

John Dewey, New Education, and Social Control in the Classroom

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Abstract

This case study investigates John Dewey's role in debates on the topic of New Education and Progressive Education schools. It deals about William H. Kilpatrick's learning by projects method, Gertrude Hartman's learning by activities method, and the late-1920s and early-1930s Activity Program. In his writings between 1902 and 1938, Dewey advised to walk the middle path between teacher-centered education and child- or student-centered education. Surprisingly enough, his Experience and Education holds a hidden message, which promotes the so-called Alexander Technique as a means of achieving the "ideal aim of education," that is, the "creation of power of self-control" (Dewey, 1938, p. 75).

Key Words: Harriet Alice (Chipman) Dewey (1858-1927), Louisa Parsons Stone Hopkins (1834-1895), Gertrude Hartman (1876-1955), Marietta Louise (Pierce) Johnson (1864-1938), Caroline Louise Pratt (1867-1954), Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869-1955), Samuel Engle Burr (1897-1987), George Sylvester Counts (1889-1974), Lawrence Arthur Cremin (1925-1990), John Dewey (1859-1952), Lester Dix (1890-1961), Charles William Eliot (1834-1926), Abraham Flexner (1866-1955), Charles Hanford Henderson (1861-1941), William Heard Kilpatrick (1871-1965), Colonel Francis Wayland Parker (1837-1902), Joseph Mayer Rice (1857-1934), Eugene Randolph Smith (1876-1968), Rufus Whittaker Stimson (1868-1947), Calvin Milton Woodward (1837-1915). Activity plan, Bureau of Educational Experiments, learning by activities, learning by doing, learning by projects, New Education, Project Method, Progressive Education Association.

Introduction

"The essence of the new education is to find out what is good for the child."

Marietta L. Johnson (1920, p. 8) in her speech *The School and the Child* at the First Annual Convention of the Progressive Education Association.

In "What is Education," the opening chapter in *Education Moves Ahead*, Eugene Randolph Smith (1924) who was Headmaster at the Beaver Country Day School (Brookline, Massachusetts) advocated that primary school should "touch and serve the life of the community" (p. 16). His aim was solid educational renewal. Students should learn actively.

Information is important, but ways to get information are more important. Children should be shown how to investigate, to go to sources — nature, mankind, books — for the information needed; they should have experience in thinking about and weighing the facts discovered, in reasoning about them and coming to conclusions in regard to them; they should learn to act upon the judgments reached and to be able to express those judgments to others, in spoken and written form, definitely and effectively. They should not, as is too often the case, be expected to learn great numbers of facts and "recite" upon them, only to forget them as soon as the immediate need has passed. (p. 24).

Educational historian Lawrence Arthur Cremin (1961) who at the time of writing his famous book *The Transformation of the School* taught at Teachers College, Columbia University (New York City) observed that Eugene R. Smith took notice of so-called progressive teaching methods rather cautiously, "responsive to the need for reform, but deeply concerned with preserving the values of traditional education" (p. 197).

Previously, Frederic Lister Burk (1913) who was President of San Francisco's State Normal School (San Francisco, California) brought out his *Lock-Step Schooling and a Remedy*. The sub-title unceremoniously betrays the main area covered by the booklet: "Fundamental evils and handicaps of class instruction." Note that Burk did not so much criticize the "curriculum of assimilation" mainly characterized by "pushing spelling, punctuation, number facts, multiplication tables, and tales of American heroism and high morality" (p. 74), but he found the entire existing educational structure failing. He mentioned reports that indicate that many students did not succeed well in school, and he pointed out that roughly half of the

student population was over-age (meaning above the age normal for their grade). He identified “the graded class system itself, with its lock-step of progress and promotion” (p. 8) as the cause of failure common to all schools.

The class system has been modeled upon the military system. It is constructed upon the assumption that a group of minds can be marshaled and controlled in growth in exactly the same manner that a military officer marshals and directs the bodily movements of a company of soldiers. In solid unbreakable phalanx the class is supposed to move through the grades, keeping in locked step. This locked step is set by the “average” pupil — an algebraic myth born of inanimate figures and an addled pedagogy. (p. 7).

Burk wished to find a substitute for the lock-step system. He suggested to use new types of text books and exercise books for students who work at their own pace and who correct their own exercises. He further recommended individualized instruction, flexibility in the amount of lessons per week, no repetition of grades, and Socratic discussions in the classrooms.

Three years later, Abraham Flexner (1916), Secretary of the General Education Board of the New York City Rockefeller Foundation, issued *The Modern School*, a tract arguing for experimental secondary schools, condemning drilling students “in arbitrary signs by means of which [they] determine mechanically what they should do, without intelligent insight into what they are doing” (p. 6). According to Flexner, schools should cultivate the students’ “interests, senses, and practical skill” (p. 10). He recommended that the curriculum should include activities in the fields of science, industry, aesthetics, and civics.

The three booklets listed above contain proposals to reorganize and renew education. And, they are merely a small illustration of thousands of educational revitalization initiatives between 1870 and 1935. Many of these reform initiatives are as yet undocumented grass-root movements (Reese, 1986). However, scores of books, booklets, journals, tracts and brochures of the time indicate a well-meant resolve to renew education that flourished widely. Today the educational reforms are known as ‘New Education’ or, later, ‘Progressive Education.’

New Education

In 1939, Lester Dix who was Principle of Lincoln School (New York City) gratefully acknowledged that the General Education Board had established his secondary school in 1917 as a consequence of the attention Flexner’s booklet had attracted. Dix’s (1939) *A Charter for Progressive Education* summarizes Flexner’s educational outlook.

Such developments in progressive schools as more study of the sciences and of modern social life; firsthand and genuine experience for the learner; expansion in the arts, with emphasis on current art developments; coordination of subject matter into individually integrated experience; attention to the needs of the family; the use of the community as a laboratory; increase in the attention given to health; an experimental attitude toward content and subject matter; the creation of new teaching materials; and the solution of the problem of discipline by helping children to find real tasks — are all to be found among the list of some forty specific proposals in [Flexner’s pamphlet]. (pp. 1-2; emphasis added).

Note that Dix addressed “the problem of discipline.” His wording even suggests that schools like Lincoln School held the secrets of the coveted solution to that notorious problem. Yet, as will be shown below, the literature suggests otherwise. Apparently, ‘progressive schools’ did not find the solution, but provided shelter for the problem of deranged discipline.

Lincoln School educators experimented with Flexner’s scheme and took a leading part in educational reforms. A footnote in Dix’s book states that Flexner had given credit to President of Harvard University Charles William Eliot for supporting his work and founding Lincoln School. Eliot (1869a-b) had written a two-part essay for *Atlantic Monthly* advocating reorganizing higher education, titled “The New Education.” The essay immediately secured him a nomination for the presidency of Harvard University (Boston, Massachusetts). Eliot remained Harvard’s President during four decades, from 1869 until his retirement in 1909. Later, in 1919, he became Honorary President of the Progressive Education Association (PEA). He

remained PEA Honorary President until his death in 1926. (In 1928, John Dewey succeeded Eliot by accepting the honorary presidency of the Association.)

Over the years the concept of ‘New Education’ used by Eliot in 1869 became the common denominator classifying his and numerous other plans for educational reorganization and renewal, proposed between 1870 and 1935.

John Dewey and New Education

The footnote in Dix’s (1939) book mentioned above additionally states that Flexner declared (in correspondence) that John Dewey had strongly influenced his own educational ideas as well as “the thinking which went into the founding of the Lincoln School” (p. 1). Dewey was one of those educational rejuvenators who redefined the concept of New Education. Dewey (1898) mentioned the concept for the first time in his article “The Primary-Education Fetich.”

Educators should...frankly face the fact that the New Education, as it exists today, is a compromise and a transition: it employs new methods, but its controlling ideals are virtually those of the Old Education. (p. 327).

He applied the phrase again in 1899, in his booklet *The School and Society*. Note that he did not reference Eliot’s *Atlantic Monthly* essay “The New Education,” mentioned above — almost certainly since it covered Eliot’s *academic* education reorganizing proposals. Dewey’s own use of it first and foremost addressed *primary* education reforms. Dewey (1899) wrote:

It is to this, then, that I especially ask your attention: the effort to conceive what roughly may be termed the “New Education” in the light of larger changes in society. Can we connect this “New Education” with the general march of events? (p. 16).

Three years later, in *The Child and the Curriculum*, Dewey (1902a) enhanced his stance.

Just as, upon the whole, it was the weakness of the “old education” that it made invidious comparisons between the immaturity of the child and the maturity of the adult, regarding the former as something to be got away from as soon as possible and as much as possible; so it is the danger of the “new education” that it regards the child’s present powers and interests as something finally significant in themselves. In truth, his learnings and achievements are fluid and moving. (p. 20).

Subsequently, Dewey (1902b) acknowledged in *The Educational Situation* that the so-called ‘Old Education’ was retreating in primary education. He realized that there was “no new education in definite and supreme existence” (p. 19). Nonetheless, he thought he saw unambiguous fundamental tendencies emerging that should collaborate in order not to come in conflict with each other or with the remnants of the Old Education dominated by the three R’s. Dewey wished teachers to “study the educative process as a whole” (p. 27). Enthused New Education teachers, however, he claimed, had to denounce their “partisanship.”

To recognize that the situation is not the wholesale antagonism of so-called old education to the so-called new, but a question of the co-operative adjustment of necessary factors in a common situation, is to surrender our partisanship. It is to cease our recriminations and our self-conceits, and search for a more comprehensive end than is represented by either factor apart from the other. (p. 20).

Dewey was very clear about the controversy he saw in New Education.

The real conflict is not between a certain group of studies, the three R’s, those having to do with the symbols and tools of intellectual life, and other studies representing the personal development of the child, but between our professed ends and the means we are using to realize these ends. (pp. 39-40).

He was less specific in parts of his book pertaining to secondary education and colleges.

