

CREATIVE INTEGRATION AND PRAGMATIST OPTIMISM: DISPOSITIONS FOR “THE TASK BEFORE US”¹

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*We must be on guard
Against despair, against fear,
Against bitterness, against self-seeking,
And have the tenacity and courage
To think optimistically and act affirmatively*

—John McQuiston II, *Always We Begin Again*²

Alice laughed. “There’s no use trying,” she said: “one can’t believe impossible things.”

“I daresay you haven’t had much practice,” said the Queen. “When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.”

—*Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* (1871), Lewis Carroll

ABSTRACT

How can and will educators in any setting work with young people of all ages to enable them to develop the ability to interrogate—without denigrating—the claims of candidates, the newsmaking of media, the needs of their neighbors, and the fears of their family members? The answer I offer and defend here involves two dispositions—creative integration and pragmatist optimism—that I view as critical to the pursuit of vibrant and viable political democracy. These dispositions are, I argue, necessary to and evidence of the very possibility of a polity worthy of the “democratic” label.

In the wake of the November 2016 presidential election, countless commentators recognized what Richard Rorty knew in 1998, that the U.S. democratic system would crack under the weight of social and economic inequalities and inequities—and that those cracking the safe would be not the historically marginalized but the historically privileged. Hear Rorty nearly 20 years ago:

[M]embers of labor unions, and unorganized unskilled workers, will sooner or later realize that their government is not even trying to prevent wages from sinking or to prevent jobs from being exported. Around the same time, they will realize that suburban white-collar workers—themselves desperately afraid of being downsized—are not going to let themselves be taxed to provide social benefits for anyone else.

At that point, something will crack. The nonsuburban electorate will decide that the system has failed and start looking around for a strongman to vote for—someone willing to assure them that, once he is elected, the smug bureaucrats, tricky lawyers, overpaid bond salesmen, and postmodernist professors will no longer be calling the shots. . . .

One thing that is very likely to happen is that the gains made in the past 40 years by black and brown Americans, and by homosexuals, will be wiped out. Jocular contempt for women will come back into fashion. . . . All the resentment which badly educated Americans feel about having their manners dictated to them by college graduates will find an outlet.³

The point is not Rorty’s prescience nor the 2016 pollsters’ failings but the clear implication that the vitality of political democracy relies on more than enforced civil rights and access to the voting booth. As John Dewey understood early on, democracy as “a mode of associated living” was and is the grounding for political democracy that works. Community is not a function of proximity but of communication, of community making. Affect theorist Lauren Berlant expresses this for postmodern ears in a way that Dewey might accept as she explores the “embodied processes of making solidarity itself.”⁴ This, I argue, is the “task before us”⁵ as U.S. citizens in the early twenty-first century.

My particular challenge in this paper is to explore a question I posed to my students—future social studies teachers—shortly after the last presidential election. I asked them to imagine how they would teach social studies to ensure that *this* never happened again. *This* was not the election of Donald Trump, but the clear clash of horizons evident among the inhabitants of the United States in the present era—at the time of the election and now as we ponder possibilities for health care, equitable employment, and just policing as well as wrestling with who is to be believed and whose lives matter. How could and would these soon-to-be teachers of history and government and economics work with young people of all ages

to enable them to develop the ability to interrogate—without denigrating—the claims of candidates, the news making of media, the needs of their neighbors, and the fears of their family members? But let me be clear, this educational task cannot be left to a particular subset of teachers. It’s a challenge for anyone who educates in any role, within any institution, for any aged population.

The answer I offer and defend here involves two dispositions—creative integration and pragmatist optimism—that I view as critical to the pursuit of vibrant and viable political democracy. Admittedly, creative integration and pragmatist optimism practiced by individual Americans would not be enough. Layers of political structures and supporting social functioning overlay and undergird these apparently individual dispositions. Nonetheless, these dispositions are, I argue, necessary to *and evidence of* the very possibility of a polity worthy of the “democratic” label. Moreover, these dispositions are properly the concern of those who take up the task of education, within schools or outside.

I begin with a brief discussion of the power of disposition, or “habit” as Dewey characterized it. I acknowledge the importance of recognizing dispositions as situated in social arrangements, that is, as *post hoc* indicators of democratic institutions, as much as individual traits that contribute to the construction of such institutions. Then I consider each critical disposition in turn, beginning with pragmatist optimism.

Pragmatist optimism is set against other possible variants—naive optimism, learned optimism, (over)confident optimism, and cruel optimism—to highlight its particular character as the tendency to focus on what I *can do* combined with the recognition that the meaning of my actions can only be judged *post hoc* in the light of *actual impacts* within problematized contexts.

Creative integration is drawn here based on the framing and phrasing of a pragmatist theorist of organizations and government, Mary Parker Follett. In the face of conflict—and there will inevitably be conflict in a diverse social milieu—creative integration refuses domination and replaces compromise as the only available responses. Follett starts with the pragmatist recognition that diversity is a critical condition for growth—and insists, in her own practice of pragmatist optimism, that creative integration not only “resolves” specific conflict, but transforms conflict (social or intellectual) into the source of invention.

I conclude with some preliminary thoughts about whether and how these dispositions can be encouraged through intentional education and thoughtful societal interaction.

A WORD ABOUT DISPOSITIONS

Educators and epistemologists have unwittingly conspired to divide qualification for any human practice into knowledge, skill, and disposition. Unfortunately,

dividing qualities that can ultimately only be judged experientially into a set of discrete (and quite possibly misleading) categories is potentially useful (for certain specified purposes), but always also dangerous. And it is doubly dangerous when the categories are operationalized in ways that separate cognition from affect and activity. Perhaps even more misleading is the implication that knowledge, skill, and disposition are *individual* characteristics or possessions rather than socially constituted and maintained in situated (and often institutionalized) interaction. Whether I am a good teacher or a good attorney or a good gardener or a good citizen is not a pure calculus of my knowledge (as measured by some sort of “test”), my skill (as determined by an artificial task), and my disposition (as assessed by an observant other). Goodness depends on function appraised holistically. Am I functioning as a good gardener? This will become evident in the quality and appearance of the gardens I tend and the yield produced. Am I functioning as a good democratic citizen? This is reflected in the collective action of my fellow citizens and the quality of the polity within which I live. At present, it is evident that we are not collectively functioning as good citizens. “Creative democracy” remains an ongoing challenge.

