On Manuscript Styles

What manuscript style to use in a journal is a seemingly small detail. I imagine that some editors or editorial boards give little thought to this item. Manuscript style can seem to some like a cosmetic bit of trivia, much like what colors are used on a cover. They may assert that style is of no great importance to the content of the journal. Others may be so used to using a particular style that they do so with little thought, or even resist using a different style altogether.

Education is an interdisciplinary field where contributions may come from the social sciences or the humanities, as well as the natural sciences. I mostly deal with contributions from scholars in humanities and social sciences, and the journal styles reflect that. The publication style of the American Psychological Association (APA) certainly rules in my college and is accepted here. Very few of my colleagues question whether an article or vita should use anything else. I have learned to use APA style over the years, and now even default to it, so well-trained have I become. I do find that some of its infelicities, such as the author/date in-text citation system, can make a paper difficult to read. I was trained in Chicago style, common to humanists. Though in-text citations are permitted, most scholars who use Chicago style opt for foot- or end-notes. Rounding out my experience with different styles, I have used MLA on one occasion, finding it pleasing and elegant. For one article I coauthored in a scientific journal, I used a style called Harvard, which I have yet to see again.

I would like to think that by signaling that several styles are acceptable for the journal, we are not confused, but open to scholars from multiple traditions. At least that is the intent of allowing more than one house style. It certainly helps to have such a superb editor as Margaret Hunt when navigating such work, as she has an eagle eye for errors or omissions. Incidentally, it was Dr. Hunt who encouraged more than one style when I had my doubts, for much the same reasons as I have stated here.

Many authors who contribute to this journal use the shorthand citation of Dewey’s complete published works in the Southern Illinois University Press edition. I doubt we will make that a requirement; again, we want to be open to scholars who may not have ever seen EW, MW, or LW. But if we do go the route of this shorthand, I am prepared, as I now have the complete works on CD-ROM at my disposal, courtesy of the Center for Dewey Studies and its director, Larry Hickman.

We begin this issue with a paper from a German Dewey scholar, Kersten Reich. He looks at the context of the German school and university system to argue for the value of “interactive constructivism,” connecting it to Deweyan pragmatism.
Leonard Waks, in his article “Re-reading Democracy and Education Today: John Dewey on Globalization and Democratic Education,” asserts that Dewey’s text can give us “immediate practical guidance” for understanding globalization and multiculturalism. Fred Harris looks too at how Dewey can help us understand our world today by arguing that “Dewey’s metaphysics of stability and precariousness is implicit in his philosophy of education and provides a unifying aspect to his philosophy of education that is relevant to the modern world.” Michele Moses and Michael Nanna turn a critical eye on today’s high stakes assessment systems, a topic of a number of submissions to this journal. They hark back to Dewey to argue that “high stakes testing reforms, driven as they are by political and cultural ideology and concerns for efficiency and economic productivity, serve to impede the development of real equality of educational opportunity, particularly for the least advantaged students. As John Dewey wrote some 70 years ago: ‘[w]hat avail is it to win prescribed amounts of information about geography and history, to win ability to read and write, if in the process the individual loses his own soul’ (1938, p. 49).”

We reinstitute our occasional interview feature, “Encounter,” with Leonard Waks conversing with noted philosopher of education Jane Roland Martin on the occasion of her new book, Educational Metamorphoses: Philosophical Reflections on Identity and Culture. When Waks asks why begin with a discussion of whole person transformations or metamorphoses, Martin states that she started with Dewey’s idea about “teaching the whole child, where he meant teaching not just mind, thought, or knowledge, but also attitudes, emotions, a whole way of being —walking, talking, eating, dressing, and the like. So by ‘metamorphoses’ I mean changes of the whole person in just this sense.”

We finish with Jim Garrison’s review of David Granger’s new book, John Dewey, Robert Pirsig, and the Art of Living, and a rejoinder by Teed Rockwell of Christine McCarthy’s review of his book that appeared in the previous issue. I would like to keep book reviews as a regular part of the journal, and am seeking ways to strengthen that offering.

—A. G. Rud
Purdue University