

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION AND RACIAL JUSTICE: EXAMINING THE WORK OF JOHN DEWEY

Kelly Vaughan

ABSTRACT

John Dewey was a progressive theorist, a pragmatist, a philosopher, and arguably the most influential American educator of the twentieth century. Yet, despite extensive documentation about John Dewey's philosophies of education and democracy, there is limited research and no consensus about Dewey's views about race and racism. I use a combination of primary sources, secondary sources, and archival data to explore the John Dewey's ideas about progressivism, racism, and schooling. I assert that Dewey, despite an expressed commitment to full and equal rights for African American students, normalized the experience of White students and implicitly endorsed accommodationist education reforms for African American children.

INTRODUCTION

John Dewey was a progressive theorist, a pragmatist, a philosopher, and arguably the most influential American educator of the twentieth century.¹ Yet despite extensive documentation about John Dewey's philosophies of education and democracy, there is limited research about Dewey's views about race and racism, especially as they relate to schooling.² While some scholars argue that Dewey was a progressive advocate for equity and equal rights,³ others point to Dewey's silence on issues of race and assert that he failed to adequately challenge racist policies of his time.⁴ Most scholars take a more moderate view. They contend that while Dewey did some good work in relation to race, he often did not go far enough.⁵

In this paper, I use a combination of primary sources, secondary sources, and archival data to explore the embodied contradictions of John Dewey as they related to the broader issues of progressivism, accommodationism, racism, and schooling.⁶ Specifically, this paper seeks to answer three questions: How did Dewey discuss race and racism, especially in relation to progressive education? How does the manner in which we re-member and represent Dewey's work impact our understanding of progressivism? Why does this matter today?

As a critical historian, I recognize that racism and white supremacy have impacted education policy and curriculum reforms.⁷ In this work, I seek to do what Annette Henry describes as transformative historical work, specifically work that helps to address a gap in the historical record by critically examining “silences and invisibilities” within the dominant narrative.⁸ I recognize that “[h]istory is a relationship between the past and the present”⁹ and that historical work needs to go beyond representation and toward re-membering, while recognizing the power of memory to be recursive and generative and the power of history to allow for alternative forms of organization, different frameworks, and less linear narratives.¹⁰

PROGRESSIVISM, ACCOMMODATIONISM, AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

It is important to view Dewey’s contributions to education in the appropriate social context. Dewey wrote over many decades with greatly changing social conditions and rapid social, economic, and political changes. During Dewey’s lifetime, emancipation, reconstruction, industrialization, immigration, migration, and urbanization created profound changes in the United States. The Civil War ended in 1865, with more than 600,000 people from both the North and South dead and many more injured. The Thirteenth Amendment, which officially ended slavery, was also passed in 1865. Following emancipation, millions of African American freedmen sought political and economic rights, as well as the establishment of schools for their children. However, black codes, Jim Crow segregation, and inadequate funding for schooling were utilized to reentrench existing racial inequities. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the number of children attending schools greatly increased, as did the diversity of the student population. As America moved from a predominantly agrarian economy to an industrial economy, schools had to contend both with increased student populations and increased demands to prepare students for the workplace. Schools were expected to help adjust students to a rapidly changing social order during a time when the very purposes of schooling were being contested.

PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT(S)

While Dewey was known as one of the “fathers” of the progressive movement, it is important to note that there were multiple, often competing strands within the progressive movement. The wider progressive movement broadly sought to create more just working conditions and a more representative (and less corrupt) government by implementing humanitarian reforms designed to “apply the promise of American life” to a society that was changing.¹¹ Reformers associated with the progressive movement were often middle-class, white professionals, most of whom were “not revolutionaries, but rather people who were interested in fixing specific

problems and improving upon the status quo."¹² For many progressive, the specific problems they were interested in fixing did not include issues of racial justice.¹³ In fact, the progressive movement was most powerful at a time of racial repression, Jim Crow segregation, and racial violence, including lynchings;¹⁴ however, within the broader progressive movement "reformers paid little attention to the poisons of racism, to the problem of minorities in general."¹⁵ Maxine Greene commented that many "great reformers," including both John Dewey and Jane Addams, did not acknowledge the "sense in which a free society (and its citizens) is morally endangered by unacknowledged mastery, by domination of every kind."¹⁶

The progressive education movement, like the broader progressive movement, was large, diverse, and contradictory. The early progressive education movement, which began to appear in popular media in the 1880s, began as a reaction to pervasive dissatisfaction with traditional schooling and what was perceived to be a dated and irrelevant curriculum.¹⁷ Despite the critiques of traditional education, there was little consensus about the character of a new system of education. In fact, in *Experience and Education*, Dewey commented that many within the progressive movement conceptualized "new education" only in relation to its opposition to traditional education.¹⁸ However, some scholars argue that while the progressive education movement may not have been unified, there were some common elements. For example, Lawrence Cremin asserted that the progressive education movement was characterized by: (a) a greater emphasis in schools on "health, vocation, and the quality of family and community life," (b) a greater focus on "pedagogical principles derived from new scientific research in psychology and social sciences," (c) a commitment to "tailo[r] instruction more and more to the different kinds and classes of children who were brought within into the purview of the school," and (d) the belief that all individuals could create and benefit from a new society, with a focus on both the arts and the sciences.¹⁹

Branches/Strands of Progressive Movements for Education

Even if most progressives agreed with the broad principles summarized by Cremin, there still existed key struggles within the movement.²⁰ Numerous scholars have identified branches, strands, or wings within the progressive movement to illustrate some of the ideological and practical differences between groups of early progressive reformers. Scholars identified these groups/ideologies differently: some describe the struggle between administrative and pedagogical progressives,²¹ while others describe the tension between liberal and conservative progressives.²² Throughout this paper, I will refer to three branches of progressive education as moderate (child-centered/experientialist), radical (critical reconstructionist), and conservative (social behaviorist).²³

Moderate progressives, known by many as pedagogical progressives, embraced an experientialist approach to the curriculum and a focus on the needs

and interests of the child. When addressing issues of social change and democratic reform, moderate progressives focused on gradual change through pedagogical reforms. Moderate progressives, like John Dewey, often believed that if schools supported children and helped educate them to become active citizens and community members, they would create a better society.²⁴ Conservative progressives advocated for social behaviorist reforms designed to increase efficiency and modify curriculum to meet the needs of society and the perceived potential of each student. They argued that by creating a more efficient school system, schools could better prepare students for successful living after school. By tracking students and providing education that was tailored to their “talents,” schools would help craft a more efficient system. By representing the system to be meritorious, this education plan would quell social unrest because it was supposedly objective and unbiased. Many early conservative progressives understood achievement to be racialized, and some early conservative progressives, like John Franklin Bobbitt and Edward Thorndike, were associated with the eugenics movements in the United States.²⁵ Radical progressives, like Theodore Brameld and George Counts, advocated for a critical reconstructionist approach to the curriculum and believed that the purpose of school was to ameliorate social ills and prepare students to create a more just society. Many radical progressives believed that all schooling was a form of indoctrination and that it was the role of schools to help teach students to reconstruct society. Radical progressives were active in shaping ideas and discourse, but had limited impact on school-based reforms.