Knowledge, skill, and disposition are all implicated in this democratic failure, but each category is implicated in a different way. Knowledge is in question as a category that matters at all in public deliberation, skill is under threat because of a system of accountability that has not taken actual communication seriously as an educational goal in all fields, and disposition is toothless because it has been reduced to attitudes.

The problem with respect to knowledge is not just that we disagree on basic facts (the climate is changing; no, it isn’t) nor that we cling to claims that are wrong (there is substantial evidence of voter fraud), nor that we fail to demand or offer justificatory evidence for important claims. The problem is that knowledge as a category useful in civic discourse is under fire, and processes for ascertaining what we *know* are routinely dismissed as unimportant or ignored in the making of civic decisions. Moreover, we fail to acknowledge that *any* designation of “knowledge” is the product of power relations.⁶

Interestingly, “twenty-first-century skills,” typically framed as collaboration and teamwork, creativity and imagination, critical thinking and problem solving *are* valued, at least rhetorically. However, this cluster of skills doesn’t explicitly articulate communication. More important, not one of these skills is actually assessed in any of the high-stakes testing that governs school improvement or student qualification.

The concept of disposition actually offers us more to grab onto. However, we have reduced dispositions to affects and attitudes, rather than see them as the full-throated flexible habits that Dewey documents and recommends. When we describe a person as gritty or patriotic or hard-working or responsible, we fail to acknowledge that what we assign to an individual as a trait is actually a *post hoc* assignment of meaning to a complex social situation in which (inter)action results in substantive and significant consequence.

The notion of disposition that I rely on here is captured in John Dewey's exposition of habit, found in *Human Nature and Conduct*⁷ and elsewhere. Dispositions, like Deweyan habits, are tendencies—developed in and through experience—to act in useful and predictable ways in similar circumstances. The habit of courage is not a feeling of bravery, but the tendency to assess a threatening situation and respond intelligently (neither fearfully nor foolheartedly) over and over again.

Habit is not habituation, a rote, thoughtless reaction. Habit is forged in experience, flexibly marshalled to respond to challenging circumstances, and perhaps the clearest indicator of one's character as responsible.

No amount of knowledge alone, no prescribed behaviors divorced of feeling or idea, no "appropriate" attitudes can motivate or explain responsible behavior. It is rather an amalgam, this cognitive-behavioral-affective nexus Dewey called "habit." I have come to believe, with Dewey and Aristotle before him, that forming dispositions is *the* primary educational goal, or at least the most generative point of entry—no matter what the field of human practice. I am not alone in this view. Sarah Stitzlein's work on habit (published in *Education and Culture* and elsewhere)⁸ frames habits and their importance in much the same way.

With Dewey and Stitzlein, I acknowledge the importance of recognizing dispositions as situated in social arrangements, that is, as *post hoc* indicators of democratic institutions, as much as individual traits that contribute to the construction of such institutions. Dewey conceives of the development of habit using the "reflex circuit"⁹ so characteristic of his thinking. Persons act within institutions that act back on persons in the same dialectical transaction. The habits I can enact are limited by the constraints of institutions even as I act to push back the limits of those institutions. The point of this is that education as the development of habits of democratic responsibility is never simply a matter of "fixing" persons, but always also a matter of reconstructing social arrangements.

If creative democracy is the task before us, that is, if we seek to educate ourselves and our fellow citizens to enact democracy as the frame for human flourishing, what are the dispositions—as individual habits and affordances of organizations—that can best orient our efforts? The two dispositions I have in mind bring feeling, thinking, and doing together in the way Dewey describes and are critical reconstructions of classical pragmatist ideas. I begin with pragmatist optimism.

PRAGMATIST OPTIMISM

Pragmatist optimism is an aspirational framing that I contrast with naïve optimism (a position more romantic than pragmatist), learned optimism (rooted in a positive psychology that chooses and trains optimism over pessimism), (over)confident optimism (an amalgam of confidence combined with the ignorance of inexperience), and cruel optimism (Berlant's diagnosis of the dangers of being an optimist in a world disorganized by neoliberalism and postmodern sensibility). Dewey himself might have called pragmatist optimism, as I construe it, "meliorism," but

that term seems too alien to contemporary sensibilities to make use of. For Dewey, “Meliorism is the belief that the specific conditions which exist at one moment, be they comparatively bad or comparatively good, in any event may be bettered. It encourages intelligence to study the positive means of good and the obstructions to their realization, and to put forth endeavor for the improvement of conditions.”¹⁰ For now, note simply that Dewey’s pragmatist optimism (his meliorism) is marked by an orientation toward the better effected by intelligent action.

To be a pragmatist optimist is to (a) focus on what “I can . . .” do rather than on that over which I have no control, (b) to recognize that meaning—of encounters or events or expressions—is a function of intelligent assessment of the impact those have on and in the world, and (c) to do this in contexts that are already problematized, that is, acknowledged as fraught with both danger and utility.

I am placing my marbles on optimism, not hope, as the term of art here—though I know that not all will agree.¹¹ However, viewed generally, the theological, indeed eschatological, implications of the term “hope” are off-putting for me. And I am haunted by the turning of hope from former American president Obama to current president Trump. That hope could be deeply invested in two such disparate figures at one time makes it difficult for me to make meaningful use of the concept of hope in this essay.

I confess, too, that I am an optimist, called to be such both internally and externally. As I described it not long ago:

The internal call is born of both realism and faith and woven into the way I read the world. I have a realistic read on my own capacities and motivations (including the weaknesses and darker shades) and those of my fellow inhabitants of this perplexing time and place. But my lived experience and my desire to live well encourage a faithful and patient pursuit of the better. Both experience and desire suggest that *when social conditions allow*, those living alongside me generally—though not universally—are also pursuing the better, each of us in our fashion. That is enough to let me see living optimistically as the more attractive path, as a road that can be made by walking (to borrow the idiom used by Myles Horton and Paulo Freire).