‘New Education’ *not* Dewey’s Catchphrase

One thing is certain; the catchphrase ‘New Education’ is *not* Dewey’s neologism. In fact, the concept first appeared in England in the 1860s (Selleck, 1968). I noted above that Eliot already used the concept in the 1869 *Atlantic Monthly* to indicate academic reorganizations. In 1877, in London (England), Emily Anne

Eliza Shirreff issued *The Claim of Froebel's System to be Called "The New Education."* The title says it all. Other texts about Froebel's work using the same catchword to indicate educational renewal were issued throughout the 1870s and 1880s, e.g., Bertha von Marenholtz-Buelow's 1876 *The New Education by Work*, and John Miller Dow Meiklejohn's 1881 *The New Education*. Courtlandt Palmer (1885) of the Gramercy Park School and Tool-House in New York City issued *The New Education: Manual (Industrial) Training an Indispensable Department of It*, a 21-page booklet that discusses Froebel's educational ideals. In November 1885, *Andover Review* had "The New Education," written by another Palmer — Harvard University philosopher George Herbert Palmer. Throughout the 1870s and 1880s numerous magazines and journals — like *The Michigan Teacher*, *Kindergarten Messenger*, *The Common School Teacher*, or *Wisconsin Journal of Education* — had texts about the pros and cons of 'The New Education.'

In 1887, Calvin Milton Woodward published *The Manual Training School* in which he examined New Education ideals more than once. His book was reviewed in the second issue of *The Teacher* (1888a), under the heading "The New Education." *The Teacher* (1888b), a monthly educational magazine established in January 1888 "to welcome every advance in methods or in subjects to our schools" and to "show to teachers their proper applications and usefulness" especially welcomed "the newcomer, Manual Training [with] outstretched arms" (p. 1). Five years later, *The Teacher* was renamed into *The New Education* (1893) — a magazine that according to the text on the cover of its very first issue intended "to unify all the forces of education and instruction, the teaching of the home, the kindergarten, and the school." It further aimed to "aid educators in every sphere in the development of the *whole child*" (front cover; emphasis in original text). In fact, *The New Education* magazine paid attention to all turn-of-the-century New Education disciplines listed by former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education Diane Silvers Ravitch (2001):

When Harvard's Charles W. Eliot wrote about the "new education" in 1869, he meant introducing science into the schools. By the turn of the century, the "new education" had come to mean manual training, industrial education, vocational education, commercial studies, domestic science, agricultural studies, and other occupational studies. (p. 51).

Colonel Francis Wayland Parker and The New Education

Be that as it may, it is obvious that the phrase 'New Education' was already in use long before Dewey wrote his works mentioned above. As indicated, the concept was generally used to depict reforms in primary as well as in secondary and tertiary education. Dewey, who mainly addressed primary education, may have been unaware of Eliot's 1869 New Education ideas, but he certainly was aware of Colonel Francis Wayland Parker's New Education 'Quincy Method.' As early as in July 1883, the *Chicago Tribune* portrayed the 'Quincy System' of primary education — based on Parker's 1875 reforms of the Quincy, Massachusetts schools — as "The New Education." The *New York Times* reprinted the article the same month. A year later, the *Chatham Courier* had an article about New Education in which Colonel Parker figured as one of the educators interviewed by author Finch (1884) who reminded his readers,

Following [Pestalozzi and Froebel], we have Col. Parker, and not Col. Parker alone, but hundreds of others throughout the length and breadth of our land. Please number among these those who have been instrumental in securing the passage of the National Educational bill, the Ladies' Temperance societies that have secured the passage of the law which makes compulsory the study of physiology and hygiene with special reference to the use of alcoholic drinks and narcotics.

THE NEW EDUCATION.
THE QUINCY METHOD TO BE INTRODUCED
INTO CHICAGO.
From the Chicago Tribune, July 2.
Col. F. W. Parker, late Superintendent of
the Primary Schools of Boston, has entered upon
his duties as Principal of the Cook County Normal
School, at Englewood. He is a man of 45 years, in
robust health, and mentally vigorous. His life-

Figure 1: Excerpt from the *New York Times*, July 5, 1883.

Parker was Superintendent of the Primary Schools of Boston, Massachusetts between 1880 and 1883; from 1883 to 1899 he was Principal of the Cook County Normal School, Englewood, Illinois; from 1899 till 1901, he was Director of the Chicago Institute, a private progressive training school for teachers that in 1901 — after merging with Alice and John Dewey’s Chicago University Elementary School, or Laboratory School — changed its name to School of Education at the University of Chicago. After Parker’s death in March 1902, John Dewey succeeded him as Director. Later, Dewey (1930) stated that Parker “more nearly than any other person [was] the father of the progressive education movement” (p. 204).

Two Books about New Education from the 1890s

Between 1890 and 1935, a variety of newspapers, magazines and journals published articles carrying the phrase New Education in their heading. Books paid attention to New Education too. *The Public-School System of The United States*, a work written by New York City paediatrician Joseph Mayer Rice (1893) who used the concept in relation to primary and secondary education, is referenced numerous times in the history of education literature.

While the aim of the old education is mainly to give the child a certain amount of information, the aim of the new education is to lead the child to observe, to reason, and to acquire manual dexterity as well as to memorize facts — in a word, to develop the child naturally in all its faculties, intellectual, moral, and physical. (p. 21).

In contrast to Rice’s book, *The Spirit of the New Education* — a work written by female Supervisor of the Boston Public Schools Louisa Parsons Stone Hopkins — receives almost no attention at all in the history of education literature, even despite the fact that Hopkins’ (1892) views regarding education, informed by Froebel’s insights combined with manual training emphasis, and merging “learning by observation and by experiment” with “learning by doing,” preceded the very core of Dewey’s philosophy of education by a decade.

A great deal of ciphering is done in schools of the old type which means absolutely nothing to the pupil; it is simply a mass of figures combined according to arbitrary direction, and standing for no actual value in his experience. Now we propose to connect every process with life. Let the child see and handle, measure and experiment, discover his process, make his rule, apply his knowledge, or gain it by his own powers of observing and doing. In this way it enters into his mind-growth; it becomes organic.

These methods of learning give constant delight. How truly they accord with the natural impulses of the child...It is *learning by observation and by experiment*; it provides the child with material and tools, and encourages him to use them to construct, to design, to demonstrate, to embody his concepts. The old tools — the pen, the pencil, the book, and the map — may continue; but he must use the pen to express his thought, the pencil to draw his ideal, the book to complete his observation and to give him practice in this tool of language, and the globe to vivify and express the shape of the earth. He must make his own maps and define his knowledge of contour and relief...he must go out and study real forms of geography...If he studies history, let him represent its facts as far as possible. Does he study the early history of this country? Let him construct miniature wigwams, dress dolls as Indians, make little canoes, snow-shoes, set up an Indian village, and draw what he has not the material to construct...The laboratory method in physics and chemistry, in astronomy, geology, botany, and biology, is now beyond challenge; the *learning by doing*, established by Froebel, is also now beyond challenge; thus the two extremes of our school-courses have settled the question. How long shall we delay their connection throughout the grades of school-work? The time has come, we believe, to unify and interrelate all our work, both in subject and method; and on this doctrine we have remodeled our course of study in the Boston schools as far as at present practicable. We have endeavored to adjust our means to our end, — the great end of all education, — the development of power, the determinate and symmetrical growth of the child-nature in all its relations to nature, to man, and to God. (pp. 128-130; emphasis added).

‘Learning by doing’ *not* Dewey’s Catchphrase

Each time we read or hear the maxim ‘learning by doing,’ we think of John Dewey. Dewey first used the slogan in his 1915 *Schools of To-Morrow*, co-authored by his daughter Evelyn.

Abstract ideas are hard to understand; the child is never quite sure whether he really understands or not. Allow him to act out the idea and it becomes real to him, or the lack of understanding is shown in what is done. Action is the test of comprehension. This is simply another way of saying that *learning by doing* is a better way to learn than by listening. (Dewey & Dewey, 1915, p. 120; emphasis added).

Yet, Hopkins had previously used the exact same maxim ‘learning by doing’ in her 1892 book *The Spirit of the New Education* (see quotation above). And, note that the slogan even constituted the title of a book in 1914 (Swift, 1914), a year before Dewey started to use it. Dewey biographer Jay Martin (2002) states that Colonel Francis Parker introduced the saying in 1885. However, Parker had declared earlier that a learning by doing educational approach was first introduced in the seventeenth century by Czech educator John Amos Comenius. Parker (1883) quoted his adage, “Let things that have to be done be learned by doing them” (p. 22). Learning by doing approaches have further roots in eighteenth and nineteenth-century educational experiments — by Swiss Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, by German Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel, and by German Johann Friedrich Herbart.

Analogous maxims, like ‘learn to do by doing’ and ‘learning to do by doing’ appeared in American educational literature well before 1900, that is, respectively as early as in 1881 and in 1882 (*School Journal*, 1881; Seward, 1882) — or perhaps even earlier.

Interestingly in this context, Principal of the Adelaide (Australia) Kindergarten Training College Lillian de Lissa (1914) stated during a Montessori Conference, “With Froebel the law is: ‘Learn to do by doing.’ With Montessori it is: ‘Learn to do by preparing’” (p. 59). So, even in contradiction to a very clear footnote by the translator of Froebel’s *The Education of Man*, claiming that Froebel most certainly was *not* the originator of the saying ‘learn to do by doing’ (see: Froebel, 1887, *translator’s note*, pp. 103-104), de Lissa identified Froebel as its author.

On the other hand, Martin James Stormzand (1924) of the Leland Stanford Junior University (Stanford, California) seemed to implicate in his *Progressive Methods of Teaching* that Pestalozzi was the creator of the maxim. Indeed, Pestalozzi indicated in a March 1819 letter to British mystic James Pierrepont Greaves that “the first rule is, to teach always by Things rather than by Words” (Pestalozzi, 1827, p. 122). But does this make Pestalozzi the author of the saying?

At any rate, catchphrases like ‘learning by doing,’ ‘learn to do by doing’ and ‘learning to do by doing’ had appeared in educational literature long before Dewey started to use them.