I must note that in conceptualizing three branches of the progressive movement, I do not mean to imply that there were no differences between the branches. I understand that many leading curriculum theorists do not include conservatives focused upon social efficiency or behaviorism within the progressive movement.²⁶ However, I believe it is useful to view all three branches as a part of the same movement because while the three branches were ideologically diverse, they were not mutually exclusive. For example, both the moderates and the conservatives advocated differentiated instruction and project-based curriculum. Radicals and conservatives both asserted that schools should serve as sites of social engineering and social change. All three groups rejected traditional humanistic education and embraced new educational reforms. Also, while each branch had distinctive and very different ideologies, Rury argued that

the lived reality of most educators at the time was considerably more complex than suggested by these widely divergent categories. Many probably took inspiration from both wings of progressivism in education, without seeing them as necessarily at odds with one another.²⁷

Labaree asserted that while conservative progressives had greater success because their “reform message appealed to people in power,” the language of

moderate/pedagogical progressivism was often coupled with conservative reforms to make it more acceptable to the public.²⁸

It is also important to note that much of the different branches of progressivism operated in different schooling contexts. Semel posited that “child-centered progressive schools were almost all independent, private schools, [whereas] public education was dominated by the social engineering strand of progressivism.”²⁹ Thus, moderate progressivism, like that championed by Dewey, was most often employed in schools educating more affluent children, conservative progressivism was usually employed to track and sort students in public schools, and radical progressivism, while largely influential in framing the debates about the purposes of education, rarely became dominant within schools.

Leading African American scholars and educators often critiqued the direction of progressive education reforms and/or articulated the need to more explicitly discuss race and education. In 1909, while speaking at the National Negro Conference, W. E. B. DuBois rejected notions that industrial training would help build a sufficient economic base to make political rights unnecessary (or at least secondary) and argued for the need to fight simultaneously for political and economic power.³⁰ In 1933, Ambrose Caliver, who was the Senior Specialist in the Education of Negroes, advocated for a “philosophy of Negro education” that focused upon “intellectual and social reconstruction” as the approach that is best aligned to the “fuller, freer, and richer life so much desired and striven for by Negroes.”³¹ Such a philosophy, Caliver explained, should be understood as a commitment to prepare every individual for the “fullest possible contribution to society commensurate with capacity, interest and effort.”³² Caliver asserted that the most important question to answer is “*For what shall we teach and why?*”³³ He stated that such

questions cannot be answered without reference to the larger problems of education in our American democracy, nor can they be adequately considered apart from the practical life and necessities of the Negro race in its relation to our social order.³⁴

According to Caliver, there were a great number of improvements that needed to be made, including increased pay, certification of teachers, and the “same general type of preparation for productive and happy citizenship as white children” were given.³⁵ Horace Mann Bond, an influential historian and educator, argued that many calls for curriculum revision were not aligned with calls for greater equity and commented that “the method of ‘activity’ analysis in the construction of a curriculum presupposed an elastic, democratic social order in which there are no artificial barriers set against social mobility of the individual.”³⁶ Bond argued that curriculum workers must neither ignore nor accept the existing social order, but instead create a curriculum that helps students understand the world and begin to make informed choices about the future.³⁷ Bond believed that while schools were important in the struggle for social equality, they alone could not solve the problems in the country.

As such curriculum workers had to understand the social context in which they were operating and create curricula that reflected social need and possibility.³⁸

Accommodationism

At the same historical moment when the progressive education movement was growing and gaining recognition, the United States was also experiencing the proliferation of accommodationist schooling for African American children, primarily in the American South. Unlike the progressive education movement, accommodationism was not a popular movement; instead, it was an orientation or approach to curriculum often identified as the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education. James Anderson stated that,

[i]n sharp contrast to its rejection by black teachers and the leaders of black schools and colleges, leading American politicians, businessmen, and philanthropists came to view Hampton and Tuskegee as pointing the way toward a national and even worldwide solution of the Negro problem.³⁹

Partially funded by wealthy philanthropists, accommodationist curriculum “emphasized vocational training, physical/manual labor, character building, and a social science package, suggesting the acceptance of racial subservience for Negroes.”⁴⁰ It is also important to acknowledge that accommodationist schooling initiatives were “legitimiz[ed] and, to a large degree, orchestrat[ed]” by leading liberals and progressives.⁴¹ Many conservative progressives supported accommodationist education and vocational training as a solution to make education more efficient and cost-effective. Many moderate progressives also embraced accommodationism. For example, Charles Eliot, the first honorary president of the Progressive Education Association, publicly advocated for liberal arts education for all and rejected efforts to track students into industrial or technical trades; however, he vocally lent his support to accommodationist schooling. In a position that seemingly contradicts Eliot’s advocacy of liberal arts education for all, Eliot stated: “I know of no educational or philanthropic object which should more commend itself to American patriots” than the models of education pursued at Tuskegee and Hampton.⁴² This view was shared by many white progressives, including G. Stanley Hall and William Harris, and progressive funders like Julius Rosenwald.

EXAMINING DEWEY’S VIEWS ON RACE, RACISM, AND EDUCATION

During his lifetime, Dewey’s positions on race, racism, and education changed numerous times. As Thomas Fallace has well documented, Dewey’s views on race and racism shifted after World War I and post-World War I: “Dewey had realized that a plurality of cultures was a necessity for democratic living and intellectual growth.”⁴³ Throughout his life, Dewey was more of an advocate of racial justice than many of his white contemporaries. Dewey was among the initial founders

of the NAACP in 1909, participated in numerous campaigns to support an end to discrimination and injustice,⁴⁴ and vocally rejected concepts of eugenics and biological white superiority popular during his lifetime. He advocated an expansion of democracy and the provision of high-quality schooling for all children. In comparison to such conservative progressives as John Franklin Bobbitt and Edward Thorndike and moderate progressives such as G. Stanley Hall, who endorsed eugenics ideation and advocated for a decidedly undemocratic two-tier system, Dewey was an advocate for racial justice. However, in comparison with many leading African American progressives such as W. E. B. DuBois or W. A. Robinson, Dewey failed to adequately confront racism, segregation, and concepts of white supremacy in schools. In this paper, I argue that Dewey, despite an expressed commitment to full and equal rights for African American students, normalized the experiences of white students, failed to fully theorize the impact of race and socioeconomic status on the implementation of progressive reforms, supported some aspects of accommodationist schooling,⁴⁵ and supported segregated schools.