The external call comes from my long-time commitment to and identity as an educator. To pursue education, one’s own or another’s, is to believe that change is possible and that education matters. Education makes different the way one fashions life actions and makes different as well the choices one perceives in the world. To be an educator—and I am, inescapably—is to see paths that are better and worse and to believe that finding the better path is both worthwhile and possible, even likely.¹²

So the question for me is not optimism vs. hope, but what does optimism look like in a “broken society,” as David Brooks¹³ characterized the United States

seven years ago? Is there an optimistic practice that can sustain (especially urban and rural) educators who cannot avoid the existential and psychological need of their talented but deeply disadvantaged students? I offer pragmatist optimism of a critical variety.

Critical pragmatist optimism is evident in working for good in the face of an acknowledgment that the good is elusive—in both meaning and attainment. It is more than “realistic” optimism. As a critical pragmatist optimist, I am not merely chastened by the recognition of circumstances that make improvement seem impossible; rather, I understand that the very recognition of so-called reality is itself a function of the judgment made about the meaning of efforts in the world. The pragmatist optimist knows that the meaning of her efforts can be found not in good intention or appropriate ideology but in results actually effected and valued. She knows that success is not guaranteed and that the very meaning of success is determinable only after result has been connected to action intelligently.

To make sense of critical pragmatist optimism, I contrast it with four other forms of optimism that may sometimes be useful, but that are not, I argue, ultimately generative and sustainable: naïve optimism, learned optimism, (over)confident optimism, and cruel optimism. If optimism is a critical element of an educator’s being in the world—and I maintain that it is—I ask, what is the most educative practice of optimism?

Before taking up the four unsustainable types of optimism as I have observed and constructed them, I note that Dewey himself, despite an intellectual demeanor that some would describe as overly optimistic about the achievement of social and individual good, was not a fan of optimism. At least he thought to critique optimism in multiple ways as “complacent optimism,”¹⁴ “loose and ineffective optimism,”¹⁵ “pious optimism,”¹⁶ “popular credulous optimism,”¹⁷ “romantic optimism,”¹⁸ “easy optimism” (which he linked with “supine complacency!”),¹⁹ “undue optimism,”²⁰ “uncritical optimism,”²¹ “exaggerated optimism,”²² “complacent optimism,”²³ “inflated optimism,”²⁴ “very cheap and harmful optimism,”²⁵ “foolish optimism,”²⁶ and the characterization that gets to the heart of the matter for Dewey, “unthinking optimism.”²⁷ It is clear from this list that Dewey had in mind some practices of optimism similar to those I discuss below.

Naïve optimism is simple, too unexamined to be a “practice,” too uncritical to be meaningful. This brand of optimism resides in a Pollyanna-like belief that good things are more likely to happen to me than to others because I am me and I somehow deserve it. There is self-centeredness propping up naïve optimism, but more important for my purposes is the sentimentalism that is at its core. Lacking in the naïve optimist is a theory of evil, an acknowledgment of tragedy, and the recognition that persistence toward a valued goal is both desirable and difficult.

Young children tend to be naïve optimists and this often, but not always, serves them well. It supports the willing action that makes learning possible. The

very process of education is a gradual replacement of naïve optimism with a more informed, less dangerous optimism that affords willing action while guarding against personal harm. The challenge is to find the sweet spot between openness and guardedness, to avoid “maturity” (as incapable of growth) in favor of “maturing” (developed but open to further development).

(Over)confident optimism is akin to what sixteenth-century British poet Samuel Daniel calls “audacious ignorance.” (“While timorous knowledge stands considering, audacious ignorance hath done the deed.”)²⁸ While positively associated with the development of adolescents and young adults, it can also be perceived among many of today’s educational reformers. Figures like Betsy DeVos and an entire phalanx of Teach for America-corps-members-turned-educational-saviors, inexperienced, underqualified, and too often just misguided, assume that the understanding they have is the understanding they need to respond pedagogically, ethically, and politically to very real educational challenges in the face of systemic racism, entrenched and normalized poverty, and all that goes with that.²⁹ In the (over)confident optimist, we find the self-centeredness evident among naïve optimists but without the sentimentalism. Their grit and commitment are unquestioned (at least within the inner circle of “educational reformers”)—and seemingly all that is needed to dissolve previously intractable educational challenges.

We see this kind of attitude in President Trump’s claim during the 2016 Republican National Convention that “I alone can fix it,” clearly a model of (over)confident optimism. His “audacious ignorance” is regularly on display, but there is an even more distressing element to this brand of optimism. The practitioners of (over)confident optimism “succeed” because they set the terms of the very possibility of success. For President Trump, this involves declaring victory without reference to evidence and castigating those who question the conclusion as “fake news.” (His claims with respect to Hurricane Maria’s impact on Puerto Rico constitute a remarkable case in point.) For educational reformers, cherry-picking good students and limiting the purposes of education to an achievement based on test scores narrowly define the terms for success. Those who would actually educate are at a disadvantage.

Learned optimism is a contemporary corollary of Martin Seligman’s positive psychology. In my youth, we knew positive psychology as “the power of positive thinking,”³⁰ an idea that was literally sold to those who wanted to be successful in business and in life. Today we are selling “grit” and “growth mindset” as critical for optimal motivation and performance,³¹ and lots of people seem to be internalizing this perspective. While both of these notions came to light as careful and well-regarded programs of research by Angela Duckworth and Carol Dweck (as did Seligman’s positive psychology), they have been appropriated by those who, often simplistically, prescribe retraining pessimism in order to improve performance. Those who can learn to see defeats as temporary, local, and reversible (rather than

as indicators of personal deficit or of systemic constraint) can be not just their best selves, but anything they imagine themselves being. From the learned optimist's point of view, the ability to reframe failure as "not yet" means that I can and will overcome immediate obstacles through the practice of my newly acquired persistence and positivity.

