How Can Cultures Go Mad? John Dewey, Durable Habits, and the Limit-Experience of German Fascism

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Totalitarianism and fascism have become increasingly real threats in contemporary America. It seems helpful, then, to look at John Dewey's thoughts about these challenges and consider their implications for education. In this essay, I explore Dewey's arguments about the sources of militarism and later fascism in Germany in WWI and WWII. This analysis complicates what I term Dewey's primarily "culturalist" vision of social action and social change. Dewey's theories about how social habits determine social action met a limit experience in the totalitarian societies of WWII, leading him to speculate about how even apparently "healthy" societies might go mad, and go mad quite rapidly.

Interestingly, with the exception of biographers, very little has been written about this aspect of Dewey's thought.[1] Perhaps this results partly from the problematic nature of some of his statements, especially in his book, *German Philosophy and Politics* (GPP), which, in a simple sense, argued that German society during WWI was fundamentally flawed and sick at its core. One might be able to overlook this overreaching simplification of something as complex and multifaceted as an entire culture in *GPP*, especially as Dewey later became a pacifist, except, as this essay demonstrates, during WWII Dewey reiterated many of the same convictions, albeit with somewhat more nuance.[2]

This essay begins with an overview of Dewey's argument about German culture in GPP. It then turns to an analysis of his theory of social habits in *Human Nature and Conduct* (HNC), where he lays out the core theoretical commitments that informed his GPP analysis. I then turn to his writings from the WWII period and argue that his own acknowledgement of the limits of some of his arguments about "sick" societies led him to begin to explore ways that his "culturalist" argument in HNC was challenged in different ways by totalitarianism. I conclude by discussing how Dewey's acknowledgement of these limitations has implications for how we approach education and how we

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educate students about the ways the world and society can work.

Understanding the conundrum Dewey faced in WWII indicates the limits of an explanation for human action based on what Dewey called "habits," and implies that we must also educate students about the dangers of particular conditions that can make even the "healthiest" culture spin out of control. Under extreme conditions, even the "best" existing habits of mind may increasingly (if never entirely) lose their controlling power. As a result, it is only by also fighting to maintain *institutions* of freedom that we can we maintain a free society.

WORLD WAR I AND THE "CULT OF RACE" IN GERMANY

Dewey wrote GPP in 1915, during World War I. The book sought to explain the relationship between German philosophy and culture and what he saw as the tendency toward militarism and racism in German society in general.[3] It is, as others like Robert Westbrook have acknowledged, quite problematic in many respects, not least because it simplified the core "habits" of an entire society. ("It is," Dewey acknowledged in GPP, "a precarious undertaking to single out some one thing in German philosophy as of typical importance in understanding German national life." Just so. "Yet I am committed to this venture."[4])

In GPP, Dewey explored the relationship between German philosophy and German culture, which at its core involved an attack on Immanuel Kant.[5] "Freedom," in the hands of Kant and those who came after him, Dewey asserted, meant simply "subjection" to the inherent "reason" in the ongoing evolution of history. This "causal necessity" was defined for people by the state. "More than any other nation, in a sense alone of all nations [!], in large part because [Germany's] philosophical traditions, freedom . . . and causal law" were seen as essentially the same thing (GPP, 149). According to Dewey's Kant, a citizen's "sole duty in the realm of practice is to obey—to do his duty." As a result, "history" becomes "the dynamic and evolving realization of [state-defined] immanent reason" (MW.8, p. 184).

In other words, in the core tradition of German philosophy, reason and experience became detached. Truth became the spinning out of an abstract "reason" embedded in the existing institutions of the state. "Liberty of action

has little to do with it" (MW.8, p. 195). The state defined what constituted reason, and the freedom of individuals became equated with the subjugation of the self to that state-defined reason. Reason cannot be challenged by any contradictions that one encounters in the sensible world, for the sensible world must, in Dewey's understanding of the Kantian argument, be disregarded by any "rational" person.

In Germany, Dewey argued, this imaginary collective selfhood came together with a deep racism that defined who was *not us* in order to have a coherent *us*. This fed militarism and, therefore,

> the war now raging [WWI] is conceived of as an outer manifestation of a great spiritual struggle, in which what is really at stake is the supreme value of the Germanic attitude in philosophy, science and social questions generally, the specifically German habits of feeling and thinking. (MW.8, p. 169)

In general, then, "the ideas of" Kant and the German philosophers that followed him justified "the part taken [by Germany] in a world war" (MW.8, p. 155).