Systemic Critique of Racism with Pedagogical Response

Unlike many of his peers in the progressive education movement, John Dewey offered a critique of the economic and political systems impacting schooling for African American children. Dewey advocated for system-wide changes to political and economic systems that promoted equity. He stated that our competitive economic system, focused only upon amassing private gain, was responsible for both slavery and the continued denial of social equality.⁴⁶ In numerous works, Dewey also acknowledged the inequitable manner in which our nation funded schools. In 1910, Dewey criticized a system of double taxation and acknowledged the unfair burden on African American communities to contribute personal funds for schools.⁴⁷ Two decades later, Dewey explained that the North spent significantly more on education than did the South and that, in the South, the government spent almost three times more per pupil educating white children than educating African American children.⁴⁸ He argued that it would be impossible to understand or address illiteracy within African American communities without understanding systemic inequities.⁴⁹ Dewey further asserted that students in segregated schools serving African American children generally had “[l]ess school time, more pupils to a teacher, poorer buildings and equipment, more poorly paid and therefore less well-equipped teachers” and less time in school.⁵⁰ And, again, Dewey argued that our competitive economic system was ultimately responsible for both slavery and the continued denial of social equality.⁵¹ This is significant because, as Dewey argued forcefully in *Racial Prejudice and Friction*, those in power often used statistics to condemn those who were being oppressed by the system.⁵² Thus, while many of Dewey’s contemporaries were using statistics to justify notions of white racial superiority, Dewey was actively disrupting that narrative by forcing the reader to contend with the inequities in the system.

However, even as Dewey spoke out against inequitable resource distribution, double taxation, and, later in his career, segregation, most of his suggested solutions focused upon a gradual harmonizing of racial relations through schooling, and not through political action. For Dewey, in cultivating democracy gradually, by teaching our young people to live and think as democratic citizens, there would be great potential for change. Dewey understood schools as politically contested spaces that could serve as sites of social change and asserted that schools, more than almost any other social institution, could help address what he termed “race questions, questions of the assimilation of diverse types of language and customs.”⁵³ By crafting schooling experiences that “assimilate different races to our own institutions,” Dewey believed that schools were more effective than legislative changes in creating more just social relations.⁵⁴ Yet, the cultivation of more just relations was clearly incremental. In his speech in 1922, Dewey argued that the first step to combat racial prejudice was to understand it and not simply to have “an indiscriminate reaction against it.”⁵⁵ Dewey wrote that without understanding those “deep-seated causes” and working to address them, racial discrimination would not end. This sentiment continued in the 1930s, when Dewey helped found the Council against Intolerance in America, a group that challenged racism and supported intercultural cooperation. Yet, according to Ronald Goodenow, Dewey and his colleagues focused greatly on the creation of social harmony and “downplayed social change and forms of actual race relations that might prove disruptive.”⁵⁶

In conjunction with his intercultural work and focus on education, Dewey also believed that art could spur social change. In *Art as Experience*, Dewey wrote that studying art produced in time periods and cultural contexts different from our own could help us overcome our fear/misunderstanding of the “other” and begin to appreciate other cultures.⁵⁷ Dewey believed that schools should help individuals develop the creative intelligence and the critical thinking/literacy skills to analyze their society and act for its betterment, not indoctrinate students toward a specific social order.⁵⁸ Yet, Dewey’s approach never fully addressed how schools, which are products and producers of social norms and culture, could implement democratic change in the classroom without explicitly addressing undemocratic contexts. While many of the pedagogical changes (and focus on the arts) were beneficial, it is problematic that Dewey never fully explained the relationship between pedagogical and political change.

Dewey acknowledged that personal attitudinal changes were important, but only in so much as the change in attitude helps individuals take actions to address structural (political, economic, industrial) causes of racism.⁵⁹ Yet education does not, for Dewey, always lead to action—thus even when attitudes change, action does not necessarily follow. For example, even when acknowledging double taxation and underfunding of African American schools, Dewey does not call for political actions; rather, he articulates a great respect for the African American race’s “superior interest in the education of themselves . . . [and sees such commitment as] the surest step

possible to gain their full political re-enfranchisement.”⁶⁰ This implied that African American communities would need to continue to operate in an unjust system until, through education, they achieved the political reenfranchisement necessary to change the unjust system. Yet the act of moving from greater education to increased political rights (especially within a reality of what Dewey characterizes as an unjust economic system) is never explained. For Dewey, pedagogical reforms, arts education, and community building were often prioritized over political change.

Normalization of White Student Experiences

Dewey’s writings about education, influenced by his experience at his Lab School, are often presented as universal (rather than situated and contextualized) ideas about progressive pedagogy and schooling. However, Dewey often failed to theorize the experiences of children of color, including African American children, in discussions about democracy and education. To pursue school-based democracy, without acknowledging systemic constraints on students’ success, is problematic because many of the policies being advocated by progressives (such as project-based instruction or industrial training) operated very differently in schools serving African American students than in those serving white students.

Dewey’s general silence on racism and his failure to confront white supremacy normalized the experiences of middle-class white Americans.⁶¹ At the Lab School, where Dewey conceptualized, designed, and tested many of his theories of education, African American students were not even admitted until the 1940s, well after the time that Dewey left Chicago.⁶² Historian Diane Ravitch asserted that the Lab School’s student population was never “representative of the Chicago population.”⁶³ With a one-to-six teacher to student ratio, “the leadership of John Dewey, a remarkable staff, highly educated parents, and a network of supportive individuals,” the private, tuition-based Lab School could not be replicated in a public system.⁶⁴ Ravitch argued that like the Lab School, many of the schools featured in *Schools of To-Morrow* “were private, child-centered schools populated—like the Dewey school—by white children from upper-middle-class families.”⁶⁵

The curriculum at the Lab School, according to scholar Thomas Fallace, also presented problematic ideas about race. The curriculum was organized as “a linear reenactment of the cultural history of mankind.”⁶⁶ This curriculum reflected Dewey’s belief in a linear historicism, a belief that all cultures were moving toward a single end and that some cultures were more civilized than others. While, according to Fallace, Dewey’s view of linear historicism was not based upon a belief in the biological superiority of white/European culture, it did “relegat[e] aboriginal, African, and American Indian civilizations to inferior status.”⁶⁷ Dewey’s “inherently ethnocentric approach to curriculum” and focus on historical problems solving, rather than a focus on solving “contemporary problems,” limited his curricular initiatives at the Lab School.⁶⁸

While Dewey's work included many experiences and observations outside of the Lab School, including his work with Jane Addams and the Hull House, I have not found evidence that Dewey theorized the manner in which race (as well as gender and class) influenced his ideas about education. Dewey also wrote little about schooling for African American students. In 1931–1932, Dewey was asked to comment upon African American education in *The Crisis*. W. E. B. DuBois wrote three separate letters requesting Dewey write an article about African American education. Yet, there is no evidence of a response from Dewey and there does not appear to be an article in *The Crisis* written by Dewey. While Dewey received countless letters and could not be expected to respond to each one, it is significant that, within the context of his general silence on discussions of race relations, he did not reply to DuBois's request to address race explicitly.

