Secularism, Secularization, and John Dewey

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Introduction

There seems to be an unwritten agreement among most Americans that there are three topics (perhaps four, if you include sex) that are best avoided in polite company: politics, personal finances, and religion. The American reluctance to discuss religion with acquaintances at a dinner party or picnic may be a part of a larger phenomenon: a manifestation of the secularism that emerged from the disastrous European religious wars and the Enlightenment, and that is arguably, as a consequence of those experiences, enshrined in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.

It is worth noting in this connection that some observers have taken pains to distinguish secularism from secularization. *Secularism*, as it has generally come to be understood, is the ascendency of political control over the public activities of religious institutions (which has in many quarters had the effect of rendering religion a matter of individual choice rather than social conscription). Secularism means that no religion is to be privileged over any other in the sphere of political life, including education. Although there are notable exceptions, in the United States, secularism generally means that religious organizations must compete on all fours with publics of other sorts. But secularism is by no means identical with an assault on religion. On the contrary. By legislating the place of religion in society, secularism in fact provides a safe harbor for religious diversity.

Secularization, on the other hand, is now generally understood as a condition in which religious considerations cease to function as central factors in the lives of individuals, even though those individuals may still represent themselves as religious, and may even continue their affiliation with religious institutions. As we shall see, secularization, like secularism, is matter of degree.

These terms, as they are now employed among sociologists, political scientists, and philosophers, depart somewhat from what one finds in the *Oxford Eng-*

lish Dictionary. The first definition of secularism in the OED, for example, is "the doctrine that morality should be based solely on regard to the well-being of mankind in the present life, to the exclusion of all considerations drawn from belief in God or in a future state." The OED's second definition of secularization, which is perhaps more relevant to this essay than its first one, is "the giving of a secular or non-sacred character or direction to (art, studies, etc.); the placing (of morals) on a secular basis; the restricting (of education) to secular subjects."

Beyond the provinces of polite company, of course, within political circles in the United States and the European Union, and especially at political conventions and on talk radio in the United States, both secularism and secularization have become topics of heated discussion. In the United States, attacks on secularism have in large measure come from the Christian fundamentalist or evangelical wing of the Republican Party. Although Christian fundamentalists or evangelicals were a key constituent of the coalition that succeeded in capturing the executive branch of the government in the elections of 2000 and 2004, significantly extending their reach into the legislative and judicial branches as well, their influence now (as I write, in the fall of 2008, after the election of President Barak Obama) appears to have reached its high water mark. In Europe, secularism appears to be under attack not from indigenous sources, but from religiously dogmatic immigrants who wish to roll back the hard-won commitment to separation of church and state that characterizes the political situation in most of the countries of Western Europe.

Increased attention to the issues associated with secularism may also be due to the increasing pull of globalizing tendencies that are in turn the effect of rapidly developing techniques of communication across national and cultural borders that until recently have remained relatively impermeable. As we come to know more about our neighbors around the world, it is probable that we will begin to see attractive alternatives to traditional ways of organizing ourselves, including alternatives to religious organizations as traditionally conceived.

With respect to both the theoretical issues associated with theology and the philosophy of religion, and the practical ones associated with quotidian religious beliefs and practices, however, secularization may well present a much more complex set of issues than does secularism. In the case of secularism, it is at least in principle possible to assess the extent to which the wall of separation between church and state is honored in the United States, or the extent to which anticlericalism continues to function in France or Mexico, or the extent to which the secular military in Turkey is capable of preventing national institutions from falling into the hands of radical Islamists. In these cases, it is usually (but not always) possible to assess the extent to which the activities of religious institutions seek to complete with those that are political, and then to apply appropriate legislative and judicial actions that will insure the continued separation of the two spheres. As far as I know, however, in none of these countries do we find political intrusion into the sphere of secularization, since that would be to contradict the central premise of

secularism, that is, that (absent illegal activity) religious belief, or the lack of it, is a matter of personal conscience and choice.

