Editor's Note

The Continuing Relevance of Dewey

Welcome, readers, to the latest edition of *Education and Culture*. We have in this issue a set of articles that nicely highlights the ongoing relevance of Dewey’s thinking for addressing barriers we continue to face today in fostering democratic forms of life. Moreover, we are reminded that an increasing number of writers are offering new insights by creatively putting this thinking to work in encounters with different cultural times and places.

For example, in our lead article, Charles Dorn and Doris A. Santoro’s “Political Goals and Social Ideals: Dewey, Democracy, and the Emergence of the Turkish Republic,” the authors probe beyond historians’ typically piecemeal commentaries on Dewey’s 1924 *Report and Recommendation Upon Turkish Education*. Importantly, their more thorough study brings to light “the conceptual slippage between Dewey’s understanding of democratic localism, as essential to an educational system in a vibrant democracy, and Turkish officials’ view of centralized, formal education as a means to promulgate a homogeneous, modern, secular and democratic identity for their new nation-state.” As a result, Dorn and Santoro effectively enhance our understanding of Dewey’s conceptions of democratic localism and pluralism, as well as his vision of democracy as a social ideal.

Following this, Roudy Hildreth’s “What Good is Growth? Reconsidering Dewey on the Ends of Education” reexamines Dewey’s routinely criticized claim that “growth itself is the only moral ‘end’” and asserts that, when interpreted in a way that empowers “ordinary’ educational actors (students, parents, teachers, administrators)” this “understanding of ends provides critical resources to help us both understand and respond to the increasingly narrow and technical focus of education practice and policy.” Next, in “Dewey’s Naturalistic Metaphysics: Ex-postulations and Replies,” Randy Friedman utilizes several popular misreadings by Dewey’s critics to develop a functionalist definition of his metaphysics, one that seeks to reveal “the value and significance of his naturalistic metaphysics in terms of his philosophy of education.” Finally, we revisit another popular point of conten-
tion (and at times outright dismissal) in Dewey’s philosophy through Bradley Bau- rain’s “Common Ground With A Common Faith: Dewey’s Idea of the ‘Religious.’” In this provocative piece, Baurain identifies and then explores a number of strong conceptual connections and discontinuities between “Dewey’s idea of the ‘religious’ and modern descriptions of the ‘spiritual’ in education.” He then uses this finely nuanced discussion to urge educators to redress “the relative absence of Deweyan ‘religious’ or ‘spiritual’ priorities from current mainstream discourse on education.”

Enjoy and be well!

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