Acceptance of Segregation

While Dewey eventually spoke out against segregation, he did not actively contest or even address segregation in his prior work. His silence on the issue of segregation was evident in his text co-authored with Evelyn Dewey, *Schools of To-Morrow*. When discussing the Gary Schools system, Dewey and Dewey applauded the Gary Schools and stated that a European immigrant had an equal opportunity “to prepare for a vocation” suited to his “capabilities” as any other child.⁷⁰ Yet Dewey and Dewey made no mention that most of the Gary Schools, while formally integrated,⁷¹ had “Black children . . . on a different vocational track than white children.”⁷² Dewey and Dewey also praised Indianapolis Public School Number 26, a segregated industrial school that served African American students.⁷³ Other schools featured in the text, including the Organic School and Arthurdale, excluded African American children.⁷⁴ Yet nowhere in the text did Dewey and Dewey mention segregation, which suggests that it was accepted as normal. Dewey did actively speak out against segregation in his later life. In 1950, Dewey was among a group of educators calling for increased federal funding and an end to segregation.⁷⁵

Support of Industrial Schooling and Accommodationism

John Dewey rejected two-track academic systems and challenged conservative progressives who supported vocational education as a separate track for those not college-bound. However, Dewey, like other moderate progressives, argued that industrial education was necessary because it engaged the whole person and not simply the intellect.⁷⁶ In *The Way Out of Educational Confusion*, Dewey wrote that vocational education was useful both for economic reasons, and also as a way in which to “liberaliz[e] and humaniz[e]” what Dewey refers to as “practical activities.”⁷⁷

Dewey explained that, historically, liberal arts courses were restricted to the “well-born and the well-to-do,” and as such the acquisition of such knowledge became a status symbol while useful knowledge was “necessary only for those

compelled by their class status to work for a living.⁷⁸ Accordingly, liberal arts education was given more value, though both courses in the humanities and courses in the trades/industrial arts were valuable. Dewey asserted that the curriculum must be reorganized to make connections between the practical and the theoretical and to ensure that education is individually and socially meaningful.⁷⁹ Yet, while Dewey advocated for a balance between the theoretical and the practical, it was clear that such a balance was not often achieved.

Within this context, Dewey failed to consider the manner in which industrial schooling, in particular, and progressive reforms, in general, would be implemented differently in different communities, largely based on social, cultural, and economic capital. This trend can be seen within the schools featured in *Schools of To-Morrow*. Dewey and Dewey asserted that each student should have the same opportunity for success. However, the implementation of industrial courses appeared to be very different in those schools serving students preparing for college and those preparing for work. For example, at Interlaken (a school serving more affluent students), Dewey and Dewey reported that most students were bound for college,⁸⁰ while only a third of the students from the Gary Schools system (a public school system primarily serving working-class students) attended college,⁸¹ and there is no mention of college at PS 26, a school serving African American students. For most students, industrial training seemed to be primarily aimed at preparing them for existing jobs, not liberalizing the manner in which they understood the world. Thus, in many ways, the industrial education enacted, primarily in African American communities in the South, had very little to do with Dewey's vision of holistic education and much more to do with a conservative progressive vision of adhering to the existing social order. This is not Dewey's fault. However, according to Diane Ravitch, Dewey did fail to consider the consequences of industrial training; rather, he "preferred to believe in his nonexistent ideal of a liberalized vocational education instead than confront the reality of narrow training for existing jobs."⁸² This same critique could be applied to accommodationist schools in the American South. When looking only at the pedagogical tendencies in each school, including an increased focus on working with one's hands, a connection to community, and interdisciplinary, project-based instruction, many accommodationist schools would clearly be considered part of the progressive movement. However, the tendency to look only at pedagogical interventions and not the political or ideological context is problematic.

It is important to understand Dewey's views about industrial education in the context of debates about accommodationist curricula in the American South. According to William Watkins, accommodationist curriculum was initially developed at schools like Hampton and Tuskegee and emphasized industrial education, vocational training, character building, and acceptance of "existing race relations."⁸³ If we accept Watkins's definition of accommodationist education, the research suggests that Dewey implicitly (and a few times explicitly) supported

accommodationist education policies in the United States. While Dewey rejected tracked vocational programs, he did support many schools that had industrial programs and did not address the manner in which vocational and industrial programs operated differently in different communities. Dewey believed that schools, as central sites of assimilation and acculturation, should educate the whole child in part by developing attitudes, habits, and character. The last component of accommodationist education, namely the acceptance of “existing race relations,” is more difficult to evaluate. Dewey was a proponent of democracy and often spoke out about the harms of racial prejudice. He did critique the system of double taxation and funding inequities in schools serving African American children, and he advocated increased funding and better opportunities for all students. As such, it would appear that he challenged existing relations. However, Dewey’s gradualist approach to social change, relative silence on segregation and racism, and normalization of the experience of white students did little to actively change the status quo regarding race relations.

There were also two occasions when Dewey appears to have lent more explicit support to accommodationist education. First, in *Schools of To-Morrow*, Dewey and Dewey acknowledged that they have not addressed “the reorganization of the rural school and the utilization of agriculture in education,” but that they find this movement has the same “tendencies” of education reform as many of the featured schools.⁸⁴ As mentioned above, they also included a segregated industrial school, PS 26, as one of their featured “schools of to-morrow.” Second, in his 1910 Address to the NAACP, Dewey contends that schools do not adequately integrate “literary and vocational types of education” as he believed they should.⁸⁵ He mused that “perhaps one of things our colored friends may do for us in the South will be to develop for us, for the first time in the history of the human race, a really perfect system of education, that the education of head and hand be brought completely and accurately together.”⁸⁶ In both of these instances, Dewey praised industrial education/accommodationist programs in the American South. Given the time period during which Dewey was speaking, there can be little doubt that the education plan Dewey was referencing above relates to accommodationist schooling, such as endorsed in the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education.⁸⁷

However, this does not mean that Dewey supported many aspects of accommodationist schooling. His endorsement of schools like Indianapolis PS 26 may be based in part on deep respect for hands-on curricula, character building, connections with community, manual work and industrial training, and projects by which students built/sustained their schools’ physical spaces. Each of these characteristics is also present, to varying extents and for different purposes, in the schools maintained by Booker T. Washington and funded by those described as accommodationist. Without a clear analysis of power and politics, both could be considered progressive.

CONCLUSION AND RELEVANCE

Dewey and the Early Progressive Movement

In this article, I have highlighted limitations in Dewey's writing about race and schooling. The purpose of this work is not to devalue Dewey's contributions, but rather to push the field to deepen our own teaching and thinking about Dewey and other progressive scholars. Dewey's positions on race and racism must be understood within the social context in which he was living and writing. Early progressive education movements were diverse and often contradictory. By focusing primarily on pedagogical reform, ignoring social context, taking a gradualist/evolutionary approach, and failing to explicitly challenge notions of class and race, progressive reforms often maintained the social order rather than challenge social injustice. Within conservative progressivism, the focus on fitting the child into an existing society failed to confront racist assumptions about African American children's potential. While many moderate progressives, including Dewey, focused on democratic practices, a general focus on democratic principles and just living often failed to examine both power dynamics and societal assumptions about race and the impact of racism on schooling. Radical progressives, while challenging the existing structures, were often silent on issues of race. Thus, while many advances occurred (including greatly expanded school attendance and significant strides in children's health and well-being), schooling often maintained existing power relations.