Assessments of secularization are much more difficult. One of the principal reasons for this may be the fact that two of the key concepts of secularization, *religion* and *religious* as they relate to personal belief, are notoriously difficult to define. If secularism involves the more or less well defined domain of institutions, secularization enters into the vague precincts of conscience. Charles Taylor, for example, writes that if religion is identified with "the great historic faiths, or even with explicit belief in supernatural beings, then it seems to have declined. But if you include a wide range of spiritual and semi-spiritual beliefs; or if you cast your net even wider and think of someone's religion as the shape of their ultimate concern, then indeed, one can make a case that religion is as present as ever."[1]

Quite so. But that is to cast the net widely indeed, and it is likely to capture beliefs and practices that many practitioners of "the great historic faiths" will be reluctant to recognize as legitimate cases of religious belief and practice. So the question remains: just how are we to cast the net so that we get religious beliefs and just those beliefs so that we can know what to make of processes of secularization? As we know, John Dewey was interested in these matters, and he addressed them in both his technical philosophy and his popular writings. Since the year 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of his birth, it seems especially appropriate to review his treatments of these important issues at this time. Before turning to Dewey's insights, however, it might be helpful to look at some recent data.

The Pew Survey

In January 2008, the Pew Research Center published a major study entitled "Religion in America: Non-Dogmatic, Diverse and Politically Relevant." More than 35,000 Americans were interviewed for the survey.

Viewed in the context of the frequent, vigorous, and sometimes sensational reportage of what some journalists are fond of calling the "culture wars," the Pew study presents some surprising results. First, Americans are apparently much less dogmatic about religion than a regular cable news viewer or talk radio listener might have expected. Asked whether many religions can lead to eternal life, a sizeable majority (in the 72% to 89% range) of Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Catholics, Orthodox, and mainstream Protestants answered in the affirmative. A comfortable majority (in the 56% to 59% range) of Protestant Evangelicals, Muslims, and members of historically black Protestant churches agreed. Only Mormons (at 39% affirmative) and Jehovah's Witnesses (at 16% affirmative) were in the minority.

Given the question "whether there is more than one true way to interpret the teachings of my religion," the results were also surprising. Mainline Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Buddhists, and Hindus answered in the affirmative in the 77% to 90% range. Protestant Evangelicals, Muslims, Orthodox, and members of historically black Protestant churches agreed in the 53% to 68% range. Mormons and Je-

hovah's Witnesses were once again in the minority, answering in the affirmative by only 43% and 18%, respectively.

It would be a mistake, however, to interpret these findings as an indication that Americans do not take their religious views seriously, or that their commitments to various forms of supernaturalism are on the wane. More than half of Americans reported that religion is very important in their lives, and some 60% believe in a personal God. Remarkably, two-thirds of U.S. adults (68%) believe that angels and demons are active in the world. Moreover, according to the report, "a plurality of adults who are affiliated with a religion want their religion to preserve its traditional beliefs and practices rather than either adjust to new circumstances or adopt modern beliefs and practices."

I should mention that some evangelicals found these results so surprising that they were convinced that the survey instrument must have been flawed. In August of 2008 Pew once again asked the question whether belief in religions other than one's own could lead to eternal life. According to the *New York Times*, sixty-five percent of the respondents responded positively. "But this time, to clear up any confusion, Pew asked them to specify which religions. The respondents essentially said all of them [including atheists].[2]

What Would Dewey Have Made of the Pew Survey?

Based on Dewey's published work and his correspondence, we can get a fairly good idea of what he would have had to say about secularism, secularization, and the Pew report. I will discuss this matter under four heads: 1) dogmatism or diversity, 2) supernaturalism, 3) the claim advanced in some quarters that Dewey sought to undermine religion, and 4) what I will term "remnant" or "benign" supernaturalism.

Dogmatism or Diversity

In one important respect, the findings of the Pew report are consistent with one of the central claims of John Dewey's lectures on religion, published in 1934 as *A Common Faith*. There seems to be a strong sense among the majority of religiously affiliated Americans that religious expression involves choice not only of affiliation, but also of interpretation of scripture and doctrine within a particular affiliation. For his part, of course, Dewey pointed out that there is no such thing as religion in the singular: religious expressions are numerous and diverse. Some sort of choice, therefore, seems imperative. Simply to remain within the fold of the religious beliefs and practices into which one has been born and nurtured is itself to effect a choice.

But once that point has been reached, once the element of choice has been admitted, Dewey suggests, there is no going back. It indicates, as he puts it, "that further choice is imminent in which certain values and functions in experience may be selected."[3] Dewey then proposes that what is religious, in the sense of "attitudes that may be taken toward every object and every proposed end or ideal," be emancipated from a religion, in the sense of "a special body of beliefs and practices having

some kind of institutional organization, loose or tight."[4] The fact that the majority of religiously affiliated Americans think there should be a choice of religious belief, then, is a step in the right direction. But if that is admitted, then why not take the next step? Why not emancipate religious attitudes from institutional religion?

