

I

INTRODUCTION

When it is understood that philosophic thinking is caught up in the actual course of events, having the office of guiding them towards a prosperous issue, problems will abundantly present themselves. Philosophy will not solve these problems; philosophy is vision, imagination, reflection—and these functions, apart from action, modify and hence resolve nothing . . . Philosophy recovers itself when it ceases to be a device for dealing with the problems of philosophers and becomes a method, cultivated by philosophers, for dealing with the problems of men.

—John Dewey, “The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy”

The Problems with Inquiry

Forty years ago, the eminent Dewey scholars S. Morris Eames and Elizabeth Ramsden Eames wrote of a long-held concern among critics: either inquiry must profess to be rigorously scientific, which means that it must embrace the view that objects exist external to the experience of them, or it must profess to be thoroughly experiential, which means that all truth and all assertion must take place within the realm of the mental. Eames and Eames note that this is the most pressing criticism of Dewey’s pragmatic theory of knowledge and of experience, and the one that demands the utmost attention. Eames and Eames put the contention this way:

Dewey’s critics seem to have placed his theory of inquiry between the horns of several dilemmas. With respect to the situation within which inquiry takes place, Dewey must choose between atomistic pluralism of unconnected individual situations and holistic unity. With respect to the doubtful or indeterminate situation and the satisfying or determinate situation, Dewey must choose between subjective idealism or dualistic realism. With respect to his treatment of propositions, the choice is between extreme rationalism or extreme empiricism. With respect to warranted assertibility, the alternatives are an idealism in which truth is de-

terminated within inquiry or a realistic view of truth as conformity to external fact. (Eames and Eames 1962, 326)

Eames and Eames claim that Dewey sees a way out of this impasse and that way is to,

develop a theory of perception that even his sympathetic critics have had difficulty interpreting. . . . Dewey writes of the construction of common sense and science from the materials of the immediate qualities of experience . . . [but] Again his critics see Dewey as facing a dilemma: if the object . . . causes the perception of it, Dewey is a realist with respect to his theory of perception and must say what the object really is. However, if he refuses this alternative and emphasizes that the kind of object is determined by the needs of inquiry, he has a phenomenalist view of perception. (Eames and Eames 1962, 327–328)¹

Eames and Eames characterize the dilemma of Dewey having to choose between an inquiry that serves to mirror an external world existing outside of experience, and an inquiry that constructs objects by relating the products of an immediate experience within one. He cannot, the critics claim, have both. Indeed, it is not too bold to say that this, or one or another variant of it, has been a chief criticism of Dewey's theory of inquiry throughout the past century. The variant of this criticism that I will discuss concerns Dewey's relationship to science, and specifically to scientific method/s (what I shall henceforth gather under the umbrella term "scientific inquiry").

It is fashionable to criticize John Dewey for paying too much attention to science and to the hope of a scientific solution to human concerns. Equally, it has become fashionable to defend Dewey by pointing out instances in his work where science is clearly subordinated to other concerns, notably those of experience and art. When critics complain of Dewey's overappreciation for all things scientific, they most often have in mind his supposed allegiance to the methods of science. When supporters complain of the overattention given to the place of science in Dewey's texts, they often respond by singing his anti-scientific praises. These praises are often to the tune of his rhetoric on the primordial nature of experience. The common fear is that viewing inquiry as scientific denies a strong place for imagination, curiosity, and emotion while promoting a techno-rational or means-end, instrumental approach to human problems. The consequences of this, both critics and supporters argue, is that ways of experiencing and of knowing beyond the scientific are denigrated, and experts fascinated with the power of science and scientific inquiry will blindly follow the technological, organizational, and managerial fruits of these, with catastrophic costs for democracy. The solution is to stress the immediacy and

qualities had, of an experience that, as immediate, is temporally and ontologically prior to inquiry. But there are, equally, critics who have trouble with the subordination of science and inquiry to experience. For the turn to experience as primordial is evidence, critics say, of a reemergence of metaphysics that Dewey takes pains elsewhere to eschew.

The debate arising out of these criticisms has powerful implications for Dewey's related notions of growth, community, democracy, and education. In fine, if there is confusion or disagreement regarding whether inquiry, as Dewey has conceived of it, does not or should not operate along the lines of science, and inquiry is central to these above aims, are these aims of Dewey's also confused? And if, as Dewey claims, democracy must consist not only of democratic ends but democratic means to these, and inquiry is rigidly scientific and impermeable to changes in the wants and needs of the people as many of his critics suggest, then how can it be said that inquiry is the democratic means to a democratic end? On the other hand, if Dewey is shown to have a nonscientific theory of inquiry, and this is in the service of the having of an experience, does this obviate the problem of rigidity and impermeability? Or does it simply introduce a new one: to wit, an inquiry that is toothless because in the service of the satisfaction of an experience at once arbitrary and capricious: an experience of little aid to social concerns? And if either of these scenarios are the case, how can Dewey's notions of growth, community, democracy, and education, which seem to be predicated upon the flexibility of inquirers to attend to shared problems and solutions, endure? And why, then, should we bother with Dewey? These are the concerns that I claim must be dealt with.