Learned optimism, like other forms, is useful for specific persons in the right circumstances. Adults who can practice "positive thinking" are more likely to persist at apparently intractable problems. It is hard to deny that persistence and a positive attitude are useful capacities—but there are dangers in it as well. First, I might fail to learn optimism, that is, to reprogram my attitude; this view is built on an assumption that all can develop positive thinking. Surely, some are more talented at optimism-as-attitude than others who may simply fail. Second, I may actually learn to deny daunting and unjust circumstances well beyond my control, and turn on myself when I am unable to fix them or the students with whom I work. Finally, learned optimism seems to be a kind of optimism "for the rest of us," that is, for those who don't immediately measure up or who are not occupying positions of institutional power. Those who are conferred with institutional power prematurely tend to inhabit versions of (over)confident optimism.

Today's educators—at least those who seek to maintain an optimism that is both realistic and constructive—face a double bind that Lauren Berlant analyzes in sophisticated theoretical terms as "cruel optimism."³² The teachers (or administrators) who aspire to remain in their institutional role must be "effective" as measured by students' performance (achievement or growth) on one or another set of standardized tests. But being effective can—and too often does—require abandoning the role of teacher *as educator* (as one who initiates her students into ways of knowing and being in the world, and who invites students to recreate the world by building on and going beyond those ways of knowing and being)—and that moral motivation, that optimistic attachment grounded in some moment(s) in their own experience of education, is what drove them toward teaching to begin with.³³

Put simply, cruel optimism "exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing."³⁴ The irony is clear. Optimistic attachments are not intrinsically cruel; optimism is intrinsic to the project of education (in fact, to any effort to pursue growth and/or justice), and attachment understood as relationality is a *sine qua non* of pedagogical efforts. "[Optimistic attachments] become cruel only when the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially."

Teachers today are stuck in a situation of cruel optimism because the social, political, and economic conditions surrounding the contemporary practice of public school teaching counter the interpersonal experience that prompted their interest in teaching. They are attracted to the work of teaching because of the meaningfulness of attending to the growth of immature persons. However, regimes of accountability that feature standardized testing and rely on "growth" measures

with questionable statistical pedigrees exert pressure on them to teach in ways that are simply not educational.

Berlant takes us beyond the concrete conditions of educational practice to the psychic and affective powers flowing through persons and institutions. We are—by virtue of being human—affected by and attracted to a fantasy of “the good life,” a moral–intimate–economic constellation of desire(s). But by virtue of living in human interaction—in real-world conditions of scarcity, imperfection, and today, “liquid life”³⁵—our fantasies are subject to “fraying,” fraying too the metanarrative that surrounds and powers our educational possibilities.

For Berlant, “the present is perceived, first, affectively.” We are affected—personally, politically—before we understand or name that affect as object. The genre of response that lets us perceive this affectively constituted present is, for Berlant, the “impassé.” The *impassé* is a “stretch of time in which one moves around with a sense that the world is at once intensely present *and* enigmatic, such that the activity of living demands both a wandering absorptive awareness and a hypervigilance that collects material that might help to clarify things.”³⁶

The question facing us now under conditions of *impassé*—as we live down the impacts of No Child Left Behind and live into the full flower of Trumpian tragedy—is whether or not any form of optimism is sensible for teachers. What is the optimism that dislodges cruel optimism, enabling teachers to persist in the profession *because* (and so that) they can be educators?³⁷ This would be an optimism that is forward looking and meaning making (that is, pragmatist) but is also attentive to present political, ideological, and existential realities (that is, critical). Only this kind of optimism is actually *practicable*. Naïve, (over)confident, and learned optimisms look forward but take on various forms of unreality. Cruel optimism, perhaps the dominant form of optimism of the present age, leads inevitably to *impassé*. What is this critical pragmatist optimism that might move us—cognitively, affectively, behaviorally—despite, and perhaps beyond, *impassé*?

Pragmatist optimism will be toothless unless it takes critical theory in all its variants seriously. It will do no good to look beyond injustice and inequity, marginalization and discrimination. At the same time, the function of critical theory is to point to that which is limiting and nongenerative. A steady diet of criticality alone leads to pessimism and, worse, resignation. Pragmatism picks up where criticality leaves off. Critical pragmatism enables and names action toward the better joined with awareness of the fact of limitation without reifying which limits *are* limits.

The pragmatist optimist is not naïve; he is not sentimental. He understands that both evil and tragedy are real, if socially constructed, practices of communities of action. The pragmatist optimist has no time for overconfidence because constructive action demands intelligence and cannot proceed in ignorance. The pragmatist optimist recognizes that optimism is a habit that is “learned” not through retraining of an individual mind/perception but by acting effectively in the world

in interaction with others. And the pragmatist-optimist doesn't get caught in cruel optimism because he asks relentlessly, "What *can* I do to act toward the purposes that I hold of most importance while negotiating and transforming purposes as we go?" He makes the road by walking.

The critical pragmatist-optimist is not a glutton for punishment; she practices what John Lachs calls "stoic pragmatism."³⁸ With John Dewey and William James, she both looks to the future *and* values "the tools that enable us to enlarge the range of local intelligence" here and now. With Seneca and other Stoics, she acknowledges the immediate limits of her powers without complaint but also without complacency. There *is* evil and tragedy, but there is *not only* evil and tragedy. "In every case in which we want to improve something, we have to accept the conditions that make amelioration possible."³⁹ Which conditions make amelioration possible is not given; it is all part of the inquiry.

Optimism is an affect tangled with particular kinds of ideas and actions. We tend to think of emotions like optimism as prewired character traits of the individual, emerging spontaneously, even instinctually. But pragmatists and critical pragmatists remind us that emotions are better understood as products of engagement with others in the world. As John Dewey noted at the turn of the twentieth century and as Sara Ahmed explores in the twenty-first,⁴⁰ emotions are sociopolitically constructed habits involving affective, cognitive, and behavioral associations with objects with which we have past histories. Educators who hope to stay alive, to practice optimism, find themselves called to critically assess the objects that elicit feelings, thoughts, and actions in order to respond constructively rather than react unthinkingly. Moreover, those educators labor proactively to construct the (institutional and interactional) conditions that make optimism possible. This is the work Berlant calls the "embodied process of making solidarity itself." As an educator, I am not Super(woman); I cannot sidestep the reality of current educational policy, nor retrain my thinking to ignore those same constraints, nor even escape the impasse that neoliberal conditions of fear and precarity construct. The task ahead is to see (and feel) clearly and to interact intelligently anyway.