So Dewey would doubtless have applauded indications that religiously affiliated Americans tend to be nondogmatic, which is to say, tolerant of the beliefs of others both inside and outside their particular communities. Beyond that, however, it is probably safe to say that he would have viewed the remaining results of the Pew survey with some concern. What of Americans' reported commitment to various forms of non-naturalism? Unless we assume duplicity or self deception on the part of the respondents, there appears to be scant evidence of secularization in the results of this survey.

Supernaturalism

How did Dewey deal with the issue of supernaturalism, which seems to hover over the results of the Pew survey? I have already cited the finding that 60% of American adults believe in God as a person with whom people can have a personal relationship. When we add those who believe in God as a universal spirit or some other manifestation, that number reaches 92%. Remarkably, net belief in some sort of deity reaches 21% among self-described atheists, 55% among agnostics, 66% among secular unaffiliated, and 94% among religious unaffiliated. The survey finds that 70% of Americans say "they are absolutely certain of God's existence."

Although quite complex and widely misunderstood, Dewey's treatment of supernaturalism rewards examination under three subheads: his personal beliefs, his technical philosophy, and his role as public intellectual.

Personal Beliefs

With respect to his personal beliefs, Dewey wrote to Max Otto that "I feel the gods are pretty dead, tho I suppose I ought to know that || however, to be somewhat more philosophical in the matter, if atheism means simply not being a theist, then of course Im an atheist. But the popular if not the etymological significance of the word is much wider. It has come to signify it seems to me a denial of all ideal values as having the right to control material ones. And in that sense Im not an atheists and dont want to be labelled one."[5]

So Dewey tells his friend that although he cannot accept the existence of supernatural forces or entities, he cannot deny the existence of ideals that are transcendent in the sense that they extend beyond the horizon of what has so far been realized, and at the same time warrant such efforts as will contribute to their realization in concrete terms. Although he described himself as an atheist in one sense of the term, it is also clear that Dewey was opposed to militant atheism for the same reason that he was opposed to supernaturalism: he thought both positions dogmatic.

Technical Philosophy

With respect to his technical philosophy, Dewey characterized himself as a Naturalist, or, as he once wrote to Corliss Lamont, as a Naturalist of the cultural or humanistic variety. His version of Naturalism is spelled out in detail in his essay "Anti-naturalism in Extremis," which he contributed to the 1944 volume *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*.[6] A central feature of his Naturalism was a rejection of supernaturalism as a legitimate influence on, component of, or substitute for philosophical or scientific inquiry. Dewey took pains to point out that his rejection of supernaturalism did not imply his acceptance of materialism. The title of the book is significant: the philosophical Naturalism espoused by Dewey and his colleagues treats spirituality as a natural part of human life, as involved with efforts toward the reconstruction and realization of ameliorative ideals.

Public Intellectual

With respect to his role as a public intellectual, Dewey regarded himself as a proponent of religious Humanism. It was in this connection that he signed the 1933 "Humanist Manifesto." The seventh point of affirmation in that document stated that "religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation—all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained." The document's eighth affirmation stated that "religious Humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion."[7] Dewey says that he supported these and the other affirmations of the manifesto because of the religious context of the time and his sympathy with its agenda.[8]

Some have claimed that Dewey's Naturalism, that is, his rejection of supernaturalism, was itself dogmatic.[9] So, just bracketing his personal feeling that "the gods were dead," it seems important to examine his philosophical grounds for rejecting supernaturalism. First, it seemed undeniable to him, as it must to any candid observer, that the rise of the experimental sciences has had the effect of undercutting much of traditional supernaturalist theology. Beliefs that are labeled "religious" are not, and should not be confused with, efforts directed toward what he called the scientific control of facts. Belief in angels and demons, for example (as reported in the Pew survey), has all too frequently blocked the way to the type of experimental inquiry that allows for control of situations which can be injurious to the lives of individuals and communities. In Dewey's view, when religious beliefs attempt to compete with the experimental results of the sciences, they put themselves in peril.

Second, it also seemed to Dewey that many traditional forms of supernaturalism, especially belief in an afterlife spent in a heaven or hell (to recur to the Pew survey again), are closely connected with an egotistical focus on personal salvation

instead of wider concerns with goods that could be more publically shared. In short, concern with an afterlife often tends to present a distraction from efforts expended to ameliorate here-and-now social conditions.

Third, supernaturalism distorts and deflects the historical and anthropological understanding of religious experience, thus generating a false portrait of the place of humanity within a wider nature. Supernaturalism tends to de-naturalize human experience by opening up an historical chasm between human life and its evolutionary origins, as well as an anthropological chasm between human nature as observable, on one side, and human nature as an undefinable mystery, on the other.