At the time, Dewey distinguished sharply between German culture and that in "France, Great Britain, or this country" (MW.8, p. 145). In America, especially, he argued that "it is difficult to see how any [such] . . . systematic absolutism is to get a footing among us" (MW.8, p. 200). German society, then, was fundamentally different and, in fact, uniquely different, from other modern societies on the planet. Germany was, deep in its culture, uniquely ill.

Dewey understood that philosophy was not the only driving force for militarism and racism in Germany. An ongoing interaction between culture and philosophy was precipitated by the Germans' deep, largely unconscious, social understandings and the specific conditions of the war. However, Dewey emphasized that "even if . . . philosophies simply reflect as in a mirror contemporary social struggles . . . seeing oneself in a mirror is a definite practical aid in carrying on one's understanding to its completion." As a result, "philosophies" can "make people aware of what they're doing by trying to justify what is going on. . . . They give reasons that people hadn't thought of, especially after they've

doi: 10.47925/79.2.133

done a lot of things and they've looked back and find very good reasons for what has been going on" (MW.8, p. 199). Dewey would not have written an entire book about this issue unless he was convinced that the tradition of German philosophy was a critical component of what he saw as the racist militarism of German society.

THE DURABILITY OF HABITS, THE ANIMAL NATURE OF MAN, AND THE DRIVING FORCE OF SOCIETIES

Dewey's understanding of how racism and militarism (and later totalitarianism) emerged in Germany grew directly out of the structure of the social psychology that undergirded his philosophical vision. In his 1922 HNC (originally given as lectures in 1918), he laid out his most detailed description of the relationship between human beings and culture.[6] Then, at the end of WWI, he sought, in part, to develop an empirical psychology of human nature that fit together with the argument of GPP. This was a psychology that he later described right before WWII as "adequate to the heavy demands put on it by [the] foreign and domestic conditions" (LW.13, p. 150).

Essentially, Dewey argued that people are made up of "habits" that they gain through interaction with other human beings and the environment. From our earliest moments our impulses are reaching out to interact with other people and our wider environment. It is by interacting and experiencing the results of these interactions that these impulses become connected to habits. People are cultural habits "all the way down" as it were; our entire personalities and ways of being are made up of learned social patterns.

However, this theory created challenges for conceptualizing social change. In HNC, he argued that early habits gained through childhood, for example, are not easily or quickly changed. In fact, habits that are inflexible, like the understanding of reason that he critiqued in German culture, are especially difficult to change. This is why, for example, revolutions may change institutions at a superficial level but leave underlying habits hardly touched.

Once gained, habits dominate how people understand new experiences, and they live on in deep levels of bodily response despite overt changes in

institutions and circumstances. In Germany, habits of non-empirical rationality ("idealism") and an understanding that reason was duty to the state continued to occupy the population at an unreflective level of the mind *and* in their explicit philosophy. These habits always threatened to show themselves in militarism, racism, and venom.

One key limitation of the social psychology Dewey developed in HNC and elsewhere, however, was its tendency to distinguish human beings radically from other animals. He asserted that, while animals have set instincts (somewhat like unchangeable habits), humans have undefined impulses that seek to engage with the world around them. Unlike instincts, impulses can take on almost any habitual form. In fact, the diversity of habits that human beings can take on, for Dewey, seemed almost infinite (including, of course, an obligatory reference to the example of "the aggressive militarism of an imperial Prussia" [HNC, p. 92]). Surely, he understood that there were some limits to this flexibility, but an analysis of these limits was simply not an interest or focus of his analyses. During the 1920s and 1930s, when HNC was published, he was battling against other thinkers, especially Freudian ones, who were trying to ground human psychology in instincts, and so his response was likely to overemphasize the alternative.[7] Further, this flexibility of habits was critical for his vision of democracy. For it was the ability to initiate people (usually in childhood) into creative habits that can respond intelligently to the unpredictable process of social change that made his vision of democracy through education possible.