Within this context, Dewey was a leading progressive who envisioned schools as sites of democratic transformation. However, he often failed to acknowledge the role of race or social class in his discussion of pedagogical or curricular reforms. This may be because many of Dewey's theories on education were formulated and tested in a small, private school that was neither racially nor economically diverse. It may also have been because of the intellectual climate during the time Dewey was writing or because most of Dewey's work on education and democracy came before he began to write more explicitly about race. While Dewey's views on race and democracy changed over time, both as a result of paradigmatic changes in the field and his own experiences, most of Dewey's major writings on education happened before many of these theoretical shifts had taken place.⁸⁸ This is problematic because many of the theories developed by Dewey were universalized without fully theorizing how race, economic status, and community impact the manner in which progressive reforms are enacted. Despite the limitations, Dewey's theories continue to influence contemporary scholars who draw from Dewey's theories and his commitments to democracy and justice to address contemporary problems.

Lessons for Today

More than a century after the progressive education movement sought to improve schools, the struggle for educational justice continues. Contemporary scholars

continue to critique the ambiguous and often contradictory aims of the progressive movement;⁸⁹ the overemphasis on pedagogical reforms without proper considerations of power and policy; the normalization of white middle-class students in discourse about student achievement; and the need for a greater focus on voice and representation.⁹⁰ In my research, I found that even early progressives like Dewey who wrote about democracy and the need to transform social institutions focused on specific pedagogical reforms. Today, this trend continues. In discussing school reform, Charles Payne asserted that “[i]f the mother of all conservative sins is the reluctance to think seriously about the redistribution of resources, the first of all progressive sins may be the fetishizing of pedagogy.”⁹¹ Payne further states that focusing only on “*how* we teach . . . may prevent us from getting to some of the questions our most marginalized youth are struggling with.”⁹² By focusing only (or primarily) on pedagogical initiatives, educators and scholars often ignore discussions of power, privilege, and outcome. Many contemporary scholars discuss the need to move beyond a focus only on pedagogical reforms to a focus on the impact of school policies on students of color and low-income students. For example, Theresa Perry asserted that many schools within “highly ranked systems in small towns, progressive college towns, and suburban communities” often fail to address the needs of African American students.⁹³ Similarly, in a study of an integrated high school in Berkeley, California (a “liberal” city that has “embraced progressive social reforms”), Pedro Noguera found that despite its willingness to pursue progressive reforms in education, there were “extreme disparities in academic outcomes among students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds.”⁹⁴

From my research, I argue that Dewey, like many of his white contemporaries, often ignored race and as such failed to conceptualize a progressive movement that was expansive and antiracist. Maxine Greene wrote that during the early progressive era, white “reformers paid little attention to the poisons of racism, to the problem of minorities in general.”⁹⁵ Yet, it is important to note that African American educators and scholars were often ignored in discussions of progressive education. For example, historically some African American progressive educators wrote about ways progressive reforms could advance “democratic social change and black awareness” to create “[p]rogressive education [that] was not only healthy for the individual child, but for the race.”⁹⁶ Yet the relationship between early progressive education and race is often undertheorized. In his analysis of a study of 16 black schools conducted by the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes (ACSSN),⁹⁷ Robinson acknowledges that progressive rhetoric could be used by all sides to justify their own ends; however, he argued that “blacks could use progressive education’s democratic rhetoric and philosophy” to improve conditions.⁹⁸ As such, progressive education *could be* used as a source of social amelioration and even transformation; however, such improvements were not inevitable. As progressive ideas could be used to justify all sides of the argument, this argument

points to the need to intentionally craft a pro-social justice, antiracist, and liberatory vision of progressive reforms. However, recent scholarship suggests that there still needs to be a greater focus on voice and representation when defining progressive policies. Lisa Delpit argued that the question of progressive pedagogy is less about pedagogy or methodology than “in communicating across culture and in addressing the more fundamental issues of power, of whose voice gets to be heard in determining what is best for poor children and children of color.”⁹⁹ Annette Henry argued that the very conception of “progressive” needs to move beyond a white, middle-class understanding of the term. Henry argued that many communities, including the black community in Canada that her book examines, are more communal than individualistic, and good teaching is defined, in part, by the act of other-mothering—caring for students with discipline, high expectations, and instruction. For Henry, the vision of the progressive movement was too small and too narrowly defined.¹⁰⁰

Re-Membering and Teaching Dewey Today

It is my hope that by complicating our understanding of early progressive education movements, we can learn from the limitations of past progressive movements and begin to envision a progressive movement that addresses both pedagogical reforms and the need to challenge racism and injustice in the classroom and in the larger education system. Dewey was an influential theorist who, by envisioning and sharing with the world an idea of truly democratic, community-based, life-affirming schools, served to counter many of the worst reforms of his day. However, when we re-member John Dewey today, we should be mindful of the social context in which his work was developed and the limits to his work. This follows the advice Dewey offered to his contemporaries about how to understand the work of educator Horace Mann. In *Social Frontier*, Dewey stated,

If we are content to glorify [Mann’s] work without applying his passionate ardor of thought and action to the problem to which he was devoted, in the forms that problem has now assumed, we shall be traitors to his memory. Our commemoration will be honest only as we employ it to rededicating ourselves to the cause to which he sacrificially devoted his life.¹⁰¹

We should honor Dewey’s advice and make certain that our commemorations of Dewey include challenges, expansions, and actions that continually work to make relevant Dewey’s ideas in a new world order. Exposing silences in Dewey’s work does not negate Dewey’s profound significance or contributions to the field of curriculum and his commitment to democratic schooling. In *Love, Justice and Education*, Schubert, through the voices of hundreds of utopian characters, provides multiple perspectives on the *contemporary meaning* of Dewey’s vision.¹⁰² Schubert asserts that Dewey’s works “coalesce into a dream of a democratic world that is always evolving as human beings refine it (in personal and public spaces) through

education based on their interests, concerns, and needs.”¹⁰³ Yet, one of the Utopians asserted that it is still important to consider things that Dewey missed, “given the time, context, or even lack of his perception, when considering their applicability for today’s dilemma.”¹⁰⁴ Acknowledging that “Dewey did not seem to realize the immense power of race and class (especially greed of the wealthy and their corporate world),” a Utopian ponders if this could be because of his identity as a “white male of Anglo-European descent.”¹⁰⁵ Another imagined Utopian in Schubert’s text recounts the idea of culturally relevant instruction and claimed that while Dewey “did not have this cultural perspective available, I am convinced that he did understand a basis for it in the kind of participatory democracy he says is both a precursor to and consequence of education.”¹⁰⁶

Dewey understood democracy as “an ideal under construction” and articulated the need to center “the experiences of those living with and addressing the problems” of current social conditions.¹⁰⁷ In fact, in a speech in the late 1930s, Dewey spoke out against intolerance and bigotry, stating that “[i]ntolerance, abuse, calling of names because of difference of opinion about religion or politics or business, as well as because of difference of race, color, wealth, or degree of color are treason to the democratic way of life.”¹⁰⁸ Dewey is still evoked by many advocating for democratic practices in the classroom. For example, in *Education Research in the Public Interest*, Gloria Ladson-Billings references Dewey when describing education reforms that can help us “recapture our humanity” through Dewey’s belief “that democracy and education are intertwined in their responsibilities to help solve its problems.”¹⁰⁹ In the same text, David Hursh asserts that neoliberal policies, as a continuation of the work of social efficiency education (which I term conservative progressivism), can be refuted through Dewey’s assertion that schools’ primary focus was to prepare students for democracy and citizenship.¹¹⁰ In both of these examples, Dewey’s commitment to democratic practices creates a call to remove barriers to democratic living and address the ways in which education can be used to ameliorate social conditions that hinder full democratic participation. Dewey’s approach to problem-solving, which is both forward-looking and historically informed,¹¹¹ can still be utilized as an approach to solving contemporary social problems, even as Dewey’s silences on race and class would mean that his work alone could not help us understand many of those contemporary problems.