In this regard there is a significant practical difference between what we might call "top-down" (supernaturalist) and "bottom-up" (naturalist) religious expressions. This difference involves the respective anthropologies of the two positions. Top-down supernaturalist religious expressions usually involve theoretical assumptions that are based on *a priori* claims such as those based on putative revelation. Bottom-up naturalist religious expressions, on the other hand, tend to build on hard-won scientific results in the fields of history, evolutionary biology, ecology, anthropology, and so on, together with other cultural capital such as music and literature.

Even in academic circles it is not difficult to find top-down religious anthropologies. In a recent[10] lecture, for example, a prominent philosopher of religion argued that "to classify a man is to downsize him as a human being, because he could not be classified any other way than according to an order and a measure (models and parameters) that come to him from elsewhere, which is to say from the workings of my rationality."[11] Further, "if God remains incomprehensible, man, who resembles nothing other than Him, will also bear the mark and privilege of His incomprehensibility. Put another way: the human being belongs to no kind whatsoever, refers to no genus, is not comprehended by any definition of (in) humanity. . . . Man is thus radically separated from every other being in the world by an insurmountable and definitive difference that is no longer ontological, but holy."[12] And finally, "Knowing man thus requires referring him to God the incomprehensible and thus by derivation to grounding incomprehensibility in the incomprehensible."[13]

Three key points in the preceding paragraph are germane to the theme of this essay. First (following Heidegger), techno-scientific investigations into the nature of human life are treated as tantamount to regarding humans as objects, that is, as "standing reserve." Such activities are therefore regarded as indefensible. Second, human life is described as a mystery that can only be understood in terms of (presumably monotheistic) revealed religion. And third, it is apparently asserted that human life has no connection to evolutionary history or the rest of nature. In short, this well-known philosopher of religion utilizes claims based on top-down supernaturalism in an attempt to reinforce Heidegger's rejection of technology, especially medical technology. He claims the same basis for rejecting the findings of evolutionary biology and anthropology. His own anthropology, if we may call it that, is mystical, or "negative."[14]

John Dewey's own "bottom-up" naturalist approach to religious attitudes and their consequences takes a very different direction. First, he inverts the top-down process by taking religious attitudes, and not commitments to religious doctrine, as his starting point. He frees up inquiry by rejecting, as he puts it, the "subordination of candid philosophic thinking to the alleged but factitious needs of some special set of convictions."[15] Second, he argues that religious beliefs must conform to those that have been arrived at by proven processes of inquiry: "any genuinely sound religious experience could and should adapt itself to whatever beliefs one found oneself intellectually entitled to hold."[16] Third, he reverses one of the central claims of traditional religious institutions: "It is the claim of religions that they effect this generic and enduring change in attitude. I should like to turn the statement around and say that whenever this change takes place there is a definitely religious attitude."[17] And fourth, he charges top-down theology with vicious intellectualism: "the inherent vice of all intellectual schemes of idealism is that they convert the idealism of action into a system of beliefs about antecedent reality."[18]

Perhaps most damning, however, Dewey thinks that the consequences of top-down forms of religious expressions are unfortunate because they tend to interfere with the development of otherwise effective moral forces: "For the neglect of sciences that deal specifically with facts of the natural and social environment leads to a side-tracking of moral forces into an unreal privacy of an unreal self."[19]

In the place of a mystical or negative anthropology, Dewey draws on one that is positive. In place of the claim that human nature is incomprehensible, he builds an anthropology and social psychology squarely on the doings and sufferings, the facilities and constraints, of human behavior.

Did Dewey Seek to Undermine Religion?

Dewey's intent in writing *A Common Faith* was not to undermine anyone's religious faith, but instead to provide hope for those who had abandoned, or felt themselves abandoned by, institutional religions. In a letter to Max Otto[20] he wrote that his book "was written for the people who feel inarticulately they have the essence of the religious with them and yet are repelled by the religions and are confused." He reiterated this point some ten years later in a letter to U.S. Army private Charles E. Witzell. "I have taught many years and I don't think that any of my students would say that I set out to undermine anyone's faith. . . . The lectures making up [*A Common Faith*] were meant for those whose religious beliefs had been abandoned, and who were given the impression that their abandonment left them without any religious beliefs whatever. I wanted to show them that religious values are not a monopoly of any one class or sect and are still open to *them*."[21]

Contrary to the claims of some of his critics, then, Dewey was not a proselytizer for antireligious sentiment. In terms of our definition of secularization, he was not an agent of secularization.[22] He in fact inverted secularization by attempting to reconstruct religious attitudes in ways that would allow them to be central fac-

tors in the lives of individuals, even though those individuals might have ceased to represent themselves as religious, or may have discontinued their affiliation with organized religion.