Educators today encounter possibilities that don't feel much like a real choice—between progress toward the better however modestly conceived and "passivity" when the perceived impasse takes over one's attention and one's energy. Author Zadie Smith recently reminded us that progress "is never permanent, will always be threatened, must be redoubled, restated, and *reimagined* if it is to survive."⁴¹ This isn't easy but it is a practice, a habit, the habit of optimism strengthened by acting *with* others *in* this world. For those who continue to see education as a useful tool and tactic for living well in all its forms in a world that is not easily tamed, it is the only choice.

This kind of critical pragmatist optimism is more easily associated with feminists whose work embodies a pragmatist intention—from Jane Addams⁴² to Judith

Butler⁴³ to Sara Ahmed⁴⁴ to Lauren Berlant⁴⁵ and Donna Haraway⁴⁶—and in the pragmatism practiced today by Colin Koopman⁴⁷ and Jose Medina⁴⁸ than it is with the image of John Dewey. These scholars are more acutely aware than Dewey of the play of power in human interaction and the inequitable distribution of material, political, and epistemic goods.

Sara Ahmed's portrayal of the "feminist killjoy" (along with the unhappy queer, the angry black woman, and the melancholic migrant) is at once critical and constructive, seeking to bridge theory and ordinary life. Arguing that a feminist critique is a sensible reaction to the injustices of the world, Ahmed both portrays and plays the role of one who disturbs what is taken for granted for the purpose of offering a better alternative. "To kill joy," she writes in the book's introduction, "is to open a life, to make room for life, to make room for possibility, for chance."⁴⁹

Similarly, Donna Haraway's insistence on "staying with the trouble," in refusing to dither in the face of difficult circumstances, in order to create new modes of being more together with the nonhuman inhabitants of Terra, clearly conveys a pragmatist stance and a relational reality. Jose Medina's examination of epistemologies of resistance and ignorance also incorporates careful documentation of social movements and the kinds of activism that can be mobilized to resist racial and sexual violence and oppression in local and global contexts.

Ahmed and the other thinkers noted above share common motivating questions. The first question is, *can* one act constructively and democratically in the world in the face of diversity, disagreement, and even discord? Can one have dialogue across diversity? Critical pragmatist optimism answers yes. But the question of how remains. Developing the disposition of creative integration is a potential answer.

CREATIVE INTEGRATION

"Creative integration" is a phrase offered by pragmatist and progressive theorist of management Mary Parker Follett (1996) to capture what she claims is the only constructive response to conflict, in a framing congruent with the thinking of John Dewey and Jane Addams. Follett suggests that domination (even the *perception* of domination) has devastating results—as we witnessed in the social dynamics leading up to and resulting from the November 2016 election. More surprisingly, Follett argues that compromise may be even worse than domination because nothing is settled and nobody is happy. Because all parties are giving up important considerations, no one is making progress toward having needs fulfilled and interests addressed. Follett proposes creative integration—the thorough communication of root needs and desires on the part of all impacted with the intelligent imagination of alternative solutions that address what parties need to accept a tentative resolution. Follett's nonbinary, win-win formulation (what today we might call integrative rather than distributive negotiation)⁵⁰ rests on her understanding of power as a function of human relating with the goal of "power with" rather than "power over."

To understand “creative integration” (or coordination) as Follett commends it to us requires that we check our understanding of the concept and experience of power. The creation and use of power are, as John Dewey suggested in another context, “strictly correlative and contemporaneous.”⁵¹ They are mutually constituting. One does not obtain power and then use it. Rather, one comes to have power in the exercise of it. To be a causal agent is to create new value, and this can only be done coactively: “power with/to.” New value is always jointly developed in interaction with others in the world.

Follett argued that power could be defined as “simply the ability to make things happen, to be a causal agent, to initiate change.”⁵² This is not a personal phenomenon, but an interactive one rooted in “the law of the situation.” This phenomenological characterization sets no limits on the amount of power available and pushes us toward a generative, agentic understanding of power. Our agency, unquestionably constrained by sociocultural context but never fully determined, reveals the borders of the values we enact. Thus the power of power is captured in Follett’s claim that “power means the possibility of creating new values.”⁵³ This possibility emerges when we take conflict to be constructive.

Follett rejects domination (power over) and compromise (mutual powerlessness?) as effective modes of response to conflict and insists that creative integration is the only response that reduces resentment while generating rather than limiting power. Follett’s view—both progressive and pragmatist—raises the prospect of “expansion” rather than “shrinking” for all parties involved, an attitude that is richly educative. She does not accept the power calculus that views the distribution of power as a zero-sum game. The friction accompanying conflict—too often construed as “power struggle”—is an energy awaiting release through a process of coordinated activity that mirrors Dewey’s method of intelligence.⁵⁴

Those who would switch from personal power to the “law of the situation” are bound to accept Follett’s four fundamental principles of organization, principles that she considered basic to effective management coordination:

- Coordination as the “Reciprocal Relating” of all factors in a situation,
- Coordination by direct contact, that is, direct communication between all responsible people involved, whatever their hierarchical or departmental positions,
- Coordination in the early stages—involving all the people directly concerned from the initial stages of designing a project or forming a policy, and
- Coordination as a continuing process, coordinating on a continuous basis, and recognizing that there is no such thing as unity, but only the continuous process of unifying.

Coordination is needed because conflict, suggests Follett, is neither positive or negative; it is not even surprising. It just is, and it is even predictable for those paying attention. Says Follett: “As conflict—difference—is here in the world, as

we cannot avoid it, we should, I think, use it.” In statements that sound much like those of Jane Addams, she argues that we should make conflict work for us, as the engineer uses friction to do work.⁵⁵

No matter what their position or expertise, those who claim a privileged epistemic and political perspective based on their educational status (including perhaps this author and the readers of this journal) are indulging in paternalism and missing something critical to Follett’s view of coordination and Dewey’s formulation of democracy. Solutions to shared problems cannot be determined and then “sold.” Actual solutions, that is solutions that don’t result in resistance to domination and resentment of compromise, are always negotiated. This is the process of associated living that Dewey describes. It enacts the communication that expresses and creates community.