Yet the idea that humans represent some absolute and radical break from the world of animals seems unsupportable. Even if we cannot easily put our finger on the ways human beings are limited in similar ways to animals, given the complexity of the nature/nurture challenge, it seems impossible that humans are infinitely flexible. Arenas where human beings encounter extreme conditions, such as totalitarianism and warfare, seem to be key candidates for examples where we meet the limits of flexibility. One might look to research on the tendency toward tribalism in human populations, for example.[8]

There is a hint of acknowledgement in HNC that collective action can emerge from non-habitual sources. Dewey wrote, for example, of mob psychology, in

doi: 10.47925/79.2.133

which "[T]he crowd and mob express a disintegration of habits. . . . Leaders . . . may . . . deliberately resort to stimuli which will break through the crust of ordinary custom and release impulses on such a scale as to create a mob psychology (HNC, p. 60)." This appeared, however, in one of Dewey's rare footnotes, a diversion from his general discussion.

The theory of HNC indicated that societies that turned militaristic or deeply racist must have deep pre-existing cultural sources for these beliefs—they must be already grounded in bad habits. Even as the world changes, culture changes much more slowly. Rapid cultural change, in Dewey's vision, is not possible. In the vision of HNC, cultures cannot quickly go "mad." While this basic argument is difficult to deny on some level—certainly, cultural patterns affect social action—these philosophical commitments led Dewey, at least at the writing of GPP, to believe that he could, problematically, discern "better" and "worse" cultures with a broad brush.

But what if any culture has the potential to move, with more or less facility, in the direction of the militarism and later fascism of Germany under the right conditions?

THE ARGUMENTS OF GPP RETURN IN WWII

If Dewey had left these beliefs about German society behind after his transformation into a pacifist, perhaps GPP could be treated like an early overreach. However, the same language, now explaining the emergence of totalitarianism in Germany and Russia, showed itself again in the context of WW II.[9] As in GPP, in WWII he asserted that "German thinkers," especially Kant, identified "the cause of culture with that of law and authority," and that as a result, "events in Germany, including the rise of totalitarianism, since the time this view was formulated, have borne the stamp of this idea" (LW.13, p. 85). German culture, he still argued, in some basic sense carried within it the diseases of militarism and racism.[10]

Dewey still believed that "the past of philosophy must have had something to do with forming the conditions that culminate in the present catastrophe" (LW.14, p. 312). There must be "defects and distortions" in philosophical

traditions, "which at least provided the opportunity for large-scale development of absolutist and totalitarian philosophies" (LW.14, p. 313).

In his 1939 *Freedom and Culture* (LW.13), written just before the start of the actual war in Europe in September of that year, Dewey again argued that German philosophers had believed that true freedom involved "subjection to the universal law" (LW.13, p. 85). As in GPP, he contrasted the American and English "liberal tradition" with the German tradition in which "the affiliation of the idea of freedom is with the idea of [non-empirical] rationality."[11] The Germans, he argued, assign "to law an origin and authority having nothing to do with freedom" and their philosophical tradition "points directly, even if unintentionally, to the totalitarian state" (LW.13, p. 80).

As in GPP, the lack of responsiveness to empirical reality meant that truth fell into the hands of those who ruled the state. Far from "withering away," there comes "an increase of intensity and range of state actions" (LW.13, p. 118). The state can develop "a system which rivals the ancient theological way of explaining away apparent inconsistencies" (LW.13, p. 132).

Freedom and Culture combined these points with a recapitulation of the social psychology of HNC. Again, Dewey stressed that human psychology is driven by cultural habits and that human motivation really consists of "complex attitudes patterned under cultural conditions" (LW.13, p. 140). If there are aspects of human nature that are not completely changeable, "of themselves they explain nothing about social phenomena. For they produce consequences only as they are shaped into acquired dispositions by interactions with environing cultural conditions" (LW.13, p. 140). In other words, even if there were some minor stable aspects of human psychology, they would not matter. We are essentially cultural all the way down.

It is important to acknowledge, however, that during WWII Dewey's critique of Germany was somewhat more nuanced than during WWI. He pointed out, for example, that there is no such thing as a culture shared in some absolute way across all members—some people are always in conflict or "in revolt" seeking "to arouse active protest." In each culture there are aspects

doi: 10.47925/79.2.133

which "promote and which retard the development of the native constituents of human nature" (LW.13, pp. 86-87). But the thread of the argument was much the same.