So although Dewey was a strong proponent of secularism, he was not an agent of secularization. He was not antireligious. He thought that institutional religions had tended to stifle what he regarded as freer and more productive religious attitudes, and that such institutions could benefit from the refreshment and renewal that would come from freeing themselves up from reliance on the supernatural. He was wary of secularization in the same sense that he was wary of the influence of religious institutions. He thought that supernaturalism was a drag on the development of morals, but unless it was replaced with thoroughgoing humanistic religious attitudes, which involved the possibility of "intelligent and objective morals," then the result would be a "half-suppressed skepticism."[23]

Dewey understood anthropology and evolutionary biology well enough to realize that people tend to organize themselves into what he called "publics" around certain ideals toward which they are willing to work. He also observed that, historically, commitments to supernatural entities and forces has tended to be a drag on ideals that might otherwise be shared among a wide range of various publics.

What then distinguishes religious organizations from other publics, such as political parties? Political parties, like religious institutions, tend to have set agendas: platforms, ideologies, and so on. But political parties (as a rule) do not tend to claim supernatural authority: their ideas must pay their own way in the arena where claims are tested in terms of practical results. (And if political parties are to be successful, they must also exhibit a certain amount of flexibility). What Dewey wanted for religious institutions was a freer form of association—in which, as publics among other publics, they could be more fluid and more productive.

Benign Supernaturalism

Is there a place for a "benign" supernaturalism? Given the Pragmatic test—that the meaning of an idea or system of beliefs lies in the manner in which it functions in experience—wouldn't it be possible for those whose religious beliefs involve supernaturalist commitments to nevertheless take full advantage of the methods of inquiry that have proven so successful in the various sciences, and whose further application is our best hope for the future? Dewey's answer is that it would not (and this is an important condition), to the extent that even residual supernaturalist considerations continue to insinuate themselves into the sphere where critical choices influence significant outcomes, including those that are technical, social, and political.

The recent history of political life in the United States bears witness to Dewey's warning about the effects of supernaturalism. For the eight years between 2001 and 2008, for example, at the level of the federal government, ideology based on supernaturalist commitments tended to trump good science in a number of fields, including climatology, the sciences of human reproduction, and public health

policy (to name but a few). Justifications for antiscience policies only occasionally relied explicitly on supernaturalist grounds. More often the refrain was "needs more study." This, for example was the justification provided when the director of the FDA overruled the agency's board of science advisors, who had approved the "morning after pill" by a sizeable majority.

Realistically, however, it is important to consider an important qualification that goes to the heart of the meaning of secularization. Secularization is generally understood, as I have indicated, as a condition in which religious considerations cease to function as central factors in the lives of individuals, even though those individuals may still represent themselves as religious, and may even continue their affiliation with religious institutions. If we take the findings of the Pew reports seriously, then secularization can hardly be said to be rampant in the United States.

But is it not possible that some of the respondents to the Pew survey have reported commitment to a supernaturalism that is benign or residual—that is outside the central factors in one's life in terms of ontological commitments but that as a functional ideal allows an orientation of oneself to a wider, more harmonious whole, to motivating oneself to use all the means at one's disposal, including the tools of the sciences and the humanities, in an effort to effect a general improvement of life? In other words, is it not possible that a reconstructed, more benign form of supernaturalism—a supernaturalism that is restricted to a personal, functional outlook on life and that has more or less the same practical consequences in the public sphere as those of a religious humanist (that is, a religious individual who rejects supernaturalism)? Might not a secularization of this sort be of value as a bridge toward more comprehensive, humanistic religious outlooks that unite people rather than dividing them?

It may be that one of the reasons why Dewey reports that he never attempted to undercut anyone's religious beliefs is that he understood the transitional potential of what I am calling benign supernaturalism. As a Pragmatist, Dewey would have been a careful observer of what various strands of supernaturalism do, rather than what they claim as their ontological foundations. And the fact is that there are millions of Americans who claim to adhere to various forms of supernaturalism but are quite effective in the building of bridges, the operation of public facilities, and the conduct of scientific research. (There are also supernaturalists on textbook commissions of some states who do not seem to understand the educational importance of the scientific discoveries of the last 150 years.) Supernaturalism of this sort is benign just in the sense that it has for the most part become encased in a protective secular shell: it has become compartmentalized in the lives of its proponents in ways that prevent it from competing with the types of inquiry that have proven so successful in the sciences. Central, yes. But nevertheless set off from most of quotidian life by an outer shell of practical concerns.