It may seem as though Follett is recommending a protocol for action in politics and business, one that can be implemented by an individual at will (or not). However, this would be a misreading of her intention. Follett is not simply suggesting that those in institutional positions of power gather the troops when conflict emerges. She is arguing for a flattened and flexible organizational structure that assumes, even welcomes, conflict as generative. It is just such a structural context that makes the practice of creative integration (as a disposition) possible.

Direct contact is not easy to facilitate if it is only initiated in an affect-fraught emergency within a hierarchical organization. Communication in the *early stages* of a conflict is only possible if regular opportunities for direct contact among all constituencies are built into the way an organization works. This is the root of a *continuous process of unifying*, rather than an elusive ideal of unity.

All of this builds and is dependent on the capacity of all parties to reveal what they *really* want and need in any “situation.” As Follett suggests, creative integration involves “fac[ing] the real issue, uncover[ing] the conflict, bring[ing] the whole thing out into the open.”⁵⁶ This takes trust, a trust that grounds possibilities for communication but is also made possible by that regular communication. Once needs are honestly and accurately expressed, the participants are tasked with finding “the law of the situation.” This takes intelligence (the kind of thinking together in interaction that Dewey documents)—and it takes time. The initial goal is to complexify what is too often presented as a binary choice in favor of “invention” of a new alternative—or what Follett calls “creative integration.” Like feminists after her, she urges us to avoid binary thinking, “thinking confined within the walls of these two possibilities.” She advocates expansive thinking, a habit of which Dewey would approve.

What is being invented is *value* as well as embodied response. Participants in creative integration are not only examining options for action. They also claim values and evaluate their own and others’ claims, leading to reevaluation in a manner akin to Dewey’s Theory of Valuation.⁵⁷ What Follett terms progress occurs by the reevaluation of desire. This is not a question of persons ‘giving in,’ but rather of realizing that they don’t really care about *that*, if they can get *this*.

There is pragmatist optimism built into this position in that one cannot know in advance the resolution to any conflict. The disposition to act in the service of coordination requires optimism, an assumption that a truly (or at least more) positive outcome is at least possible. The key to recognizing this as a pragmatist response is that the pragmatist recognizes both the truth and the limits of the positions seemingly in conflict and then searches for an intelligent response that acknowledges those limits while reframing the original issue or question in a more useful way. This reframing is the opening to invention.

As noted, the practice of coordination is a function of individual disposition *and* social organization. We recognize it in the results it makes possible, in solutions invented and agreements reached that involve neither domination nor compromise. An individual who has experienced democratic functioning can attempt to coordinate in stressful situations, but coordination is not individual power. It is a mode of associated living, embodied in organizational arrangement.

Those who wield institutional power cannot delegate it to those who don't because, says Follett, "genuine power is capacity. . . . It is the blossoming of experience. The challenge facing those without power . . . is how much power they can grow themselves. . . . The division of power is not the thing to be considered, but *that method of organization that will generate power.*" In fact, the institutional power of individuals will, in most circumstances, actually erode overall organizational and social achievement. This is why Follett shifts the focus to the "law of the situation" as it emerges from coordination and cooperation. Partnership is quite literally more powerful than hierarchical control and the competition it engenders.

Follett insists that institutions should be organized so that in any conflict, the *whole field of desire* can be viewed. She recommends the realignment of (working) groups to enable the reevaluation of interests. Once an inclusive working group is possible, the members are called to find and focus on the significant rather than the dramatic features of the situation and seek or construct the response that is "circular." Reminiscent of Dewey's claim in "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology,"⁵⁸ Follett understands the circular response as one that recognizes and accepts responsibility for responding never just to you, but always to you plus me. "Circular behavior as the basis of integration gives us the key to constructive conflict."⁵⁹

However, organizational arrangements are not enough to ensure the practice of coordination when individual persons have no experience of standing up and speaking out. Systems of inequity train individuals to view themselves as more or less worthy, more or less capable of engaging in the kind of deliberation Follett describes. Epistemic injustice,⁶⁰ woven into the fabric of racism, sexism, classism, and other inequitable social habits and arrangements, makes imagining either organizational structures or personal dispositions of creative integration difficult.

The practice of creative integration is not the default habit in twenty-first-century America. We are generally impatient and, sadly, habituated to

domination and compromise. Our language tends toward the binary rather than the integrative. Creative integration takes time, can be stressful, and does not always yield practicable action. Follett recognized this, as she is not the naïve optimist some still think her to be.

Nonetheless, this is an important counter to my argument for creative integration as a “disposition for the task before us,” one that requires some exploration. Put simply, is creative integration an overly optimistic stance in a political and cultural environment where difference is defined as divisive? Does creative integration belie the very possibility of *critical* optimism? Am I asking that we imagine and work toward the impossible?

Integration is not possible in all cases, but as a life stance, as a disposition, Follett viewed creative integration as far more fruitful than the alternatives (just as democracy is the worst form of government except for all the others). Like the pragmatist she was, she argued that we can only know the limits of creative integration by enacting the practice. The enactment reveals “what perhaps may be. This we can discover only by experiment.”⁶¹

Whether Follett did or did not understand the political realities and inequities we recognize today, whatever naivete she harbored in the early years of the twentieth century, she did not believe that integration was possible in all cases: “I do not say there is no tragedy in life. All I say is that if we were alive to its advantages, we could often integrate instead of compromising.”⁶²

With this statement, Follett expresses her own pragmatist optimism. She recognizes the “high order of intelligence, keen perception and discrimination, brilliant inventiveness” that creative integration asks of those who would live democratically. She acknowledges the courage that it requires to resist the pull of the either/or formulation of conflict. She remains the optimist because the coordinated result, once achieved, has little to none of the residual resentment and dissatisfaction of compromise or the resistance that domination must stimulate.

Of course, creative integration will not “work” every time—or quickly—even in those organizations that are planned to make it possible. It can take weeks, months, years to find a workable response to conflicting interests, but the operating principle (the disposition at work) is to see and acknowledge the very real disagreements, but to look hard for the shared interests and build what *can* be built on those shared interests. That will change the operating conditions, making new (small) common ground possible. This is the democracy Dewey calls us to—and creative integration is a democratic disposition enacted today in some political action, educational work, and academic discourse, especially by women.