Dewey also acknowledged that, even if America's and England's traditions were more democratic, the tradition of English-speakers nonetheless still also contained problematic aspects. For example, he pointed to America's deep habits of racism against African Americans, among others, that provided fertile ground for totalitarian ideals (although the Germans were, as usual, worse: "the attitude of intolerance infects, perhaps fatally, the example of Germany") (LW.13, p. 153; LW.14, p. 277). He stressed that we must "beware of supposing that totalitarian states are brought about by factors so foreign that 'It can't happen here'" (LW.13, 88-89). In fact, one of his core arguments against joining WWII was that totalitarianism in another nation was not an excuse for fostering totalitarianism here.[12]

But while he understood that democracy in the U.S. was quite imperfect, he argued that the historical development of U.S. culture was nonetheless fundamentally different from that of the Germans. For example, Americans "are not in the habit of taking social and political philosophies very seriously. We do not realize that continental Europeans, especially those educated under the influence of German ideas, have a still greater contempt for action which is 'empirically' directed than we have for abstract theory" (LW.13, p. 129). For a range of reasons, our culture was not nearly as welcoming to totalitarianism.

COMPLICATING THE "CULTURALIST" ARGUMENT

Importantly, however, during WWII Dewey complicated the culturalist argument of GPP. While he did reprise aspects of his arguments about the problematic non-empirical rationality of the Germans, scattered across his WWII writings are explorations of a wider range of ways that a society could move in totalitarian directions. He speculated about reasons for the emergence of what he termed "social movements" in a society that were not dependent upon the pre-existence of an undercurrent of what one might call proto-totalitarian habits. Alongside his culturalist arguments came arguments that focused more

on what I would term *conditions* that could lead cultures in totalitarian directions.

His simplest explanation of how a nation can be led to totalitarianism without the cultural precursors was through force. He asserted at one point that totalitarianism was "put into force" through "ruthless persecution and punishment of all dissenters" by a relatively small "clique" that sought to "keep in their hands a monopoly of all power" (LW.13, p. 127). It was a social movement that could be made to emerge through force and control of all the institutional levers of a society, for example, "press, schools, radio, the theater, and every means of communication" (LW.13, p. 127). At points, then, he seemed to argue that a single group can take over and forcibly provide an interpretation of the "single law" to the people. All independent, even somewhat democratic, institutions and opposition can be eliminated with a "venom" displayed by convinced disciples of the orthodox "creed . . . against dissenters" (LW.13, p. 128). Under such conditions, any resistance to totalitarianism might be suppressed, forcing people into mass action.

But within Dewey's theoretical horizon, because of the durability of prior habits, mere force was not really enough to create the kind of emotional commitment to social movements that Dewey found in totalitarian societies. Force might be able to make people act in particular ways at specific moments, but it could not change their deep-seated habitual motivations with any rapidity. According to Dewey, there needed to be some mechanism through which people could be quickly motivated to take on new forms of action *and* commitments. During WWII, he speculated about a few different ways this might happen.

First, he argued that a kind of "intolerable vacuum" was created by "the separation of ideas and knowledge from emotion" (LW.13, p. 323). This is a general structural issue with habits in general and not some set of racist or militaristic habits or proto-habits. "When one hears from authentic sources the ardor, the abounding zeal, with which the young have devoted themselves in totalitarian countries, one is *on safe ground in inferring* that there was a vacuum of this sort, and that totalitarian philosophies alike in Germany and Russia, *somehow* succeeded in uniting intellectual beliefs and the well-springs of emotion in a way that filled . . . a deep-felt want" (LW.13, p. 323, emphasis added). Somehow

DOI: 10.47925/79.2.133

this new pattern of society hooked in a very short time into the motivations of the German people. The specific content of the ideology did not seem to matter for this pathway. Any society with a range of beliefs that were weakly connected to actual emotions (and this, he realized, would include every society) was susceptible. Emotions linked to underlying tendencies toward racism can be fostered and intensified. In a short time, an entire population can be shifted to a commitment to a different set of underlying habits. A "lesson the war has to teach philosophy," then, "is the importance of the problem of the relation of . . . emotional . . . [and] intellectual" factors.

This also links to recent research, mentioned above, on the underlying "tribalism" that appears to be part of the "instinctual" or "animal" inheritance of human beings. Such underlying mechanisms in human nature may be able to be activated by emotional appeals at moments when groups feel threatened, bringing particular currents of social difference to the fore and overwhelming other cultural patterns.[13] We are not talking here about instincts operating outside of culture. Instead, the question is whether there are instincts inflexible enough to deeply affect what is possible to teach people regarding what to be and not be.