Dewey's fellow Pragmatist William James had opened the door to this benign or secularized supernaturalism some years earlier, in 1890, in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. He wrote that "The practical needs and experiences of religion

seem to me sufficiently met by the belief that beyond each man and in a fashion continuous with him there exists a larger power which is friendly to him and to his ideals. All that the facts require is that the power should be both other and larger than our conscious selves. Anything larger will do, if only it be large enough to trust for the next step."[24] Applying the spirit of the Pragmatic maxim, James is here focusing on the practical effects of religious belief. He seems to be suggesting that it is more or less irrelevant whether it claims supernatural or naturalistic authority. In the realm of religious experiences, he seems to say, benign or secularized supernaturalist motivations can function in more or less the same way as naturalistic motivations. The real issue is a functional one: not origin, but outcome.

Dewey's resolution of this issue is different. He viewed the residual or benign supernaturalism as at best transitional. This is because he thought there is a debilitating dualism inherent in such a position: it continues to honor a distorted sense of distinction between the sacred and the secular that cordons off areas of valuation from the possibility experimental inquiry. Such a position would at best be a way station on the road to a more sustainable position—sustainable because of being capable of being reconstructed and renewed.

And that more sustainable position is what he called humanistic Naturalism. In inverting secularization as it is generally conceived, Dewey thus proposed that non-supernatural religious considerations could continue to function as central factors in the lives of individuals (in ways that supernaturalist beliefs could not), even though those individuals may have ceased to represent themselves as religious, or may have discontinued their affiliation with religious institutions. This would be a religious faith that would rise above traditional sectarian squabbles and thus become both more available and more attractive across cultural divides. It would be highly relevant to contemporary globalizing tendencies.

One of Dewey's colleagues, John Herman Randall, Jr., reminded us that there is plenty of room within Naturalism for religious attitudes, "since [religious belief] is an encountered fact of human experience." Further, religious attitudes need not be cold or bloodless: "there is room for celebration, consecration, and clarification of human goals; there is room—*pace* Mr. Dewey!—for man's concern with the eternal. . . . But for naturalism eternity . . . is a quality of human vision; and divinity belongs, not to what is existent, but to what man discerns in imagination."[25] When supernaturalist religious arguments enter into the public sphere, they are inherently incompatible with the type of inquiry that is essential to the technosciences and therefore to honest debates. Naturalist religious arguments, on the other hand, are such that they can potentially enter into the fullness of the debates regarding science policy as an equal partner and still maintain a place for religious values. This is because they eschew dogma for experimentation.

On this, the 150th anniversary of the birth of John Dewey, there is every indication that the United States remains a secular society, but one in which secularization has hardly taken root. I believe that Dewey's treatment of secularism and

secularization is as relevant now as it was during his lifetime. Secularism must be maintained as a great and hard-won good. But secularization need not, for that reason, be embraced. Dewey was convinced that religious belief and practice can be reconstructed along lines that are capable of defining and promoting what he called "a common faith."

Notes

1. Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 427.
2. Blow, "Heaven for the Godless?," A19.
3. LW 9: 8.
4. Ibid.
5. (1935.01.14) References to John Dewey's correspondence are to the electronic editions, *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871-1952.* Citations include accession number, writer, addressee, and date.
6. Krikorian, *Naturalism and the Human Spirit*.
7. See American Humanist Association. *About Humanism.*
8. (13667) Dewey to Corliss Lamont, September 6, 1940.
9. See, for example, Sheldon, "Critique of Naturalism."
10. Marion, "*Mihi magna quaestio factus sum*."
11. Ibid., 11.
12. Ibid., 16.
13. Ibid., 17.
14. Carlson, "Religion and the Time of Creation." See especially p. 831.
15. MW 5: 153.
16. LW 5: 153.
17. LW 9: 13.
18. LW 9: 17.
19. MW 14: 10.
20. (08049) Dewey to Max Otto, January 14, 1935.
21. (22265) John Dewey to Charles E. Witzell, June 5, 1943.
22. See Rockefeller, *John Dewey*, for a somewhat different approach to this point.
23. MW 11: 125.
24. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, 413.
25. See Krikorian, *Naturalism and the Human Spirit,* 358.

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