Manual Training an Essential Element in New Education

Manual training, as indicated above, formed an essential element in Hopkins’ (1892) book about New Education initiatives in Boston, just like it did in Palmer’s (1885) booklet *The New Education: Manual (Industrial) Training an Indispensable Department of It*. Hopkins wrote, “We are in the beginning of a manual-training era, for manual training is a method of education, not a specialty of education” (p. 139). Her views were certainly outspoken:

The exercises in manual training are a means not only of physical and intellectual, but also of morale culture. They train to habits of accuracy, neatness, order, and thoroughness; they make a helpful occupation for otherwise unemployed time, or a relaxation from less pleasurable work; they present an incentive to good work in all directions; and offer at all times and in all connections a moral stimulus and preparation for usefulness at home and in the community. (pp. 135-136).

Hopkins’ greatest endeavor was to “make learning a discovery by the child’s natural activities; to connect the child with his environment, and prepare him for his growing relations” (p. 133). She added, “Systematic labor, work for a purpose, not merely mechanical, but scientific in its methods, that is the aim of the free education we mean to bring into the schools” (p. 148). Hopkins decidedly explained the wider societal implications of a New Education envisaged by her:

The school is nearer to the problems of the day than any other institution, because it is forming the generation which continually confronts those problems, and must set itself to their solution...The schools have a more vital work to-day than in the past. We see the urgent need of a living connection between the growing child and the life about him. We no longer want mere bookworms coming out of our schools, but live boys and girls, awake at every pore, — quick to see, quick to feel, quick to take hold of the great needs of life...We want power to think and power to do; power to organize and power to act under organization; power to lead and power to follow; for one is the complement of the other...So we must equip our children for concerted action, for participation in the activities of the day, for helpfulness in practical matters, for ready application of all they have gained in training or knowledge. Let them learn to work for each other as well as with each other. (pp. 141-142).

These are all noble ideals. In case such educational renewal had indeed taken place in the Boston public school system, what was the secret ingredient making such changes possible? Hopkins identified two features typical to her approach to education, tested during the 1880s:

But so far our revised course shows a clear escape from the old rote methods. We have incorporated the live, active, and experimental methods, the constructive methods, the natural methods, the manual-training methods, and given freedom to the child in all his activities.” (p. 138).

Earlier works by Hopkins (1886, 1887, and 1889) describe the basic experiments concerning the introduction of her educational rejuvenation ideas. Hopkins (1892) concluded,

You agree that at this stage of the science of education, we cannot take less than “*the whole child*” into our scheme of public school work. It is necessary that *we involve the body and soul as well as the mind* in our efforts to evolve human growth and power. (pp. 51-52; emphasis added).

So we see: Hopkins did *not only* precede Dewey’s philosophy of education, and/or perhaps even the *praxis* in his Chicago University Elementary School, but as an advocate of evolving human growth by involving “the body and soul as well as the mind” she also pioneered a kind of ‘organic education.’ In fact, the adjective ‘organic’ appears eighteen times in her 1892 *The Spirit of the New Education* — however, *not* in combination with the noun ‘education.’ Still, Hopkins may well have been a yet unacknowledged theoretical and practical forerunner of Marietta Johnson and her didactic views regarding teaching an ‘Organic Education.’ Although Johnson never referred to Hopkins in her writings, she would have fully agreed with Hopkins’ line of reasoning regarding body, soul and mind of the ‘whole child,’ quoted above (compare, for instance: Hunt, 1913; Johnson, 1913; Staring, 2013b, 2014, 2016).

By the way, maxims like ‘Education of the Whole Child’ or ‘Educating the Whole Child’ also appeared in U.S. educational literature around 1880 (*e.g.*, Fisher, 1881).

‘New Education’ Common Denominator

A year after Maximilian Groszmann (1894) published his *The Common School and the New Education*, co-founder of Teachers College at Columbia University Nicholas Murray Butler who in 1902 would become the 12th President of Columbia University asked the probing question: “Is there a New Education?” Butler’s (1898) assessment was that without a doubt there *was* a New Education around 1890, in the sense of “the new of hitherto non-existent, the new as the comparatively recent, and the new as the hitherto unfamiliar” (p. 95).

As implied above, ‘New Education’ became the common denominator classifying Eliot’s (1869) and other plans for educational reorganization and renewal. Throughout the whole of the 1890s, the phrase headed numerous articles in journals and magazines, for example in the 1894 *Dial*, in 1895 and later volumes of *Journal of Education*, and in 1891 and later *Chautauquan* issues — *e.g.*, in an article by Laura L. Runyon (1900), teacher of history at the Chicago University Elementary School established by Alice and John Dewey.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the concept of New Education seems to have started losing its late nineteenth-century appeal, even though in 1915 educator and political activist Scot Nearing published his influential *The New Education: A Review of Progressive Educational Movements of the Day* — a survey of educational reforms prior to World War I. Not much later, philosopher Randolph Silliman Bourne used the phrase a number of times in his 1917 *Education and Living*. And Frederick

Matthias Alexander (1918), founding father of the so-called Alexander Technique (and John Dewey's breathing and poise therapist, as well as his good friend), used it once in the revised edition of his *Man's Supreme Inheritance* — in the sense of “the new education to free the child” (p. 135).

The concept appears to have been more and more avoided after World War I, in particular so after the naissance of the Progressive Education Association in 1919. It seems that as of that time Charles Hanford Henderson's (1896, p. 487) slogan ‘Progressive Education’ began to replace ‘New Education.’ Still, the publication of a series titled “The New Education” in the 1924 *Nation* by activist and journalist Agnes de Lima, and publication of *The Child-Centered School: An Appraisal of the New Education* written by Harold Ordway Rugg and Ann Shumaker (1928) of the Lincoln School at Teachers College, Columbia University seem to be notorious exceptions to the rule. It is also interesting to note here that Marietta Johnson (1927) — Principal of the Fairhope (Alabama) School of Organic Education — as well as Harriet M. Johnson (1930) — Principal of the NYC Bureau of Educational Experiments Nursery School — each published an article about New Education. In 1930, *The New Republic* published contributions to a Symposium titled ‘The New Education Ten Years After’ (e.g., Dewey, 1930). And a year later, New York University Professor of Philosophy of Education Herman Harrell Horne (1931) listed and explicated twenty-five characteristics of New Education in his *This New Education* — for instance: educational tendencies are child-centered, recognition of individuality, pupil participation, discussion and conference, learning by doing, intrinsic motivation, free discipline, intelligence testing, education as socialization.

And finally, just before World War II, Dewey (1938) summarized aspects of the contrast between traditional and progressive education in his *Experience and Education* — this time using the phrase “newer education.”

If one attempts to formulate the philosophy of education implicit in the practice of the newer education, we may, I think, discover certain common principles amid the variety of progressive schools now existing. To imposition from above is opposed expression and cultivation of individuality; to external discipline is opposed free activity; to learning from texts and teachers, learning through experience; to acquisition of isolated skills and techniques by drill, is opposed acquisition of them as means of attaining ends which make direct vital appeal; to preparation for a more or less remote future is opposed making the most of the opportunities of present life; to static aims and materials is opposed acquaintance with a changing world. (pp. 5-6).

New Education: Dewey and the Question of Discipline

In 1925, in his *Public Education in Detroit*, Director of Statistics and Reference of the Detroit (Michigan) Public Schools Arthur Bernard Moehlman described the progress of public education in Detroit and its societal influences since 1842. Moehlman (1925) illustrated that the Superintendency of William Edmunds Robinson encouraged educational experiments between 1886 and 1897, covering kindergartens and kindergarten teacher training, provision for the deaf and the blind, extension of the curriculum, and encouragement of the New Education. Moehlman explained that Robinson took exception to the fact that New Education experiments met severe negative evaluations. He cited Robinson, who derisively tackled slurs about the Detroit New Education inspired schools:

If it is better to cram the mind with a lot of facts that are absolutely worthless when the child is thrown upon his own resources, than to lead him step by step, to think for himself, to find out for himself that all subjects are dependent and related, and to become self-reliant, then the children of our schools are to be pitied for their visionary training. (Robinson cited in Moehlman, 1925, p. 150).

Marietta Johnson (1929) remarked in her *Youth in a World of Men*, “The new education has often been accused of having a ‘do-as-you-please’ program” (p. 147). Johnson knew: her own School of Organic Education in Fairhope, Alabama had in 1913 been depicted as a ‘Do-As-You-Please School’ by the *Evening Post* (1913). Thirteen years later, Johnson (1926) openly spelled out that her own approach to education did not represent any ‘do-as-you-please’ program: “The child is too ignorant to know what is best for him... It means that *he must be guided and controlled* but this guidance and control must be determined by his nature and need rather than by any external standard or pre-conceived notion of the adult” (p. 338; emphasis added). Journalist Kathleen Sinclair (1920) wrote in the *Evening Post*:

Mrs. Johnson is frequently asked about discipline. She would develop discipline in the child through giving him the opportunity to persist and struggle for an end which to him was of supreme importance, for she says that all work under impulsion, or direction, without freedom of choice, tends to weaken the will and make him dependent on external decisions...Discipline, in the common use of the word, is permissible when it is for the child's urgent and immediate welfare, to guard him from calamity, but generally it is used arbitrary to restrain him from overstepping some adult law of which the child is entirely unconscious, or cannot possibly measure by his immature standards of value.

Earlier, in 1914, Johnson told a *New York Evening Sun* reporter (Hamilton, 1914) that in her school in Fairhope there were "penalties for misconduct," and that she had "even gone so far as to spank!" Getting spanked is not the image we get when thinking of 'do-as-you-please.'

Study of the educational literature and the media reveals, in retrospect, that since the early days New Education and Progressive Education walked hand in hand with reports of lack of proper conduct. The press often discussed failure of keeping discipline, letdown of guidance and control, and collapse of management of classes in progressive schools. The question of discipline in those schools was a regular and recurrent theme. University of Florida (Gainesville, Florida) educationist Vynce A. Hines (1972) even addressed the issue of 'unguided freedom' when discussing the 1896-1904 history of Alice and John Dewey's Laboratory School at the University of Chicago. He remarked that education in the sense of "freeing of individual capacity in a progressive growth directed to social aims" (Dewey's phrase: Dewey, 1916, p. 115) must *not* be "a license for anarchy" (Hines, 1972, pp. 122-123).