The Women’s March of January 2017, the “Nevertheless, She Persisted” meme-turned-campaign in response to Elizabeth Warren’s experience with Senate leader Mitch McConnell, the #MeToo movement, and the valorization of the “Notorious RBG” are all indicators of a critical pragmatic optimism afoot in the land

of #MAGA. The proliferation of children's and young adult literature by authors who are female, of color, LGBT, with disability, and immigrant written to portray in high-quality narratives the actual experience of youth who represent the same range of humanity have reinvigorated publishing targeted toward young people and utterly reconstructed the face of reading in the public schools. Feminist and womanist theory of all stripes continues to be written and debated, but always from a both/and perspective (both intellectual and material) with an insistence on the possibility that win-win (rather than win-lose) is a desirable outcome.

All of these indicators represent intelligent action in the face of challenging circumstances. They represent as well a stance of inclusion rather than exclusion, of creative integration wrought through intelligent effort together over time.

FROM CONSTRUCT TO DISPOSITION

How do theoretical constructs become commonplace dispositions? Dewey's answer, of course, is to *educate* for pragmatist optimism and creative integration. As any reader of *Democracy and Education* knows, however, this is not a simple matter of developing a dispositional curriculum that teachers can deliver to future citizens. Education is a situated transaction. Those who would themselves practice these dispositions, this fusion of idea and affect and act, will only develop them through experience, that personal encounter with others and the world that is always both individual and social. Only environments (social, natural, or organizational) structured to enact pragmatist optimism and creative integration support the experience that forges dispositions that are flexible habit and not habituation. The reality (accessible in today's various forms of critical appraisal) is that most institutions are not structured in this generative way. However, the good news is that small spaces can be constructed—within families, classrooms, schools, book clubs, scout troops, athletic teams, academic departments, work crews, even churches—by those who intend to imagine pragmatist optimism and creative integration until they can experience it.

The far more difficult challenge is to move beyond, to take this inquiry to the question of how widely available educational channels (public and paid television; social, print, and broadcast media; and public libraries) and political institutions (political parties, PACs, governmental entities) are exacerbating the situation of conflicting horizons and might contribute instead to the creation of community, to the embodied processes of making solidarity itself.

The practice of schooling today is not improving our prospects. High-stakes accountability continues to get in the way of expansive but also realistic expectations. Our reliance on “measurable goals” of putatively useful subjects rather than actual indicators of human growth has led to gutting the curriculum at all levels. Mathematics and reading are viewed as the only goods; the arts, literature, even sciences are not valued and too often not part of the curriculum at all. We need

new indicators of success in education that can serve as aspirational ends-in-view.

Still, there *are* persons in our world, in our educational circles, who practice critical pragmatist optimism and creative integration. This is why both Dewey and Follett were able to provide phenomenological descriptions of them. Neither invented these dispositions *ex nihilo*; rather, they recognized and help us still to recognize that responsible people act in these ways, if inconsistently. And when these dispositions are broadly enacted, democracy exists.

I suggest that neither disposition alone is a sufficient condition for democratic functioning. Both are needed—not as attitude and skill, but as complementary tendencies to act infused with positive feeling and useful thought. But these two dispositions are not a simple answer. In a pragmatist reading, these two dispositions matter because they make something possible, maybe even—in the right circumstances—make something seemingly impossible possible.

In the opening of this essay, John McQuiston calls on us to “have the tenacity and courage to think optimistically and act affirmatively.” This is not a new idea (McQuiston finds it in *The Rule of St. Benedict*⁶³), but it links pragmatist optimism and creative integration to tenacity and courage. As I have been thinking about these two dispositions, I have been thinking and writing as well about courage revisioned for a critical feminist, situated, and communal understanding of human action.⁶⁴ McQuiston, and my colleague Terri Wilson, have pointed out to me that these two projects are interconnected.

It requires courage to believe the impossible is possible and to act as if that were the case. But courage is not heroic and individual. Courage is also an embodied process of making solidarity itself, constructed and supported in communities of interaction.

What is still needed today, as it was in Dewey and Follett’s time, is both courage and the capacity to see and highlight these dispositions in practice so that these modes of response are regularly externalized, eventually legitimated, and ultimately internalized. And what is needed as well are institutional supports and constraints, the concrete institutions already in place but too often taken for granted. For educators, the task before us is both pedagogical and political.

NOTES

1. This essay was presented in slightly different form as a talk at the John Dewey Society Annual Meeting in 2017 as part of a session organized around the theme, “Creative Democracy: The Task Before Us.” I would like to thank the participants at that session, Dr. David Granger, and an anonymous reviewer for their help in making the original presentation stronger.

2. John McQuiston II, *Always We Begin Again: The Benedictine Way of Living* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1996).

3. Richard Rorty, *Achieving Our Country* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

4. Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

5. Those familiar with the work of John Dewey will recognize the subtitle phrase from “Creative Democracy: The Task Before Us,” in *John Dewey: The Later Works*, vol. 14, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

6. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

7. John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct* in *John Dewey: The Middle Works*, vol. 14, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976).

8. Sarah Stitzlein, “Habits of Democracy: A Deweyan Approach to Citizenship Education in America Today,” *Education and Culture* 30, no. 2 (2014): 61–86. See also Sarah Stitzlein, *Breaking Bad Habits of Race and Gender: Transforming Identity in Schools* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008).

9. John Dewey, “The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology,” in *John Dewey: The Early Works*, vol. 5, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969).

10. John Dewey, “Progress,” in *John Dewey: The Middle Works, 1899–1924*, vol. 10, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1976).

11. It is worth noting that though Dr. Stitzlein and I share an understanding of habit as it figures in both Dewey’s philosophy and contemporary democratic action, she has chosen to explore “hope” as a key determinant of rich possibility in democratic living.

12. Barbara Stengel, “Staying Alive,” *Educational Theory* 67, no. 22 (2017): 123–129.

13. David Brooks, “A Broken Society,” *New York Times*, March 18, 2010. Available online at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/19/opinion/19brooks.html?mcubz=3>.