I hope that my work can contribute to a growing body of historical research that seeks to deepen our understanding of progressive education not by creating a new *grand narrative*, but rather in addressing what (and who) has been missed. As such, I end with questions rather than answers: Why do we include Dewey in our narrative about progressivism, but ignore other powerful curriculum workers and theorists? How can we remember Dewey in such a way that acknowledges both his great contributions and his silences? How can remembering a more complicated narrative of progress and progressivism allow us to address what Gloria Ladson-Billings

describes as “an education debt” composed of “the historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral decisions and policies that characterize our society?”¹¹² Further, I would assert that for those seeking to continue Dewey’s legacy of democratic change today, the question should not be “What would John Dewey do?” but rather “How can we use that which was best in Dewey’s philosophy to create change” and “What other perspectives are important to consider in addressing this problem?”

NOTES

1. This work is based upon a chapter in my 2013 dissertation, completed under the direction of Dr. William Watkins and entitled *Connections and Contradictions Between Progressive and Accommodationist Education Reforms from the 1860s*. Significant portions of this paper are modified and/or excerpted from my dissertation. Kelly Vaughan, “Connections and Contradictions Between Progressive and Accommodationist Education Reforms from the 1860s” (doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2013), Indigo UIC, https://indigo.uic.edu/bitstream/handle/10027/10072/Vaughan_Kelly.pdf?sequence=1. While completing my dissertation research, I searched three databases (lectures, correspondence, and published works) within the John Dewey Collection at the Center for Dewey Studies at Southern Illinois University. Within each database, I searched for relevant words or phrases, and then read and summarized relevant documents. I also surveyed contemporary secondary and primary academic and media sources that focused on Dewey progressivism today so as to understand the manner in which contemporary practitioners and theorists interpreted and represented Dewey’s ideas in their own work.

2. There are notable exceptions. For example, Thomas Fallace documents Dewey’s views on race and asserts that during his time at the University of Chicago (when he was writing his educational philosophy) he still “considered American non-White minorities to be biologically equal to Whites but socially deficient.” Thomas Fallace, “Was John Dewey Ethnocentric? Reevaluating the Philosopher’s Early Views on Culture and Race,” *Educational Researcher* 39, no. 6 (2010): 471. See also Thomas Fallace, *Dewey and the Dilemma of Race: An Intellectual History 1895–1922* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2011).

3. Susan Carle asserted that Dewey’s works “paved the way for the development of a discourse about what we today call multiculturalism, as well as opening the eyes of moderate White progressives to the evils of racial injustice.” Susan Carle, “John Dewey and the Early NAACP: Developing a Progressive Discourse on Racial Injustice, 1909–1921,” in *From Dewey’s Enduring Impact: Essays on America’s Philosopher*, eds. John R. Shook and Paul Kurtz (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2011), 249.

4. For example, Frank Margonis argued that Dewey’s silence on matters of race and racism and his support of an industrial school for African American

students were evidence of his “racialized philosophy of education.” Frank Margolis, “John Dewey’s Racialized Visions of the Student and Classroom Community,” *Educational Theory* 59, no. 1 (2009): 18.

5. See Michael Eldridge, “Dewey on Race and Social Change,” in *Pragmatism and the Problem of Race*, eds. Bill E. Lawson and Donald F. Koch (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 11–21; Gregory F. Pappas, “Distance, Abstraction, and the Role of the Philosopher in the Pragmatic Approach to Racism,” in *Pragmatism and the Problem of Race*, eds. Bill E. Lawson and Donald F. Koch (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 22–32.

6. The term *embodied* has a number of different meanings and is used by feminist theorists, critical race theorists, cognitive psychologists, sociologists, and educators. I am using the term broadly—to include a connectedness between mind and body, theory and practice, emotion and cognition, the physical self and his/her relationship to society. I utilize the word embodied to denote a sense of historical consciousness, whereas social actors belong to “a succession of past and future generations as well as to a present community and society.” David Glassberg, “History and the Public: Legacies of the Progressive Era,” *Journal of American History* 73, no. 4 (March 1987): 958.

7. See James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860–1935* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); William H. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001).

8. Annette Henry, “Historical Studies: Groups/Institutions,” in *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Educational Research*, eds. Judith Green, Gregory Camilli, and Patricia B. Elmore (Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum and Associates, 2006), 333.

9. Petra Hendry, *Engendering Curriculum History* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 3.

10. See Petra Munro Hendry and Ann G. Winfield, “Bringing Out the Dead: Curriculum History as Memory,” *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* 29, no. 1 (2013): 19.

11. Lawrence Cremin, “What Happened to Progressive Education: Speech Given All-College,” *Teachers College Record* 61, no. 1 (Summer 1959): 2.

12. William Hayes, *The Progressive Education Movement: Is It Still a Factor in Today’s Schools?* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2006), 5.

13. See Ann G. Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America: Institutionalized Racism and the Implications of History, Ideology, and Memory* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007).

14. Howard Zinn, *A People’s History of the United States* (New York: HarperCollins, 1980), 347.

15. Maxine Greene, *The Dialectic of Freedom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1988), 44–45.

16. *Ibid.*, 46.

17. Cremin, "What Happened", 1. Also, it is relevant to note that earlier progressives (like Francis Parker) began their work in the 1870s and the Progressive Education Association was not established until 1919.

18. John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Simon & Schuster Touchstone, 1938/1997), 20.

19. Cremin, "What Happened", 2.

20. See Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum: 1893–1958* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Wilson J. Moses, *Creative Conflict in African American Thought: Frederick Douglass, Alexander Crummell, Booker T. Washington, WEB Dubois, and Marcus Garvey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Laurence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education 1876–1957* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964).

21. David Labaree, "Progressivism, Schools and Schools of Education: An American Romance," *Paedagogica Historica* 41, no. 1 (February 2005): 275–288; David Tyack, *One Best System: A History of American Urban Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974); John L. Rury, *Education and Social Change: Themes in the History of American Schooling* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002).

22. David Setran, "'From Morality to Character': Conservative Progressivism and the Search for Civic Virtue, 1910–1930," *Paedagogica Historica* 39, no. 4 (2003, August): 437–456.

23. This framework is influenced both by Semel's description of three "strands" of progressivism, including the radicals, conservatives, and liberals, as well as by Schubert's orientations to the curriculum, which include intellectual traditionalists, experientialists, social behaviorists, and critical reconstructionists. Susan Semel, "Introduction," in *Schools of Tomorrow, Schools of Today: What Happened to Progressive Education*, eds. Susan F. Semel and Allen R. Sadovnik (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 17; William H. Schubert, *Curriculum: Perspective, Paradigm, and Possibility* (New York: Macmillan, 1986).