Fascinatingly enough, four decades earlier, Dewey (1930) himself had already dealt at length with the very same issues of guidance and direction of students, management of classes, and the prevention of anarchy in the classrooms. In his essay "How Much Freedom in New Schools?" he prophesized that teachers can indeed bring students to the point of anarchy:

To fail to assure [students] guidance and direction is not merely to permit them to operate in a blind and spasmodic fashion, but it promotes the formation of habits of immature, undeveloped and egoistic activity." (p. 205).

Note that Dewey (1902a) in *The Child and the Curriculum* strongly advised to scrutinize ill-advised New Education advocates who disregard guiding and directing of students adequately because of misinterpreting self-directed learning strategies. He found there is always a possibility that sect-like approaches to education will toss students back onto themselves:

[The] "new education" is in danger of taking the idea of development in altogether too formal and empty a way. The child is expected to "develop" this or that fact or truth out of his own mind. He is told to think things out, or work things out for himself, without being supplied any of the enviroing conditions which are requisite to start and guide thought. (p. 18).

And two years later, in his contribution to the *Third Yearbook of the National Society for the Scientific Study of Education*, Dewey (1904) specifically drew attention to management of classes and to aspiring teachers who had to learn the skills of instruction and keeping order in schoolrooms. Indeed, problems of freedom, discipline and responsibility, related to both students and teachers were not new to education. Dewey (1902a) distinguished two branches of thought — two sects in his words — with their own ways of dealing with such matters.

- a. One sect "fixes its attention upon the importance of the subject-matter of the curriculum" (p. 7). This is the teacher-directed approach to education.
- b. The other sect points out that the "child is the starting-point, the center, and the end. His development, his growth, is the ideal...Not knowledge or information, but self-realization, is the goal...Learning is active. It involves reaching out of the mind. It involves organic assimilation starting from within." (p. 9). This is the child-centered approach to education.

Dewey advised to walk the middle path, avoiding the antagonism of curriculum *vs.* students, discipline *vs.* interest, guidance and control *vs.* freedom and initiative, law *vs.* spontaneity, "the notion of subject-matter as something fixed" *vs.* "thinking of the child's experience as...something hard and fast" (p. 11). He warned for the "radical fallacy...that we have no choice save either to leave the child to his own unguided spontaneity or to inspire direction upon him from without" (p. 30).

Now, this may look like an empty warning, but it is not. Two and a half decades later, Dewey again addressed the core of the problem of discipline in New Education schools. In 1927, the Progressive Education Association invited him to become their Honorary President. In 1928, as already mentioned above, he succeeded Charles Eliot by accepting the honorary presidency of the PEA. Dewey's (1928) acceptance address "Progressive Education and the Science of Education" converses requisites of learning by so-called 'projects' or learning by 'activities,' two types of New Education, or Progressive Education, evolved in the 1920s.

Bare doing, no matter how active, is not enough. An activity or project must, of course, be within the range of the experience of pupils and connected with their needs — which is very far from being identical with any likes or desires which they can consciously express. This negative condition having been met, the test of a good project is whether it is sufficiently full and complex to demand a variety of responses from different children and permit each to go at it and make his contribution in a way which is characteristic of himself. (p. 202).

Ravitch (2001) declares that this very specific section rebukes "those who idealized 'learning by doing'" (p. 200). Now, what was Dewey's opinion? Exactly where did he stand on the scale of 'classic' or 'old' and 'new' or 'progressive' education? Dewey (1928) stated,

Suppose there is a school in which pupils are surrounded with a wealth of material objects, apparatus, and tools and of all sorts. Suppose they are simply asked what they would like to do and then told in effect to "go to it," the teacher keeping hands — and mind, too — off. *What* are they going to do? What assurance is there that what they do is anything more than the expression, and exhaustion, of a momentary impulse and interest?...Of necessity — and this is as true of the traditional school as of a progressive — the start, the first move, the initial impulse in action, must proceed from the pupil. (p. 202).

After discussing possible preliminary actions by the students, Dewey estimated that it is *the duty* of teachers, as members of student-teacher groups, to "suggest lines of activity" (p. 203), meaning that he obviously was of opinion that teachers in the end had a guiding and directing responsibility in the educational process.

That same year, Stanwood Cobb (1928) who was the first Secretary of the Progressive Education Association plainly placed Dewey amid the child-centered 'sect.' He called Dewey's description of students being the 'starting-point, the center, and the end' in his *The Child and the Curriculum* "the *Magna Charta* of the child" (p. 251). Yet, Cobb additionally cautiously commented that progressive educators "base their educational practice on the theory that the average child, *if given opportunity, if properly encouraged and guided*, is capable of self-direction and of responsibility" (p. 100; emphasis added). Still, ten years later, in his *Experience and Education*, Dewey (1938) put in plain words that although he had "used frequently...the words 'progressive' and 'new' education" he was of "firm belief that the fundamental issue is not of new versus old education nor of progressive against traditional education but a question of what anything whatever must be to be worthy of the name *education*" (p. 115; Dewey's emphasis). Now, what was Dewey's position?

Without any doubt, in the eyes of any close-reading layman, it is rather dubious to place Dewey in the child-centered education 'sect' while he himself in *The Child and the Curriculum* had advised to walk the middle path between child-centered and teacher-centered schooling (see: Dewey, 1902a). A sketch of New Education developments during the 1920s and early 1930s in the following sections of this case study will give insight in this statement. The sections discuss 'learning by projects' and 'learning by activities,' two progressive educational renewals, which evolved during the 1920s, leading to the so-called 'Activity Plan of the Progressive Education' of the early 1930s. The mid-1930s *coup d'état* within the Progressive Education Association by PEA social reconstructionists as a reaction to the learning by projects and learning by activities renewals of the 1920s represents the end of the period examined here. Evaluations of severe criticism concerning 'learning by projects,' 'learning by activities,' and the Activity Program alternate with historical sections on the origin and development of the various educational renewals during the 1920s.

Early 1920s: Learning by Projects

In “The Project Method: The Use of the Purposeful Act in the Educative Process,” an article in the September 1918 *Teachers College Record*, William Heard Kilpatrick (1918a) introduced — in fact, revived — the so-called ‘Project Method.’ Kilpatrick, who between 1912 and 1937 held the chair of Professor of Philosophy of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University had previously published his dissertation on the history of Dutch schools in New Netherland and colonial New York, and two small volumes — specifically, two examinations of newer approaches to education: one about the Montessori System, the other about Froebel’s kindergarten principles. His *Teachers College Record* article that proposed learning by projects — an educational approach of putting students to work to solve practical problems via undertaking so-called projects — was also published as a pamphlet (Kilpatrick, 1918b). It was reprinted many times and it made him instantaneously famous. Kilpatrick stated, “It is to [the] purposeful act with the emphasis on the word purpose that I myself apply the term ‘project’” (p. 4), and, “as the purposeful act is...the typical unit of the worthy life in a democratic society, so also should it be made the typical unit of school procedure” (p. 6).

In 1918, Kilpatrick provided the following definition of his Project Method in a letter to Professor of Education John Alford Stevenson at the Carnegie Institute (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania): “The term ‘project’ contemplates a complete act (or experience) which the agent projects, purposes, and within limits sees through to completion” (Kilpatrick cited in Stevenson, 1921, p. 57). Three years later, Kilpatrick (1921b) understood the concept

to refer to any unit of purposeful experience, any instance of purposeful activity where the dominating purpose, as an inner urge, (1) fixes the aim of the action, (2) guides its process, and (3) furnishes its drive, its inner motivation. (p. 283).

Project Education *not* Kilpatrick’s invention

Note that Kilpatrick’s learning by projects approach constituted *his* particular version of an age-old international educational venture. Kilpatrick acknowledged, “I did not invent the term nor did I start it on its educational career. Indeed I do not know how long it has already been in use” (p. 4). Stormzand (1924) explicated that the specific educational approach of learning by projects was already applied in manual training and vocational training tutoring. It seems that Kilpatrick, perhaps unaware of their previous work, followed the lead of Calvin Milton Woodward and Rufus Whittaker Stimson.

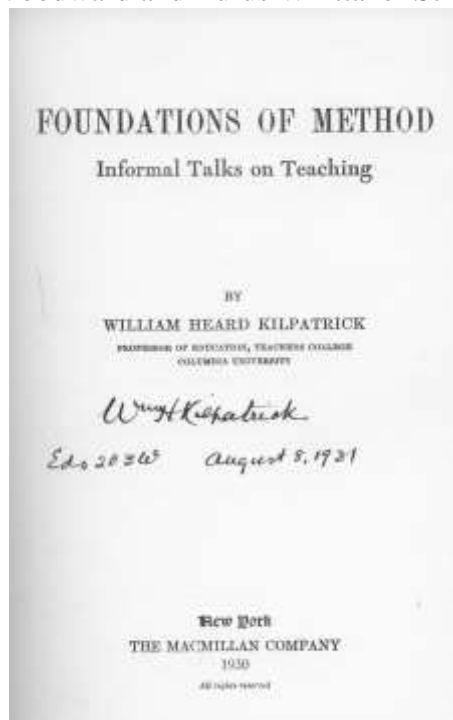


Figure 2: Title page of *Foundations of Method*, signed by Kilpatrick. (Jeroen Staring collection.)

In 1879, Woodward, Dean of the O'Fallon Polytechnic Institute at the St. Louis Washington University, established the Manual Training School in the same city. Harvard's President Eliot had suggested the name 'Manual Training School,' after having rejected other promising names like 'Hand-and-Head-Work School,' 'Technical School,' 'Industrial Trade School,' and 'Skilled Labor School.' Woodward's school had carpentry and machine shops and a smithy, and introduced a manual skills instruction which Woodward dubbed 'shop-work.' Students were supposed to learn the basic tools of a diversity of jobs. Woodward (1887) introduced his concept of project coaching in *The Manual Training School*, a book that describes both his school and its teaching methods. Once students had learned basic manual training skills through graded shop exercises, they were given the opportunity of undertaking so-called projects marking the end of their vocational education, applying and showing their technical skills.