14. John Dewey, “The Logic of Judgments of Practice,” in *John Dewey: The Middle Works*, vol. 8, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976).

15. John Dewey, “The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy,” in *John Dewey: The Middle Works*, vol. 10, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976).

16. John Dewey, “The Discrediting of Idealism,” in *John Dewey: The Middle Works*, vol. 11, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976).

17. John Dewey, “Progress,” in *John Dewey: The Middle Works*, vol. 10, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976).

18. John Dewey, “The Social-Economic Situation and Education,” in *John Dewey: The Later Works*, vol. 8, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

19. John Dewey, "Science, Folk-lore and Control of Folk-ways," in *John Dewey: The Later Works*, vol. 3, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

20. Ibid.

21. John Dewey, "The Social-Economic Situation and Education."

22. Ibid.

23. John Dewey, "Democratic Ends Need Democratic Means for Their Realization," in *John Dewey: The Later Works*, vol. 14, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

24. John Dewey, "Contribution to *Democracy in a World of Tension*," in *John Dewey: The Later Works*, vol. 16, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

25. John Dewey, "Educational Lectures Before Brigham Young University," in *John Dewey: The Later Works*, vol. 8, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

26. John Dewey, "A Philosopher's Philosophy Interview by S.J. Woolf," in *John Dewey: Supplementary Volume 1*, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

27. John Dewey, "The Economic Basis of a New Society," in *John Dewey: The Later Works*, vol. 13, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

28. Samuel Daniel, "Behold how every man, drawn with delight." Quoted in Saul Bellow, *Humboldt's Gift* (New York: Viking Press, 1975).

29. This should not be read as a defense of the educational establishment or of traditional teacher education. Where American public schools succeed, and many do, largely in well-funded suburban areas, there is optimism effectively employed. However, urban and rural schools (and any schools where students are underserved and historically marginalized) are subject to a different criticism: that there is neither (over)confidence nor optimism. In truth, defensiveness and even cynicism are too often present in such settings, stemming in large part from chronic underfunding in the face of social and cultural challenges. One could argue that (over)confident optimism—born of greater funding and autonomy than is present in public schools—is a more productive stance than defensiveness or cynicism. That is not the question on this table.

30. See, for example, Martin Seligman, *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment* (New York: Atria, 2002). See also Norman Vincent Peale, *The Power of Positive Thinking* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1952).

31. Angela Duckworth, *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* (New York: Scribner, 2016); Carol Dweck, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (New York: Random House, 2006).

32. Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 1.

33. After thirty-five years as a teacher educator, I would say with conviction that future teachers have complex motivations that include a desire for modest economic security, an appreciation for autonomy, and an enjoyment of working with young people and/or a love of a particular subject matter. But they always also *start out* with what David Hansen, Doris Santoro, and others have explored as “moral motivations.” That is, they view teaching as meaningful work that targets private and public good. Their visions of teaching as vocation are rooted in specific experiences when they were the “initiate” learning to understand the world in new ways and when teachers enabled them to see new possibilities for action.

34. Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 1.

35. Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Life* (London: Polity Press, 2005).

36. Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*, 4.

37. Doris Santoro explores these questions in *Demoralized: Why Teachers Leave the Profession They Love and How They Can Stay* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Press, 2018).

38. John Lachs, *Stoic Pragmatism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 32.

39. *Ibid.*, 42.

40. John Dewey, “A Theory of Emotion I: Emotional Attitudes” (1894) and “A Theory of Emotion II: The Significance of Emotions” (1895), in *John Dewey: The Early Works, 1882–1898*, vol. 4, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1976); Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

41. We hear a version of critical pragmatist optimism in Zadie Smith’s Welt Prize address given just after the November election. Smith acknowledges that her readers perceive a new note of despair in her writing and wonder whether she is no longer a champion of “multiculturalism.” She says in response, “I believe in human limitation, not out of any sense of fatalism but out of a learned caution We will never be perfect; that is our limitation. But we can have, and have had, moments in which we can take genuine pride. Human living is ‘not perfect but . . . filled with possibility.’” Even now.

42. Jane Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1902); *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York: Macmillan, 1912); “Newer Ideals of Peace,” excerpted in L. Harris, S. Pratt, and A. Waters, eds., *American Philosophies: An Anthropology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1907), 389–404.

43. Judith Butler, “Subjection, Resistance, Resignification: Between Freud and Foucault,” in *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 84–105.

44. Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

45. Berlant, *Cruel Optimism*.

46. Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016).

47. Colin Koopman, *Pragmatism as Transition: Historicity and Hope in James, Dewey, and Rorty* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). See also Erin Tarver's review of this book in *Education and Culture* 30, no. 1 (2014): 95–99.

48. Jose Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imaginations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Medina describes his work as heading “toward an insurrectionist pragmatism.”

49. Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness*.

50. Brad Spangler, “Integrative or Interest-Based Bargaining,” In *Beyond Intractability*, ed. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess (Boulder: Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado). Posted June 2003. <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/interest-based-bargaining>.

51. Dewey, “Reflex Arc.”

52. Mary Parker Follett, *Prophet of Management* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 101.

53. *Ibid.*, 116.

54. See, for example, Barbara Stengel, “Making Use of the Method of Intelligence,” *Educational Theory* 51, no. 1 (1998): pp. 109–125.

55. Follett, *Prophet of Management*, 71.

56. *Ibid.*, 75.

57. John Dewey, *Theory of Valuation in John Dewey: The Middle Works*, vol. 14, ed. Jo Ann Boydston and Larry Hickman (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985). Dewey's pragmatist point is that valuation is an ongoing social process that can be better understood when we start with the verbal “valuing” rather than the product “value.”

58. Dewey, “Reflex Arc.”

59. Follett, *Prophet of Management*.

60. Medina, *Epistemology of Resistance*.

61. Follett, *Prophet of Management*, 71.

62. *Ibid.*, 72.

63. McQuiston, *Always We Begin Again*.

64. Barbara Stengel, “Practicing Courage in a Communal Key,” *Educational Theory* 68, 2 (2018): 213–233.

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