24. Some scholars, including Herbert Kliebard, argue that Dewey did not belong to "any particular side" in the struggle between different curriculum orientations/reforms. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum*, xix.

25. See Winfield, *Eugenics and Education*; Steven Selden, *Inheriting Shame: The Story of Eugenics and Racism in America* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1999).

26. In fact, Paul Shaker and Elizabeth Heilman offered a critique of Diane Ravitch's *Left Back: A Century of School Reform* in part because her definition of "progressive" included those within the social efficiency branch of school reform. They contended that Ravitch ignored vital differences in goals, methods, and application of science when she "lump[ed] efficiency-minded social Darwinists together with socially minded progressives." I agree with much of this critique. Paul Shaker

and Elizabeth E. Heilman, *Reclaiming Education for Democracy: Thinking Beyond No Child Left Behind* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 148.

27. Rury, *Education and Social Change*, 142.

28. Labaree, "Progressivism, Schools," 284.

29. Semel, "Introduction," 13.

30. W. E. B. DuBois, *Politics and Industry*, address from the *Proceedings of the National Negro Conference 1909: New York May 31 and June 1*. Retrieved from http://moses.law.umn.edu/darrow/documents/Proceedings%20of%20the%20National%20Negro%20Conference%201909_%20New%20York_%20May%2031%20and%20June_1.pdf

31. Ambrose Caliver, "The Negro Teacher and a Philosophy of Negro Education," *Journal of Negro Education* 2, no. 4 (1933, October): 432–447.

32. *Ibid.*, 438.

33. *Ibid.*, 439.

34. *Ibid.*, 440.

35. *Ibid.*

36. Horace M. Bond, "The Curriculum and the Negro Child," *Journal of Negro Education* 4, no. 2 (1935, April): 168.

37. *Ibid.*

38. See Horace M. Bond, *Education of the Negro in the American Social Order* (New York: Octagon Books, 1966).

39. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 72.

40. William H. Watkins, "Black Curriculum Orientations: A Preliminary Inquiry," *Harvard Education Review* 63, no. 3 (Fall 1993): 324.

41. Jennings L. Wagoner Jr., "The American Compromise: Charles W. Eliot, Black Education, and the New South," in *Education and the Rise of the New South*, eds. Ronald K. Goodenow and Arthur O. White (Boston, MA: G. K. Hall, 1981), 28.

42. Charles Eliot was quoted in Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 72.

43. Thomas Fallace, *Dewey and the Dilemma*, 4.

44. Dewey was active in many campaigns that addressed race and racism. For example, as early as 1913, Dewey, the president of the National Kindergarten Association Board of Directors, advocated for, and eventually secured, funds to begin a demonstration kindergarten for African American children in the South. John Dewey, "Letter from John Dewey to National Kindergarten Association in April 1914," *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952*, no. 1, Electronic Edition, ed. Larry Hickman (Charlottesville, VA: InteleX, 2008), letter no. 04876. Also, in 1917, Dewey called for increased federal aid, including money to specifically address African American illiteracy. John Dewey, "Federal Aid to Elementary Education," *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899–1924*, no. 10, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, 127. In the 1930s, Dewey worked with William Kilpatrick and other leading progressives to found the Council against Intolerance in America that specifically addressed race

relations throughout the United States. See Ronald Goodenow, "The Progressive Educator, Race and Ethnicity in the Depression Years: An Overview," *History of Education Quarterly* 15, no. 4 (Winter 1975): 376. Also in the early 1930s, Dewey was active in an unsuccessful campaign to exonerate Odell Waller, an African American sharecropper convicted of murdering his landlord. See Sam F. Stack Jr., "John Dewey and the Question of Race: The Fight for Odell Waller," *Education and Culture*, 25, no. 1. Finally, in 1950, Dewey was part of a group of educators that wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, advocating for increased "federal aid to school." Dewey and the other signers explicitly argued that there must be explicit language "against discriminatory treatment of Negro and other minority groups" and that segregation must be ended. John Dewey, "Letter from John L. Childs, John Dewey, Frederick May Eliot, Harry Emerson Fosdick, John Haynes Holmes, V.T. Thayer on 1/04/1950" (document no. 21616), no. 2, *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871-1952*, Vol. 3, electronic edition, ed. Larry Hickman (Charlottesville, VA: Intelix, 2008), letter 21616.

45. I employ Watkins's definition of accommodationism as schooling that "emphasized vocational training, physical/manual labor, character building, and a social science package suggesting the acceptance of racial subservience for Negroes." Watkins, "Black Curriculum Orientations," 324.

46. John Dewey, "Address to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1932," in *The Later Works 1925-1953*, Vol. 6, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, *Collected Work of John Dewey, 1882-1953* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), 229.

47. John Dewey, "Letter from John Dewey to NAACP Annual Conference on 5/14/1910" (22389), in *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871-1952*, Vol. 1, electronic edition, ed. Larry Hickman (Charlottesville, VA: Intelix, 2008).

48. John Dewey, "Our Illiteracy Problem," in *The Later Works 1925-1953*, Vol. 5, ed. Jo Ann Boydston, *Collected Work of John Dewey, 1882-1953* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), 314.

49. *Ibid.*, 313.

50. *Ibid.*, 314.

51. Dewey, "Address to the National Association," 229.

52. John Dewey, "Racial Prejudice and Friction," in *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924*, no. 13, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), 248.

53. John Dewey, "The School as a Social Center," in *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924*, no. 2, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985).

54. *Ibid.*, 85.

55. Dewey, "Racial Prejudice," 253.

56. Goodenow, "The Progressive Educator," 376.

57. John Dewey, "Art as Experience," in *The Later Works 1925–1953*, Vol. 10, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 337.

58. While many radical progressives, such as George Counts, argued that all schools indoctrinate students, Dewey countered that while indoctrination did occur in schools, it was harmful and did not justify counterindoctrination efforts. For Dewey, indoctrination was not education because students were not actively constructing knowledge; Dewey argued that replacing conservative indoctrination with more progressive or even radical indoctrination was wrong. John Dewey, "Education and Social Change," *Social Frontier* 3, no. 26: 237. Yet, rejecting indoctrination did not mean accepting the status quo. In 1934, Dewey asserted that schools "develop above all else the will for cooperation and the spirit which sees in every other individual an equal right to share in the cultural and material fruits of collective human invention, industry, skill and knowledge." John Dewey, "Need for a Philosophy of Education," *The Later Works 1925–1953*, Vol. 9, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986), 203.

59. Dewey, "Racial Prejudice," 252–253.

60. John Dewey, "Letter from John Dewey to NAACP Annual Conference on 5/14/1910," *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871–1952*, no. 1, electronic edition, ed. Larry Hickman, document no. 22389.

