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PROGRESSIVE

EDUCATION

MAGAZINE

We recently mentioned here that Kraus Reprints is reprinting all volumes of *Progressive Education*. As heir to the Progressive Education Association, the John Dewey Society owns many back numbers of the magazine which we would like to make available to *Newsletter* readers for study, for filling incomplete volumes, or simply as souvenirs of an important movement and period in American educational history.

We will be happy to send you one or more of the copies by return mail IF you send with your request a self-addressed manila envelope with 12¢ postage affixed, one for each magazine you want. The magazines fit into a 9 x 12 size envelope. To make your selection, please see the list of holdings. (Last page)

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THAYER'S

MEANING

AND ACTION

Professor George E. Axtelle calls our attention to the 1968 Bobbs-Merrill book by H. S. Thayer, *MEANING AND ACTION: A CRITICAL HISTORY OF PRAGMATISM*. There are several extensive sections on John Dewey, and Professor Axtelle says of the book, "It is an amazingly good work, fascinating reading. I could scarcely lay it down and when I did, I returned to it the moment I was free, until I had finished. [Now] I find myself picking it up and opening it at random and reading. Wherever I turn the page I find it full of interest."

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VOLUME 3,

1889-1892

PUBLISHED

The third volume in the series *The Early Works of John Dewey, 1882-1898* was published in December 1969. It is entitled *Early Essays and OUTLINES OF A CRITICAL THEORY OF ETHICS* and includes all Dewey's works between 1889 and 1892. Several especially interesting features of the book are the Note on *APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY*; S. Morris Eames' Introduction; the six "Angle of Reflection" articles not previously attributed to Dewey; a facsimile of the first galley of Dewey's hand-corrected proof for "The Present Position of Logical Theory," the first publication of Dewey's final version of that article with all his corrections; stenographic reports of addresses and remarks. The *Early Works* are published by the Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale and Edwardsville.

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DOCTORAL  
DISSERTATIONS  
ON DEWEY

Please do continue to send us information about doctoral dissertations and master's theses on Dewey and his works. There are three additions to lists that have appeared here earlier:

Ellis, Matt Locke. "John Dewey's Theory of Value." Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1933.

Heslep, Robert D. "The Philosophical Views of Thomas Jefferson and John Dewey as Bases for Clarifying the Role of Education in an American Democracy." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1963.

Schultz, Frederick M. "The Concept of Community in the Philosophy of John Dewey." Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1969.

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RECENT  
PUBLICATIONS

Cywar, Allen. "John Dewey in World War I: Patriotism and International Progressivism." *American Quarterly* 21 (1969): 578-94.

Feuer, Lewis S. "John Dewey's Sojourn in Japan." *Teachers College Record* 71 (1969): 123-45.

Sheeks, Wayne. "The Role of Principles in Moral Judgment in the Philosophy of John Dewey." *Murray State University Review* 2 (1969): 119-24.

Rucker, Darnell. *THE CHICAGO PRAGMATISTS*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969.

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OHIO  
WESLEYAN  
NINETIETH  
BIRTHDAY  
PARTY

On John Dewey's ninetieth birthday in 1949, a group of students who had been studying his philosophy with Loyd Easton of Ohio Wesleyan University brought to class a huge cookie decorated "Happy Birthday, Dear John" and celebrated the birthday by discussing Dewey's influence around the world. Professor Easton sent an account of the event to Dewey, who responded with a two-page handwritten letter. We are grateful for the copy of the correspondence, photograph, and newspaper clipping that Professor Easton has given the Dewey Center. In his letter to Dewey, Professor Easton assured him that the students meant no disrespect by their salutation "Dear John." Dr. Dewey responded that he wouldn't have missed that expression of friendliness for a good deal, and that although there had been many happy features along with his recent anniversary, none had surpassed the Ohio Wesleyan event and few had equalled it.

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

"Knowing and Coming-to-Know in Dewey's Theory of Knowledge"

by

Georges Dicker

This study analyzes basic issues between Dewey and the epistemological tradition, and defends Dewey's position.

Dewey holds that theories of knowledge from antiquity onwards presuppose that knowing is a relation between a knower and a thing known, in which the knower is essentially a viewer or passive spectator of the thing known. This conception of knowing, he argues, is both a misconception and a preconception. He collectively dubs theories which embrace it--i.e. all theories of knowledge previous to his own--the "Spectator Theory of Knowledge."

Dewey criticizes the Spectator Theory primarily as a theory about *acquiring* knowledge, as opposed to *having* knowledge. His own theory, which he advances against the Spectator Theory, is primarily about a process he calls indifferently "knowing" and "inquiry." This process, as analysis of its successive stages shows, is the deliberate seeking and getting of knowledge.

This has opened Dewey to a criticism, made by Murphy, Lovejoy, Russell and others, which sets the problem of this study: In his critique of the epistemological tradition and his positive contribution alike, does Dewey not change the subject, substituting methodology for epistemology?

The argument of the dissertation is summarized as follows.

The term "knowing" is ambiguous. Most commonly, it means *having* knowledge (product); in philosophical works, it also means *coming-to-know* (process). The Spectator Theory conceives of both (what we commonly call) knowing and coming-to-know as occurrences analogous to someone's seeing a thing. It is thereby prevented from giving an illuminating account of either knowing or coming-to-know.

Dewey, however, conceives of neither knowing nor coming-to-know on this visual model, and so is able to give illuminating accounts of both.

Coming-to-know, according to Dewey, is a temporal process involving experimental operations guided by ideas developing within a problematic situation. Dewey's thesis is that this entire temporal process is the "act of knowing" which traditional theories (mistakenly, if Dewey is right) equate with an instantaneous apprehension analogous to seeing. Inquiry does not

merely put one in a position to perform some further, mental "act of knowing": no additional act is required in order to know something.

This claim cannot be established, nor can Dewey fully answer his critics, unless he provides an account of what it is just to *know* something or to *have* some knowledge (an account of what we commonly call "knowing").

Dewey has such an account. But he does not presuppose that knowing is a relation between a thing known and a viewer or spectator, and then inquire how men do (can) get knowledge. He begins by describing the process by which men seek and get knowledge and then asks: *What* do we get by this process? *That* will be what knowledge is. So his account of knowing is *based* upon his theory about coming-to-know.

Inquiry consists (broadly speaking) in putting things through various changes and noting what consequences result. So what we get by it--given memory on our part and stability in nature--is the *ability to anticipate, successfully and consistently, the consequences of putting things through various changes*. Inquiry is *all* one need go through to acquire this ability: no further "act of knowing" is required. Hence this account of knowing (that a thing has some characteristic or stands in some relation) supports, reciprocally, Dewey's thesis about coming-to-know.

Dewey's analysis of recognition accounts for the powerful tendency to conceive of both knowing and coming-to-know as occurrences analogous to seeing a thing.

Although Dewey seems inconsistent on this point, his constructionalistic-sounding statements about "the object of knowledge," interpreted in light of knowing and coming-to-know in his theory, are compatible with common-sense.

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