dewey to be "constituted by the presence and action of the habits of thinking and feeling of civilized men."[106] "The continuity of any experience, through renewing of the social group, is a literal fact. Education, in its broadest sense, is the means of this social continuity of life."[107]

In general, then, Dewey assumed a typically functional social ontology that prioritized the empirical facticity of the self-society relation. Learning as doing, the legacy of Deweyan progressivism, therefore, was to be linked to "social conditions" and their production of "the appliances which are requisite if new ideas are to be adequately elaborated."[108] Dewey, can be seen (again) to be exalting the "Great Community" in phrases like "the formation of the proper social life," the "maintenance of proper social order," the "securing of the right social growth," and the teacher as "the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God."[109] In Sanchez's view this meant putting "the schools in step with a modern, industrial democracy . . . [where] children would develop the critical intelligence to help push the wheels of progress in a society 'which is worthy, lovely, and harmonious'."[110] Politically and educationally, the nature of reform "was to make the system work efficiently and effectively"[111] and, if necessary (as Dewey argued in *Liberalism and Social Action*), increase the role of the state.

As I have been arguing, Dewey initially defined democracy functionally and abstractly: common interest, interaction,

cooperative discussion with others, "of conjoint communicated experience."[112] Democracy is a "particular social ideal"[113] which demands a social return from everyone, while providing the opportunities for the development of individual capacities,[114] and reflects a "society in which all share in useful service and all enjoy a worthy leisure."[115] "Socialization depends upon the habits and aims of the group."[116] The greater realization of universal education was drawn from the potentiality of the new, bourgeois-developed need to produce a growing industrialized society. From this rationale, society, or "whatever binds people together in cooperative human pursuits and results,"[117] along with the values instrumental to its preservation have been already defined. These relations, as we have seen, which bind people together, were construed in social and functional terms, not as a result of a struggle for ideological turf.[118]

Due to the gains of experimental science, he believed that American democracy had transformed both the Platonic and Rousseauean formulations of self and society. Schools could begin to develop the imagination and sympathetic insight into "the social and scientific values"[119] of the workplace which the evolving Western consciousness had produced. However, according to Sanchez, *The School and Society* and *Democracy and Education* unequivocally proposed "an educational solution for alienation in industrial society."[120] "The stick of mindless labor," writes Sanchez, "poor working and living conditions, and skimpy salary would be ameliorated by the carrot of understanding that each individual worker was part of a great industrial, corporate society which would in time bring a cornucopia of goods."[121] Karier, too, critiques the reformist position and ties it to the argument (cited above) against the pragmatic view. Dewey, he says,

> never seriously challenged the power sources within American society; his nonviolent socialist views threatened few in power. In fact much of his philosophy of nonviolent, reasoned, and orderly change (albeit toward a kind of welfare-state socialism) was adopted by those who directed and managed the corporate industrial state.[122]

Dewey's answer, thus, never problematized "democracy." It was never a question of "do I fight?," "do I flee?," but "how do I accommodate?" By assuming a pragmatic stance, he was