61. In "Racial Prejudice and Friction," Dewey writes that while religious differences between "ordinary white Americans" may not "cause attention," Americans are much more likely to feel threatened or bothered if the person of a different religion is also of a different race. Dewey, "Racial Prejudice," 247.

62. The University of Chicago Laboratory School, "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion—University of Chicago Laboratory Schools." Accessed September 30, 2018, <https://www.ucls.uchicago.edu/about-lab/diversity-statement>. The University of Chicago Lab School's Diversity Statement states: "Amidst the racially segregated reality of Chicago and greater America in 1942, a parent arose to call for integration. Governed by the principle of equality, as demonstrated by its then long-standing history of enrolling Asian and Jewish students, the Laboratory Schools took action to become the first private school in Chicago to admit African American students."

63. Diane Ravitch, *Left Back: A Century of Battles over School Reform* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 174.

64. *Ibid.*, 173–174.

65. *Ibid.*, 175.

66. Fallace, "Was Dewey Ethnocentric," 473.

67. Fallace, *Dewey and the Dilemma*, 2.

68. See also Fallace, "Repeating the Race Experience: John Dewey and the History Curriculum at the University of Chicago Laboratory School," *Curriculum Inquiry* 39, no. 3 (2009, June): 381–405.

69. Thomas Fallace, "Race, Culture, and Pluralism: The Evolution of Dewey's Vision for a Democratic Curriculum," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 44, no. 1 (2012): 18.

70. See, for example, W. E. B. DuBois, "Letter from W.E.B. Du Bois to John Dewey on 5/15/1931," *The Correspondence of John Dewey, 1871-1952*, no. 2, electronic edition, ed. Larry Hickman (Charlottesville, VA: Intelix, 2008), letter no. 07496.

71. John Dewey and Evelyn Dewey, *Schools of To-Morrow* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1915/2008), 148.

72. An article appeared in the January 1917 issue of *The Crisis*. The paper reports that "The Gary Branch [of the NAACP] is very much worried over the question of segregation in the schools." The paper reported that the school superintendent supported segregation. "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People: The Model Schools of Gary Indiana," *The Crisis* 13, no. 3 (January 1917): 121.

73. Susan F. Semel and Allen R. Sadovnik, "Lessons from the Past and Present," *Schools of Tomorrow, Schools of Today: What Happened to Progressive Education*, ed. Susan F. Semel and Allen R. Sadovnik (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 364-365.

74. Dewey and Dewey, *Schools of To-Morrow*.

75. See Margonis, "John Dewey's Racialized Visions."

76. J. J. Chambliss, "Dewey, John," in *Philosophy of Education: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Garland, 1996).

77. John Dewey, "The Way Out of Educational Confusion," *The Later Works of John Dewey, 1925-1953*, no. 6, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), 83.

78. John Dewey, "Need for a Philosophy," 202.

79. Dewey, "The Way Out," 88-89.

80. Dewey and Dewey, *Schools of To-Morrow*, 54.

81. *Ibid.*, 113.

82. Ravitch, *Left Behind*, 306.

83. Watkins, *White Architects*.

84. Dewey and Dewey, *Schools of To-Morrow*. It is important to acknowledge that John Dewey did not visit most of the schools featured in this text.

85. Dewey, "Letter from John Dewey to NAACP."

86. *Ibid.*

87. See Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 34 and 36. As Anderson explained, the Hampton-Tuskegee model of industrial education developed during the years 1868-1915. While many in the North saw the Hampton model as a way to bring "racial peace, political stability, and material prosperity to the American South," it was really part of a "Black Reconstruction" philosophy, which stunted political power, limited economic opportunity, and maintained systems of racial hierarchy.

88. Fallace, "Race, Culture, and Pluralism," 32.

89. Many different groups, including constructivists, brain-based researchers, charter school operators, small school teachers, and social justice advocates, define themselves as progressive reformers. Still others, including child-focused schools and reformers who carry the legacy of Deweyan progressivism, shy away from the word “progressive” altogether. Semel and Sadovnik assert that progressive, child-centered educators “rarely acknowledge and may be altogether unaware of their historical antecedents,” while other “progressive” educators fear using the term because the progressive movement has been so severely “tarnished by many contemporary critics.” Semel and Sadovnik, “Lessons from the Past,” 1.

90. See Therese Perry, “Up from the Parched Earth: Toward a Theory of African-American Achievement,” in *Young, Gifted, and Black: Promoting High Achievement Among African American Students*, ed. Theresa Perry, Claudia Steele, and Asa Hilliard III (Boston: Beacon Books, 2003); Pedro Noguera, *City Schools and the American Dream: Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2003); Lisa D. Delpit, *Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom* (New York: New Press, 1995).

91. Charles M. Payne, *So Much Reform: So Little Change: The Persistence of Failure in Urban Schools* (Boston: Harvard Education Press, 2008), 119.

92. *Ibid.*

93. Perry, “Up from the Parched Earth,” 107–108.

94. Noguera, *City Schools*, 60.

95. Greene, *The Dialectics*, 44–55.

96. Goodenow, “The Progressive Educator,” 376.

97. William A. Robinson, “A Secondary School Study,” *Phylon* 5, no. 2 (1944): 146. In the 1940s, the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools for Negroes (ACSSN), with funding from the General Education Board, began a study of 16 black schools with the purpose to formally “study progressive movements in education.” While the actual study (1940–1948) occurred outside of the era addressed in this paper, the planning for the study began in the 1930s and reflected a growing engagement with Southern progressivism in African American schools.

98. Ronald Goodenow, “Progressive Educator,” 379.

99. Delpit, *Other People’s Children*, 47.

100. Annette Henry, *Taking Back Control: African Canadian Women Teachers’ Lives and Practice* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998), 72.

101. John Dewey, “Horace Mann Today,” *Social Frontier* 3, no. 20 (1936): 42.

102. William H. Schubert, *Love, Justice and Education* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2009.)

103. *Ibid.*, 3.

104. *Ibid.*, 22.

105. *Ibid.*

106. *Ibid.*, 209.

107. Nel Noddings, *Education and Democracy in the 21st Century* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2013), 13–14.

108. Sam F. Stack Jr., “John Dewey and the Question of Race: The Fight for Odell Waller,” *Education and Culture* 25, no. 1: 25. The quote from this source is attributed to Dewey, who wrote these words for a speech written by Dewey but, as explained in a footnote by Stack, delivered by Horace Kallen in October 1939.

109. Gloria Ladson-Billings, “Introduction” in *Education Research In The Public Interest: Social Justice, Action, And Policy*, eds. Gloria Ladson-Billings and William J. Tate (New York: Teacher College Press, 2006), 10.

110. David Hursh, “Carry It On: Fighting for Progressive Education in Neo-liberal Times,” in *Education Research in the Public Interest: Social Justice, Action, and Policy*, ed. Gloria Ladson-Billings and William J. Tate (New York: Teacher College Press, 2006), 47.

111. Cornell West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 5.

112. Gloria Ladson-Billings, “Presidential Address: From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in US Schools,” in *Education Researcher* 35, no. 7 (October 2006): 5.

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Kelly Vaughan is an assistant professor of English education in the School of Education and Counseling at Purdue University Northwest.