When these exercises are finished, a variety of combination pieces may be executed by the members of a class jointly or separately. These projects should be carefully matured. (p. 159).

University of Wisconsin (Madison, Wisconsin) educationist Herbert Kliebard (1995) refers to Rufus W. Stimson and his 'Home Project Plan' as Kilpatrick's precursor. In his article "The Vocational Agricultural School," Stimson (1912) — who was Director of Smith's Agricultural School at Northampton, Massachusetts (1908-1911) and later became State Supervisor of Agricultural Education in Massachusetts (1911-1938) — reported a successful introduction of the Project Method in agricultural education as early as in 1908. In a later work Stimson elucidated the 'Project Study,' suitable for vocational agricultural education.

Yet, learning by projects has a much longer history, states German educationist Michael Knoll (1988, 1995, 1997): in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Academies of Art and Architecture in Rome (Italy) and Paris (France), and in nineteenth-century European and American technical universities in Karlsruhe (Germany), Zürich (Switzerland), Paris (France), and Boston (USA). Recently, Dutch Professor of Education at the University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands) Sjoerd Karsten (2016) reported of eighteenth-century Dutch students (called "élèves") who completed their vocational studies by presenting the end-result of their final project — a so-called "meesterstuk" (masterpiece) — to the *Fundatie van de Vrijvrouwe van Renswoude* in Utrecht, The Netherlands, which had granted them their scholarships.

It was Kilpatrick, however, who was — and still is — accredited far and wide as having introduced the Project Method in American primary and secondary education. He tested his method at the Horace Mann School at Teachers College, New York City. While he was zealously promoting learning by projects during the early 1920s, he never referred to Woodward's work, nor did he refer to Stimson's work. His later books (e.g., his *Foundations of Method, Education for a Changing Civilization, A Reconstructed Theory of the Educative Process*, or his *Remaking the Curriculum*) do not refer to Woodward or Stimson either.

Four Types of Project

Former Principal of the NYC Walden School Margaret Naumburg (1928) wrote that Kilpatrick's Project Method "seemed to many...the most complete expression of the 'new' education" (p. 598). Stanwood Cobb (1926) called Kilpatrick the "Apostle of the New Education" (p. 51). And Diane Silvers Ravitch (1983) remarked — in general terms — that Kilpatrick was the "most influential proponent of the new education" (p. 50).

Kilpatrick (1921b) distinguished four types of projects.

The first type represents those experiences in which the dominating purpose is to do, to make, or to effect; to embody an idea or aspiration in material form. (p. 283).

The second type of project may be defined as one which involves purposeful enjoying or appropriation of an experience. (p. 284).

The third kind of a project is one in which the dominating purpose is to solve a problem, to unravel and so compose some intellectual entanglement or difficulty. (p. 285).

The fourth type includes experiences in which the purpose is to acquire some item or degree of knowledge or skill, or more generally, experiences in which a person purposes his own education at a specific point. (p. 286).

Later, Kilpatrick (1925) dubbed the first type the Producer's Project, the second the Consumer's Project, and the third and fourth types were Problem Projects. Marietta Johnson (1974) clearly envisaged the second type of project at the time she wrote that the project "is not obliged to furnish the means of acquiring subject matter or skill, though these often do result. Projects may be undertaken for the pure joy of the experience" (p. 68). When describing the third type of projects, Kilpatrick (1918b) referred to Dewey's *How We Think*. His allusion to Dewey is not surprising; Kilpatrick worked with Dewey since 1907. Later, New York University educationist Adolph Erich Meyer (1945) suggested the fourth type should be called "Specific Learning Project" (p. 18).

Understanding purposeful acts, with the emphasis on purpose is central to a correct understanding of projects, Kilpatrick (1918b) explained. He described how students within the school procedure "are living together in the pursuit of a rich variety of purposes, some individually sought, many conjointly" (p. 13). It was his view that purpose "supplies the motive power, makes available inner recourses, guides the process to its pre-conceived end, and by this satisfactory success fixes in the...mind and character the successful steps as part and parcel of one whole" (p. 9). In line with this vision, he wished purposeful acts to utilize the laws of learning as spelled out by Edward L. Thorndike (1913) in his *Educational Psychology*. Later, Isaac Leon Kandel (1943) — Professor of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University — commented,

On the psychological side the theory of the child-centered school was founded for a time on the stimulus-response theory of mechanistic psychology. This theory was later supplanted by the theory that the "whole child" is involved in the learning process, that emotions, conscious and unconscious, play an important role in determining responses, attitudes, and learning. Practice was not changed, however. (p. 71).

Kilpatrick, the Project Method, and 'unbridled freedom'

Ellsworth Collings — County Superintendent of Schools in McDonald County in Missouri — published first research results of Kilpatrick's Project Method in 1923. He issued the results of his 1917-1921 investigations in three rural schools in his dissertation turned book *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum*. Earlier, the 1921 *Teachers College Record* published evaluations of Kilpatrick's Project Method by his Teachers College co-workers William Chandler Bagley, Frederick Gordon Bonser, and James Fleming Hosis, plus by teacher of history Roy Winthrop Hatch. One of Bagley's (1921) points of critique was that the validity of Kilpatrick's assumptions regarding purpose had not been demonstrated by methodical experimentation. Hatch (1921), who taught at Horace Mann School of Teachers College, Columbia University had given his pupils a questionnaire to fill in. His students conceded, among others, the following advantages of the Project Method: self-reliance, general orderliness, good fellowship, aroused and increased interest, wholehearted activity stimulated in pursuit of knowledge. They conceded, among others, the following disadvantages: loss of time due to parliamentary discussion and to needless discussion, certain required subject matter slighted, non-participation on part of some students is greater.

A few years later, Boyd Henry Bode (1927), Professor of Education at Ohio State University (Columbus, Ohio), listed the following limitations concerning Kilpatrick's Project Method and its emphasis on purpose.

Learning that is limited to this method is too discontinuous, too random and haphazard, too immediate in its function, unless we supplement it with something else. Perhaps children may learn a great deal about numbers from running a play store or bank, but this alone does not give them the insight into the mathematics that they need to have...Learning from immediate purposes, or incidental learning, is too much a hit-and-miss affair — it dips in here and there, but it gives no satisfactory perspective. (pp. 150-151).

Bode strictly questioned Kilpatrick's definition of the Project Method. He found that Kilpatrick's explanation factually means "any procedure that arouses interest" without describing a "principle of procedure" (p. 157). Bode's assessment of Kilpatrick's perspective regarding learning by projects in relation to curriculum making was that the differentiating characteristic in the so-called 'wholeheartedly purposeful activity in a social situation' was not "in the organization of what is learned, but in the attitude of the learner toward his work" (p. 157). He found that the Project Method was "in a sad state of confusion" (pp. 158-

159). And in spite of the fact that he had no intention — he brought to mind — “to minimize the importance of purposeful activity,” Bode was of opinion that “the whole idea of the project method easily becomes a means of evading instead of facing the problem of educational guidance or direction” — almost “letting the pupil determine his own curriculum” (p. 164). He feared the Project Method was merely “harking back to Rousseau” (p. 165). Note that Lawrence Cremin (1961) declared that Bode’s 1927 book *Modern Educational Theories* is a “brilliant critique of progressive pedagogy in the twenties;” that “it was too little read in its time;” and that it was “virtually forgotten” by the 1960s (p. 222).

Kilpatrick biographer Samuel Tenenbaum (1951) stated that one of the charges against Kilpatrick’s Project Method implied that “unbridled freedom was responsible for unruly, unmannerly behavior of children and even for their lawlessness and delinquency” (p. 232). He described the atmosphere of similar attacks on learning by projects and learning by activities.

Teachers with vested interests in subject matter attacked the project method, or as it has been more recently called, “the activity program,” by describing it as a “rabbit” kind of education, with children jumping hither and yon, nibbling here and there, and never mastering anything. (p. 229).

University of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) Assistant Professor of Elementary Education Pickens Elmer Harris (1928) addressed a number of analogous disparagements. In his *Changing Conceptions of School Discipline* he illuminated that

there existed already, even in the midst of the newer educational movements, certain evidences of dissatisfaction with the “new education.” Just as in previous periods there were those who decried “loose schoolcraft,” so there were now those who objected to too much “freedom” in education. (p. 230).

Ellen Condliffe Lageman (2000) who at the time of writing her *An Elusive Science* was the Charles Warren Professor of the History of American Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, analyzed:

The example of Kilpatrick and the project method is an especially troubling one because there can be no doubt that the popularity of this innovation helped give progressivism writ large a black eye. Because it was so vague in description, extreme, Auntie Mame-like pedagogical experiments were often justified with references to it. (p. 239).

Tenenbaum (1951) declared that a number of progressive supervisors and teachers had misunderstood the Project Method and did “hideous and silly things in its name,” compelling Kilpatrick to refrain of sponsoring “such going-on” (p. 248). He stated that he in a 1939 issue of *School and Society* had already described learning by projects fiascos caused by “stupid teachers and supervisors” (*Ibid.*) showing off and making others jealous, not thinking at all of their students and their interests. He quoted Kilpatrick commenting (date not specified),

I decided that I would talk...about wholehearted purposeful activity. Later, people began to use the term ‘activity program.’ I didn’t create the term, but it now seems best to use ‘activity program,’ if we are to use any term at all. (*Ibid.*).

Kilpatrick added, Tenenbaum revealed,

Personally, I don’t use any term nowadays except ‘better education’ or ‘truer education’ or ‘more defensible education’ or some such expression as that. (*Ibid.*).

Lastly in this short list of evaluations of the Project Method: the revised edition of *How We Think* has Dewey’s (1933) polite reaction to the learning by projects curriculum developments of the 1920s. He listed four conditions to be fulfilled by projects. The first, interest, was usually met. Further conditions are: project activities must be worthwhile intrinsically, projects ought to imply problems that can stimulate the student’s curiosity and ought to generate ‘demand for information;’ and, lastly, projects should involve considerable time spans in order to be adequately completed. Only in case these four conditions are fulfilled, projects — or ‘constructive occupations,’ in Dewey’s 1933 vocabulary — will be really educative. Note that Dewey gave no indication of the percentage of projects that satisfied all four conditions.