Another way totalitarianism could emerge was grounded in the fact that no culture contains a sufficiently coherent justification for democracy. Dewey argued during WWII that all modern cultures were in a similar state of confusion, with habits having different sets of tendencies from one another. Because of the inevitable force of cultural lag (with culture changing slower than the conditions it is meant to make sense of), "modern philosophy is weakened and confused by its attempt to combine things inherently incompatible" with new aspects of culture always in some level of conflict with the old (LW.13, p. 316). Thus, culture is always at least partially "unfitted to be of avail in coping with the problems of modern life." This created a different kind of vacuum than the one discussed above. Again, he represented this vacuum (like the one above) as a normal part of the process of cultural development, not itself a cultural artifact. According to this explanation, in Germany and Russia, the lack of a coherent socially shared understanding of emerging new conditions provided the necessary space for the totalitarian nations to "put the doctrine

into effect" because "at least there was some kind of social aim set up to fill the vacuum," regardless of the specific content (LW.13, p. 320). It provided a hook for the force exerted by a small clique. This "vacuum . . . is one factor that has given totalitarian philosophies their present power," for "if ideals aren't made concrete in terms of concrete life and actual institutions that we know are here and events that are going on around us, well, that vacuum will be filled in some very untoward ways" (LW.13, p. 319; 332). There are always alternatives to democracy residing within the multiplicity of habits in any culture, and the right conditions can activate these anti-democratic tendencies.

And one can see how the vacuums created by limited emotional connection and social lag could be harnessed together.

Finally, Dewey talked about the power of propaganda as a third way that social action might be influenced without necessarily changing people's core habits. During WWII, he explained that propaganda "selects facts with no reference to anything but their effect upon others." And he argued that these "complete *inversions of truth are astonishingly confusing*. They *produce a state of daze* that endures long enough to enable its creators to accomplish their will while darkness still prevails" (LW.13, p. 375, emphasis added). Propaganda seemed to create conditions for confusion, fostering the emergence of situations where totalitarian ideologies can spread easier. When nothing makes sense anymore, people will grasp about for something that can make sense of their increasingly incoherent world.

To his footnote about "mob psychology" in HNC, Dewey added a range of new mechanisms for changing patterns of motivation and action in a society without necessarily rooting themselves in dominant habits. First, people might be weakly connected to dominant habits, leading to a vacuum of emotional commitment that a new ideology can force into through some mechanism that Dewey acknowledged he did not sufficiently understand. Second, habits could lack significant explanatory power to make concrete sense of new challenging empirical circumstances, leading to confusion about what people are experiencing and creating a different vacuum that a new ideology could fill. These two examples were related to issues with culture but not about

doi: 10.47925/79.2.133

its content. Instead, they represented issues that almost any culture would have to one extent or another.

Finally, propaganda in totalitarian societies could create a state of such confusion and daze that people can be led in some way to accept ideologies they would not otherwise entertain, intensifying the power of the first two mechanisms.

TOTALITARIANISM AND EDUCATION

Dewey's fundamentally culturalist theory on slowly changing social psychology met challenges in the extreme experiences of war and totalitarianism. It is hard to know exactly where Dewey was going with his non-culturalist speculations about rapid social change since these speculations took place at the end of his life (he died in 1952). However, what does seem clear is that the importance of social structures and institutions were becoming increasingly clear to him. In his efforts to understand how societies went "mad," he seemed increasingly conscious that culture alone would never be fully coherent and emotionally rooted enough to maintain itself under the most challenging circumstances and institutional pressures. The horror of totalitarianism during WWII raised for Dewey the possibility that that even in relatively "healthy" cultures like that of the United States, the right collection of social forces and structures can drive an entire society mad, perhaps any society.

In education, this raises issues with approaches that focus purely on the habits into which children are educated. Even if education tries to give children the "right" habits, given cultural lag and the many layers and multiple emotional interconnections in all cultures, there is always the danger of totalitarianism if social institutions are misused. (While Dewey had written about the relationship between social structures and democracy in *The Public and Its Problems* (LW.2) in the inter-war period (1927), the question there was not about how institutions and state action could produce rapid social change.)