Early 1920s: Learning by Activities

Gertrude Hartman (1921) — the former Director of the open-air Merion Country Day School at Merion, Pennsylvania, who between 1917 and 1924 worked for the New York City Bureau of Educational Experiments — wrote in her *The Child and His School* that purposeful activity “may...be looked upon as the primary human motive force” (p. 62). She clarified,

Activity...instead of being a by-product of the educative process, is the process itself, since it is through purposeful activity that learning takes place and that tested knowledge accrues. (p.62; Hartman’s emphasis).

Hartman recommended that the Project Method should *not* be used in the schooling of young children. Instead she was in favor of a learning by activities approach, emphasizing ‘Activity as Play’ as the form of ‘Organization of Activities’ for young children, and ‘Activity as Work’ for older children. She referred to “The Real Joy in Toys,” a 1914 article by Caroline Louise Pratt who between 1917 and 1924 was her co-worker at the Bureau of Educational Experiments. Pratt (1914) advanced that children learn through playing, and that the “essential difference between work and play is that work is productive” (p. 114). According to her, toys “have their place as the instruments of play, just as garden tools have their place as the instruments of gardening” (p. 117). Note that Dewey (1916) would write two years later:

Persons who play are not just doing something (pure physical movement); they are trying to do or effect something, an attitude that involves anticipatory forecasts which stimulate their present responses. The anticipated result, however, is rather a subsequent action than production of a specific change in things...From a very early age, however, there is no distinction of exclusive periods of play activity and work activity, but only of emphasis. (pp. 238-239).

Pratt (1914) stated that modern children are not able to gather “so easily play material from the life around them” (p. 119) as children did in pre-industrial times. They do not have “the sort of real experiences of which they see the beginning and end and therefore, so some extent, the meaning” (*Ibid.*). In an earlier article, “Toys: A Usurped Educational Field,” Pratt (1911) had stated that toy manufacturing kept in pace with changing social conditions. She put forward that she was in favour of the kind of toys she manufactured herself, “to satisfy the demands of playability, durability, make-ability, and of artistic merit” (p. 893). Pratt had produced adjustable, jointed wooden dolls since 1908. The simply constructed and colored Do-With Toys™ — the trade name under which she manufactured her playthings — or ‘Do-Withs’ relate to her perspective that toys should motivate children to active, dramatic play:

The toys...were so designed that they could be used by the children to portray familiar activities such as barn, house, or street schemes. I carefully kept the toys simple in construction so that they could be used as models if the children desired to make others along the same line. I named my brain-children Do-Withs — and for a time I had high hopes that I had created something that would revolutionize education. (Pratt, 1948, p. 24).

Manufacturing and selling of her wooden dolls and toys, however, never was a success, and Pratt who in 1908 had left teaching manual training returned to teaching again in 1913 when she established her own school — Play School, in Greenwich Village, later renamed City and Country School.

Hartman (1921) fully agreed with Pratt’s views about work and play. However, she added that education should represent “a gradual development from the play to the work interest” (p. 108). She unconditionally quoted Dewey (1911) who in the *Cyclopedia of Education* defined education “as a process of the continuous reconstruction of experience with the purpose of widening and deepening its social content, while, at the same time, the individual gains control over the methods involved” (p. 400). According to Dewey, even though experiences are “crude, narrow, and largely self-centered,” they can assimilate and re-create “what is most perfected, developed and generalized in culture” (*Ibid.*). He clearly saw societal aspects in early childhood education and experiencing.

Hence the educative process is a constant process of making-over the existing experience, so that the social values lying blindly and crudely within it shall be clarified and enlarged. (*Ibid.*).

As stated, Hartman (1921) envisioned play interest develop into work interest. Schools should therefore select activities that fit the children. Following Dewey's lead, Hartman put emphasis on 'Activity as Work' for older children, underscoring that "activities should be chosen more and more as a means of organizing [children's] powers in social directions" (p. 109).

Mid-1920s: The Activity Plan of Progressive Education

Coinciding with a curriculum revision movement during the mid-1920s, the trend away from the Project Method to an Activity Program, or Activity Plan, gained momentum. Ravitch (2001) stated, "The curriculum revision movement paved the way for the activity movement in elementary schools" (p. 242). According to Dewey (1928) in his address to the Progressive Education Association, the question of didactic methods within various progressive educational approaches had to take a fresh form, no longer being "a question of how the teacher is to instruct or how the pupil is to study." (p. 204). Dewey more or less recommended learning by projects and learning by activities as contributions to a science of education formulated by Progressive Education schools because those schools taught their own kind of subject-matter and created their own "conditions favourable of learning" (pp. 203-204). He described what he imagined learning by projects and learning by activities should look like when students are learning while teachers are creating optimal learning conditions.

The pupil's mind is no longer to be on study or learning. It is given to doing the things that the situation calls for, while learning is the result. The method of the teacher, on the other hand, becomes a matter of finding the conditions which call out self-educative activity, or learning, and of cooperating with the activities of the pupils so that they have learning as their consequence. (p. 204).

In the first edition of his *How We Think*, Dewey (1910) had — he wrote — already located the crucial problem of education, that is, the problem of

discovering and arranging the forms of activity (a) which are most congenial, best adapted, to the immature stage of development [of students]; (b) which have the most ulterior promise as preparation for the responsibilities of adult life; and (c) which, at the same time, have the maximum of influence in forming habits of acute observation and of consecutive inference. (p. 44).

He added,

As curiosity is related to the acquisition of material of thought, as suggestion is related to flexibility and force of thought, so the ordering of activities, not themselves primarily intellectual, is related to the forming of intellectual powers of consecutiveness. (*Ibid.*).

Professor of Education at Cornell University (Ithaca, New York) Helen Wardeberg (1972) explained that the activity movement was "sometimes described as a 'sport' of progressive education" (p. 214). She added, "Activism, learning by doing, was not a new educational principle; yet to analyze activities for difficulty, relative importance, and to relate them to subjects of the conventional curriculum and to objectives of education was a complex process" (*Ibid.*). Ravitch (2001) commented in her *Left Back*, "As one would expect, the activity movement was warmly defended by Kilpatrick" (p. 246). She enlightened that Kilpatrick's Project Method directly inspired the activity movement and that the Lincoln School at Teachers College, Columbia University formed its model.

New Castle (Delaware) Superintendent of Schools Samuel Engle Burr (1935) wrote in *What is the Activity Plan of Progressive Education?* that 'activity schools' emphasize the truth of Dewey's slogan 'We learn to do by doing.'

In general, it may be said that the activity plan, or the activity method, is the one by which man does most of his learning, unless formal conditions are imposed upon him. It is the experience plan. It provides for learning on a plane appropriate to the immediate abilities, interests, and needs of the learner. The activity school emphasizes the truth of Dewey's oft repeated statement, "We learn to do by doing." It constantly repeats that educative situations are those in which the learner actually experiences for himself — directly if possible — vicariously if necessary. (p. 14).

I noted above that maxims like 'learning to do by doing' and 'learning by doing' are not Dewey's innovation. These slogans date from the late 1800s. On the other hand, as Burr pointed out, the later

connotations of those and similar catchphrases were certainly *also* based upon Dewey's philosophy of education, enhanced by the works of Boyd Henry Bode, John Lawrence Childs, and William Heard Kilpatrick.

Burr listed seven types of schools, which in his view had been "really progressive American schools" (p. 13) during the decade prior to 1935, the first type being "Schools using the Activity Plan in part, or in full" (*Ibid.*) — including schools using the Project Method. Burr listed twenty-three experimental schools that had endured. Recorded in Burr's book are several schools named in this case study, *e.g.*, Lincoln School at Teachers College, Columbia University; Walden School, New York City; or City and Country School, New York City.

Remarkably, Burr dated the start of the Activity Plan in 1896, when Dewey and his first wife Alice (Chipman) Dewey established University Elementary School — the famous Laboratory School at the University of Chicago. He defined the Activity Plan as follows:

The activity plan really is the application in education of a scientific and experimental attitude of mind and of a dynamic and evolutionary conception of life. This conception leads to the use of certain methods and practices which help individuals and groups of individuals (communities) to develop their own powers of growth so that they may enter more fully and more successfully into the activities of life. It is an attitude of mind which leads the "teacher" to suggest, to guide, and to help the "learner" on a cooperative basis of mutual respect and appreciation. It is an outlook upon life which emphasizes the all-round development of the individual as a member of the social order so that his own personal abilities and accomplishments will be of greatest value to him and to the group of which he is a part. It emphasizes the applicability of the statement "we learn to do by doing". It believes that purpose and need are driving forces in motivation. It appeals to interest as a starting point in learning and in usefulness or functional quality as a criterion for judging worth. (p. 31).

According to Burr, the Activity Plan had at least three corner stones:

1. Progressive educators expect to find purposeful physical and mental *activity* on the part of students.
2. Progressive educators recognize the value of vivid educative *experiences*.
3. Schools exist for students — and not students for schools.

In fact, the first two corner stone's undoubtedly mirror Dewey's late nineteenth-century educational standpoints. In 1897, not long after he established the Laboratory School, Dewey issued *My Pedagogic Creed*, listing almost eighty beliefs regarding education. The pamphlet was first published in the January 16, 1897, issue of *The School Journal*; it was reprinted in a 1897 booklet, cited here. Dewey (1897) held that students are active persons. Neglecting this reality would cause "waste of time and strength in school work" (p. 13), while students would be thrown "into a passive, receptive, or absorbing attitude" (p. 14). In addition, he believed that "education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and the goal of education are one and the same thing" (p. 13). Note that John Lawrence Childs (1931) who was Professor of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University sketched the following societal background of Dewey's reform views:

Wildernesses were cleared, swamps were drained, deserts were irrigated, canals were dug, railroads were built, mountains were tunnelled, mines were opened, water-power was harnessed, industries were started, towns were founded, and communities were organized. Changes such as these were telescoped almost within a single life-span. It is not to be wondered that American experimentalists believe that novelty and change are naturalized in the world. Nor is it strange that Dewey should define growth — education — as that process of 'continuous reconstruction of experience.' (p. 28).

The third Activity Plan corner stone relates to Dewey's late nineteenth-century stance as well. Burr (1935) stated that schools "must be *child-centered*" (p. 27), but he found the expression 'child-centered' misleading. He thought that those schools should in fact be called "Child-and-Teacher Centered Schools [because] the teacher did not disappear entirely from the scene" (p. 33) — much in agreement with Dewey's standpoint. Note that Dewey (1897) believed that the interests of students — "the signs and symptoms of growing power" (p. 15) — not only demonstrate "dawning capacities" (*Ibid.*), but are also evidence for "the state of development" (*Ibid.*) the students have attained. It was his conviction that "too much of the stimulus and control proceeds from the teacher, because of neglect of the idea of the school as a form of social life" (p. 9). He stated,

I believe that the teacher's place and work in the school is to be interpreted from this same basis. The teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child, but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these influences. (p. 9).

Consequently, Dewey was certain that discipline in schools “should proceed from the life of the school as a whole” (*Ibid.*), and not directly from teachers.

Early 1930s: School as Embryonic Society? What About Social Reconstructionism?

By the end of the nineteenth century, Dewey (1897) stressed that education is “a process of living and not a preparation for future living” (p. 7). Schools should therefore represent “present life,” simplifying and reducing it “as it were, to an embryonic form” (p. 8). Kilpatrick (1918b) fully agreed with Dewey. While giving details of his Project Method, he referred to Dewey's 1897 belief that schools should simplify ‘present life’ to ‘an embryonic form.’ Kilpatrick explained that moral importance arises during learning by projects:

Under the eye of the skilful teacher the children as an embryonic society will make increasingly finer discriminations as to what is right and proper. Ideas and judgment come thus. Motive and occasion arise together; the teacher has but to steer the process of evaluating the situation. The teacher's success — if we believe in democracy — will consist in gradually eliminating himself or herself from the success of the procedure. (p. 13).

Three decades later, Tenenbaum (1951) spelled out the connection between Kilpatrick's Project Method and Dewey's ‘embryonic society:’

The project method in its encouragement of doing, making, planning; in its concept of the classroom as an active, dynamic, embryonic society; in its stress on individual interests; on active participation in group and community enterprises — this kind of education furnishes some of the firsthand experiences that the urban child normally cannot obtain otherwise. (p. 158).

Tenenbaum accentuated that education should begin with a psychological insight into the students' “capacities, interests, and habits” which “must be translated into terms of their social equivalents — into terms of what they are capable of in the way of social service” (p. 6). According to Dewey (1897), late nineteenth-century education had failed in this respect because it neglected the basic imperative that schools should represent community life.

It conceives the school as a place where certain information is to be given, where certain lessons are to be learned, or where certain habits are to be formed. The value of these is conceived as lying largely in the remote future; the child must do these things for the sake of something else he is to do; they are mere preparations. As a result they do not become a part of the life experience of the child and so are not truly educative. (p. 8).

Historians of education Alan Sadovnik and Susan Semel (1998) explain that Dewey underscored that schools should balance a social role — “needs of society and community” (p. 146) — with educating individuals, advocating “both freedom and responsibility for students” (*Ibid.*). It was Dewey's conviction, Sadovnik and Semel say, that “education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform” (p. 16). Dewey (1897) believed that the “educational process has two sides — one psychological and one sociological; and that neither can be subordinated to the other or neglected” (p. 4). He reminded his readers, “the psychological and social sides are organically related, and that education cannot be regarded as a compromise between the two, or a superimposition of one upon the other” (*Ibid.*). For that reason, Sadovnik and Semel (1998) see two ‘branches’ of educational progressivism, which are in fact two sides to the same Deweyan progressive educational penny.

Whereas the child-centered schools often emphasized the individualism of the Deweyan ‘dialectic of freedom’, a second branch of progressivism, social reconstructionism, emphasized the community side of the equation, especially with regard to the development of a more just, humane and egalitarian society. (p. 150).

During the 1920s, the child-centered branch flourished within the Progressive Education Association (PEA), overshadowing social reconstructionist viewpoints. However, due to the gloomy economic situation during the Great Depression in the 1930s, and because child-centered progressive women lost control of the PEA, male reconstructionist voices got the upper hand in PEA debates. Professor of Educational Leadership of Foundations at the University of South Alabama (Mobile, Alabama) Joseph W. Newman (2004) comments:

Today, using the interpretive lens of gender analysis, we can see within the takeover of the PEA a masculine rejection of a feminine pedagogy...child-centered women practitioners, rather than professors, found themselves marginalized within their own organization as well as the larger progressive education movement. They were dismissed — quite unfairly, in most cases — as frivolous playschoolers with no social vision. (p. 4).

Criticisms of the child-centered branch of New Education, or Progressive Education, grew louder after George Sylvester Counts — who from 1927 until 1954 taught at Teachers College, Columbia University — threw a bomb-shell into the ranks of progressive educators when issuing his *Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?* In retrospect Counts' booklet represents the start of the takeover of control of the PEA by politically minded social reconstructionist *men* (Staring, 2013b). Counts (1932) firmly opened the debate by stating, "Progressive Education cannot place its trust in a child-centered school" (p. 10). He stressed that the "weakness of Progressive Education...lies in the fact that it has elaborated no theory of social welfare, unless it be that of anarchy or extreme individualism" (p. 7). By referring to anarchy and individualism, Counts on the one hand toughened the opinion that child-centered schools lacked discipline, and on the other hand he implicated child-centered education had failed to educate children to become responsible citizens and worthy members of society.

Mid-1950s: Severe Criticism Concerning New Education Subject-Matter

Rugg and Shumaker (1928) stated, "The new school organizes itself around the child's intention to learn; the old school organized itself around the teacher's intention to teach him" (p. 102). Another of their striking stances is, "The contrast between the new and the old education is nowhere more obvious...than in the matter of setting [desks, tables and chairs] and environment. How startling the difference between the bare, intellectual routine of the old and the cheerful, intimate, stimulating atmosphere of the new!" (p. 303). Graham (2005) comments with humor, "Whether the student desks were movable or not became the visual signal of whether the school was rigid and bureaucratic or flexible and responsive...As the desks moved, slowly, so did the curriculum and pedagogy" (p. 63).

Obviously, Rugg and Shumaker's text contains exceptionally romantic qualifications. For instance, they underline in their book, "Experience — the keynote of the new education!" (p. 5). Yet, they did so *not* without losing sight of community needs. They added that the experience keynote couldn't be qualified as mere child-centered educational idealism. They argued that "tolerant understanding" (combined with "critical questioning") and "creative self-expression" are "the two foci of the new education" (pp. 8-9).

Experience has a twofold significance, and the aims of the new education encompass it all; on the one hand, maximum growth in creative self-expression, on the other, tolerant understanding of self and of society. (p. 8).

In contrast to experience as a New Education's keynote, Rugg and Shumaker articulated, the Old Education 'listening school' keynotes were memorizing, reciting and paying attention.

In 1967, Harvard University educational historian Patricia Albjerg Graham summarized what New Education enthusiasts disapproved of:

It is easier to identify, what these enthusiasts of the new education disapproved than what they approved of. Typically, they opposed fixed arrangements and preferred flexible ones. They revolted against fixed grades in the schools, fixed rules for the children, and fixed furniture in the classrooms. They advocated instruction that was individual or in small groups. They favored programs stressing physical activity and often actual exposure to the elements. They objected categorically to all standards except their own rule of freedom and creativity. At first these enlightened views were most

characteristic of the teachers at the elementary school level, but they became increasingly common among secondary school instructors. (p. 46).

Graham's synopsis has a friendly tone. This is categorically not the case with Albert Lynd (1953) — former teacher of history, businessman, and member of the school board in Sharon, Massachusetts — who harshly, at times even brutally, criticized progressive schools, the influence of “Neo-Educationists” (p. 187), and educational texts like the ones published by Burr, Dix, Hartman, Kilpatrick, Rugg and Shumaker, and Smith discussed above. Lynd's condemnation covers the period between the 1920s and 1950. He stated,

The New Education, it seems, is *living, vital, life-related, dynamic, organic, bold, gripping, throbbing, creative, adventurous, rich, significant, forward-looking, thrilling, constructive, child-centered, onward-going, growth-oriented*, and, of course, *democratic*, with the variant *democratizing*.

The Old Education was *dead, passive, meager, traditional, abortive, impotent, static, retrogressive, subject-centered, moribund, inorganic, stale, flat, backward-looking, autocratic, Prussian, Alexandrian, bookish*, and (on my oath!) *intellectualized*. (p. 31; Lynd's emphasis).

According to him, Kilpatrick was “the one who has apparently set the Educationist fashion in the riotous use of the terms like ‘rich,’ ‘throbbing,’ ‘engrossing,’ ‘gripping,’ and the like, to describe the aspirations of the new pedagogy” (p. 216).

This much is clear, Lynd was not a New Education devotee, nor was he a fan of “many bedoctored *Herren Professoren*” (p. 36; Lynd's emphasis). His *Quackery in the Public Schools* — an amplification of a 1950 *Atlantic Monthly* article — particularly targets Kilpatrick and “Kilpatrickism,” Dewey and “Deweyism,” in addition to the Activity Program, “which may include anything from the care of pets to the rites of hair-doing” (p. 14). Lynd scrupulously attacked issues like the sect-like manners of New Education enthusiasts who avoid criticism. He criticized their views that New Education students learn the fundamentals equally well, or even better, than Old Education students. And he knocked out the deplorable teaching quality of New Education teachers. He detested the shallow information conversed by them. In fact, his book is one extended long invective treatise criticizing the lax discipline in the progressive schools, mocking “professors and practitioners of the New Education” (p. 36), the research they delivered, their teaching practice, the texts they produced and published, and the extremely “peculiar English” (p. 41) they used in their writings. Adrienne Koch (1953) — who was Professor of History at the University of Maryland (Baltimore, Maryland) — warned readers of her *Washington Post* review of Lynd's book:

One will rarely encounter a less genuinely analytic book. Its basic charges are lost in the vast structure of ridicule, vituperation, vulgar clichés, pleonasms, dogmatisms, special pleading and argumentum ad hominem which characterize Mr. Lynd's prose and poison his thought.