These late musings indicate that the common focus among Deweyan scholars on the habits students are taught in school and elsewhere is insufficient as a tool for sustaining democracy. Students and educators need to understand

the ways that institutions and conditions are also critical for maintaining a free society. Habits are too messy and contradictory and too incompletely integrated into motivations and emotions to sustain this by themselves.

Dewey's earlier work on education implied that if you could educate people effectively enough (not just in schools, but with a range of processes throughout the entire culture) you could inoculate them against something like fascism. But his musings during WWII indicate that he was learning that such educational inoculation is simply not possible. In fact, it may be a dangerous fantasy. [14]

Educators need to help their students understand the danger that particular forms of governance and forces like propaganda can have on the development of an egalitarian society, and the ways strong institutions can resist (or foment) social breakdown. They need to introduce examples of the ways that societies can go "mad," as we have seen repeatedly throughout history. And perhaps students need to be helped to resist the influence of such forces by understanding the ways they might be drawn in to the "mob," or the underlying tendencies for tribalism and othering we all may have. Ultimately, Dewey only speculated about this issue. But at the end he realized these were crucial questions for the survival of democracy—something we can see in the news today.[15]

REFERENCES

1 Exceptions include Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (New York, Cornell University Press, 1991); James Scott Johnson, "Dewey's Critique of Kant," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 42, no. 4 (2006): 518-581; James Campbell, "Dewey and German Philosophy in Wartime," *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society* 40, no. 1 (2004): 1-20; Sidney Hook, "Introduction," MW.8.

2 See Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*.

3 Early in the book he asserted that he chose the German example "somewhat arbitrarily" but the discussion that followed and the fact that the book was written during WWI made it clear that this was disingenuous (MW.8, p. 144).

4 John Dewey, *The Collected Works of John Dewey*, 1882-1953, ed. Jo Ann Boydston (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967-1991), sub-

DOI: 10.47925/79.2.133

sequently cited in the text with page numbers as MW (*Middle Works*) and LW (*Later Works*); MW.8, p. 151.

5 For the purposes of this paper, I do not get into criticisms of this understanding of Kant. See Johnson, "Dewey's Critique of Kant," for a discussion of Dewey's overall critiques of Kant.

6 John Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt, 1922), subsequently cited in the text with page numbers as HNC. https://doi.org/10.1037/14663-000

7 See Jay Martin, *The Education of John Dewey* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003). https://doi.org/10.7312/mart11676

8 On the common tendency for tribalism among human societies see, for example, David Berreby, "Why Do We See So Many Things as 'Us vs. Them,'" *National Geographic* (2018), https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2018/04/things-that-divide-us/. For overviews of the field of evolutionary psychology, see, for example, Todd K. Shackelford and James R. Liddle, "Understanding the Mind from an Evolutionary Perspective," *WIREs Cognitive Science* 5 (2014): 247-260. https://doi.org/10.1002/wcs.1281; Leda Cosmides and John Tooby, *Evolutionary Psychology: A Primer* (Santa Barbara: Center for Evolutionary Psychology, 1997), https://www.cep.ucsb.edu/primer.html.

9 See, especially, "Freedom and Culture" published in 1939 (LW.13, pp. 63-173); "Lessons from the War--In Philosophy" an address given on December 7, 1941, the day Pearl Harbor was bombed (LW.14, pp. 312-334); and "The Crisis in Human History," published in 1946 (LW.15, pp. 211-223).

10 Originally, I was going to include an examination of the differences between his explanations of Germany and Russia in WWII, which indicate some challenges he was encountering with interpretation, but I eliminated this for reasons of space.

11 He refers at points to "continental" philosophy more broadly, but quickly exempts the French from this pattern.

12 See Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*.

13 See endnote nine. In this case, it might be that some level of initial othering is required.

14 See, for example, Westbrook's discussion in *John Dewey* of his increasing reali-

zation that schools alone were not sufficient given the broad social influences on culture and learning.

15 The work in this essay points to other analyses that could come out of a study of Dewey's largely neglected discussions on militarism, fascism, and totalitarianism, including interesting points in his comments on German education, tensions in his conflating of Germany and Russia, further analysis of his correspondence, and a closer look at the limits of human cultural flexibility.

DOI: 10.47925/79.2.133