Lynd advanced that progressivism is associated with the names of Dewey and his forerunners Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Herbart, and Froebel. He spelled out, “Of course John Dewey knew what he was doing at the philosophical fountainhead of the movement, *but Mr. Dewey did not set up the curriculum in your local school*” (p. 17; emphasis added), thereby openly mocking devotees of Dewey's educational views. Lynd further wrote that “it is demonstrable from their own works that many enthusiasts of the New Education are themselves half-educated or uneducated” (p. 16). Another example of Lynd's prose states,

A parent who wonders whether his child is spending too much time in finger painting and too little in multiplication does not usually begin his inquiry far enough back. He should first look into the theories which inspire teacher training in the Schools of Education. (p. 185).

In 1953, Lynd reacted to mishaps that suggested itself over the years since the early 1920s. Perhaps he reacted to misconducts, but most certainly he acted in response to propaganda related to New Education, or Progressive Education. He almost presented those aspects as forming the bulk of misdemeanours in primary and secondary education on the total scale of U.S. education. He did so in spite of the fact that the majority of U.S. instruction was, and still is, teacher-centered.

U.S. Instruction: Teacher-Centered

Here it is good to note that Larry Cuban (1984) who was Professor of education at Stanford University (Stanford, California) showed in his *How Teachers Taught* that classroom teaching and instruction methods in the USA are, and have always been, for an extremely large extent, teacher-centered, and not student-centered, or child-centered. Cuban concluded, “Far more stability than change, my argument goes, characterized classroom instruction. Change did occur, mostly at the elementary level, and far less in high schools, but it was limited” (p. 253). His observations, Cuban wrote, were especially consistent with Dewey’s views, as uttered at the end of his life in his introduction to Elsie R. Clapp’s 1952 book *The Use of Resources in Education*:

There is a greater awareness of the needs of the growing human being, and the personal relations between teachers and students have been to a noticeable extent humanized and democratized. But the success in these respects is as yet limited; it is largely atmospheric; it hasn’t yet really penetrated and permeated the foundations of the educational institution...[The] basic attitudes underlying the gross manifestations have in many areas still to be rooted out. The fundamental authoritarianism of the old education persists in various modified forms. (Dewey, 1952, p. viii).

Professor of Education at Stanford University School of Education David L. Labaree (2004) reminds readers of Cuban’s 1984 findings when explaining and demonstrating that “progressivism has had an enormous impact on educational rhetoric but very little impact on educational practice” (p. 91). It is his view that the Deweyan branch of progressivism in education, ‘pedagogic progressivism’ in Labaree’s terminology, implicitly propagates a view that skills learned in one kind of learning task carry over to other kinds of learning tasks. Labaree assumes the Deweyan branch lost the battle from the Thorndikean branch of progressivism — ‘administrative progressivism’ in his terminology. This branch opposed the Deweyan branch because it claims the skills learned in one kind of learning task do *not* carry over to other kinds of learning tasks. Labaree states that ‘pedagogic progressivism,’ as taught in so-called ‘ed schools,’ in fact *never* came to fruition. In contrast, ‘administrative progressivism’ did well; it was more efficient in restructuring schooling “in line with business management practices” and “in meeting the needs of economy and society, by preparing students to play effective adult roles in work, family, and community” (p. 95). At the end of the day, as he puts it, “Education professors love to talk like John Dewey, but, like everyone else in education, they walk in the path of Edward Thorndike” (p. 112).

“Training in Thinking:” An Insider’s Appraisal

In contrast to Lynd, Professor of History at the University of Illinois (Urbana, Illinois) Arthur Eugene Bestor, Jr. (1953) composed eloquent sentences in his book *Educational Wastelands*. He sketched his observation that Progressive Education during the 1920s had turned from the “right track” (p. 151) into what he tagged ‘regressive education’ (consult also: Bestor, 1956). Bestor had attended primary education at Horace Mann School, and high school training at Lincoln School. Both schools were experimental schools under the control of Teachers College, Columbia University. Later he had lectured at — *nota bene* — Teachers College. So, we may reasonably assume that he experientially knew all ins and outs of Progressive Education schooling that he described in his books on failing standards in American progressive schools. Bestor’s (1953) analysis, parallel to Lynd’s, argues, “faulty language leads to faulty thinking and to faulty action” (p. 42). Bestor observed that what he hailed as ‘regressive education’ was caused by the separation of schools and “the great world of science and learning” (p. 47). In his perspective, ‘regressive education’ is a consequence of bypassing several stages of analysis during learning processes. Students should *not* “solve children’s problems” (p. 74). In fact, they should not *directly* study what he called ‘real life problems,’ but “*indirectly* through the development of generalized intellectual powers” (p. 63). Like Lynd, Bestor detected anti-intellectual tendencies within Progressive Education, and he unquestionably identified progressive educators avoiding criticism. He detested their “hushing up of criticism,” which he thought, “belongs, not to a company of independent scholars, but to a bureaucracy, a party, a body united in defence of a vested interest” (p. 111). Instead, he advocated the vision where liberal education represents “training in thinking” (p. 166), “to weigh evidence, to reason logically, and to reach conclusions that will stand up to the severest criticism that other well-informed men can bring to bear upon them” (p. 179).

Alexander Technique: Training in Thinking as a Means of Achieving Self-Control

Leslie B. Shaw (1924) wrote in a book review of F. M. Alexander's *Constructive Conscious Control of the Individual* in the August 9, 1924, *New York Evening Post Literary Review*:

In this country Mrs. Marietta Johnson of the Fairhope Organic Schools [sic] was the first to demonstrate that education must be adapted to the needs of the individual organism; and that theories beyond or outside such needs should not be formulated. It is notable, too, that in the Fairhope Organic Schools [sic] fear is never detected in the behavior of the pupils...Mr. Alexander's teaching is precisely in this direction — the integration of the personality as the basis for education.

It is very likely that Dewey would have agreed with Shaw's estimation. Dewey (1938) thought that practicing the Alexander Technique was *the* vital method to achieve the — what he called — “ideal aim of education,” that is, “the creation of power of self-control” (p. 75). In his opinion F. M. Alexander's methods of improving motor coordination and breathing habits (see: Staring 2005, 2015b) were pivotal in achieving self-control. Furthermore, in many instances, self-control directly and indirectly influences social control; social control and self-control are often interdependent. Dewey (1938), in his *Experience and Education*, summarized his long-held viewpoints regarding discipline and social control:

The conclusion is that in what are called the new schools, the primary source of social control resides in the very nature of the work done as a social enterprise in which all individuals have an opportunity to contribute and to which all feel a responsibility. Most children are naturally “sociable.”...The educator is responsible for a knowledge of individuals and for a knowledge of subject-matter that will enable activities to be selected which lend themselves to social organization, an organization in which all individuals have an opportunity to contribute something, and in which the activities in which all participate are the chief carrier of control. (pp. 61-62).

As implied, *social* control requires, and affects, *self*-control of everybody involved in the so-called educational ‘social enterprise.’ Dewey — without ever mentioning Frederick Matthias Alexander's name in his *Experience and Education* and without explaining Alexander's methods — openly recommended inhibition procedures which are used by teachers of the Alexander Technique. He did so when addressing thinking as a means of achieving the “ideal aim of education,” that is, the “creation of power of self-control:”

Natural impulses and desires constitute in any case the starting point. But there is no intellectual growth without some reconstruction, some remaking, of impulses and desires in the form of which they first show themselves. This remaking involves inhibition of impulses in its first state. The alternative to externally imposed inhibition is inhibition through an individual's own reflection and judgment. The old phrase “stop and think” is sound psychology. For thinking is stoppage of the immediate manifestation of impulse until that impulse has been brought into connection with other possible tendencies to action so that a more comprehensive and coherent plan of activity is formed. Some of the other tendencies to action lead to use of eye, ear, and hand to observe objective conditions; others result in recall of what has happened in the past. *Thinking is thus 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 reflection. What has been said explains the meaning of the well-known phrase “self-control.” The ideal aim of education is creation of power of self-control.* (Dewey, 1938, pp. 74-75; emphasis added).

In her dissertation *Toward Embodied Education, 1850s to 2007*, Bridgewater State University (Bridgewater, Massachusetts) Assistant Professor Donna A. Dragon (2008, p. 181) shares my opinion that Dewey in his *Experience and Education* advocated Alexander's ‘Technique’ as a means of achieving self-control. And it seems, Dewey was also recommending Alexander's methods as a kind of initial ‘training in thinking’ as demanded by Bestor (see above). Still, introductory and follow-up lessons in the Alexander Technique in primary and secondary schools are extremely rare. At this very moment, only a handful of U.S. schools offer such training.

The state of affairs is not new. Essayist and novelist Aldous Huxley (1983) assured in his *The Human Situation*:

[Among] the hundreds of thousands of educators who have followed Dewey, virtually none, so far as I know, paid any attention to this method of training the mind-body which Dewey regarded as of primary importance in education; it has been allowed simply to fall away, and so far as I know, there is only one school in the United States where it is applied to the education of children [= The Alexander Foundation School in Media, Pennsylvania, now closed. Consult: Hinitz & Staring, 2016; *Prevention*, 1967, 1971; Rootberg, 2012; Staring, 2005; J.S.]. (p. 242).

Huxley's words, spoken during a lectures series at the University of California at Santa Barbara, California originally date from 1956, that is: exactly 60 years ago. Dewey's *Experience and Education* is almost 80 years old. Yet, there is still no study made on the veracity of his words, so we do not know empirically whether Dewey's opinion was correct or not. Who shall be the first to test and do research in this matter? Did Dewey discover the long sought ultimate secret key to self-control, social control, and discipline in the classrooms? Or were Dewey's words mere propaganda for the Alexander Technique — but no one knows?

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