No doubt, Dewey speaks a great deal about inquiry. Indeed, hardly an article or a book penned by Dewey lacks some reference to it. Critics and supporters agree: inquiry is central to Dewey. But with critics and supporters, much time is spent debating just what the model of inquiry is supposed to be. This assumes to a large degree that Dewey's statements on what might be the point, purpose, and ground (if there is one) of inquiry are of a piece with one another. But this would be a hasty conclusion. Given the fact that Dewey spoke at length about inquiry, can the assumption be made that Dewey treats inquiry to a rigorous examination and that the finally emerging product is smooth, polished, precise, and free from contradiction? To judge by the volume of secondary literature devoted to the topic, particularly the literature in education, and to judge from some of Dewey's own statements on the topic, the answer seems to be no.

There seems an uncertainty as to what Dewey means by inquiry, what characteristics are to be included in his notion of inquiry, and what, after all, the aim and purpose of inquiry is to be. Part of the problem may stem from Dewey's own hand. He has been described as a difficult writer. His prose is considered awkward and, indeed, turgid. He is said to be exceedingly redundant in

the use of premises and conclusions to support an argument. Robert Westbrook has said of Dewey's text *Experience and Nature* that "some of this opposition [to Dewey's arguments] was the fault of Dewey's prose . . . his language was loose, his definitions slippery, and his arguments often elusive" (Westbrook 1991, 341). A very recent commentator complains that the "dense prose" of this work renders it as "incomplete" and "forbiddingly convoluted," and, believing Dewey's own recognition of this state of affairs, he well understands why the author would, in 1949, remark in a new (unpublished) introduction that if he had to do it over again, he would drop the term "experience" and replace it with "culture" (Dalton 2002, 125).

Perhaps one of the reasons interpreters have such a hard time with Dewey is that Dewey's approach to problems is often to attack them from a variety of angles. Often the context determines the tenor of the argument. If Dewey happens to be writing of physical science or logic in a text, then a scientific or logical solution to the problems at hand is often stressed: likewise with experience, education, and society, in those texts stressing these topics. And when inquiry is invoked or applied, it is an inquiry closely bound to the context of which it is spoken.

This leads the reader into some trouble. Though it may seem eminently reasonable to argue for a particular view of, or application for, science in the context of one text, when this view or application is transposed to another text and context, it seems to function in an awkward or misleading manner. More specifically, Dewey's statements on inquiry with regard to science do not always mesh well with his statements with regard to inquiry in experience and art. Supporters of Dewey, faced with a set of seemingly inconsistent statements, sometimes "choose" a view of inquiry. Often this is to the detriment of another view. Choosing one view over another often solves the critics' or scholars' particular concern, but opens up yet other concerns for those disinclined to that view.² Though it is unreasonable to expect all to agree on what Dewey meant by inquiry, it is reasonable to expect that Dewey meant that it was to be, for example, strongly scientific.

What is one to make of all this? I will examine what others have said and will develop and support my own arguments in the following chapters. For now, I will limit myself to a few preliminary observations. One fast and dirty way to come down on the side of inquiry as scientific or not is to lift passages out of Dewey's many works such that the reader cannot gauge the context from the passages and cannot, therefore, make an adequate estimation of the argument. What these passages are and what they claim will be taken up in the following chapters. It should be obvious, though, that this approach to the matter at hand will not do. One is required to go back to the texts and contexts from which the statements are pulled and, after having examined these, only then make an argument as to the purported inconsistencies.

I claim that going back to the texts and contexts from which the arguments arise will provide a response to thwart one criticism of Dewey: the charge that Dewey is of two minds about the aims, purposes, and functions of, inquiry. But this only scratches the surface: those critics and supporters that argue for Dewey as being pro- or con inquiry as scientific and inquiry—whether scientific or experience based—will remain unsatisfied. Of course, scholars do choose sides and claim that one view of inquiry does prevail over another, with certain consequences for science, logic, experience, art, and education in tow. But this cannot mean that these are imperiled thereby. To get to the root of these claims, I shall have to examine various philosophers' and educators' criticisms in close detail.

There are scholars who think of inquiry as found in the natural sciences as the model for all talk of Dewey's inquiry. These scholars often treat Dewey's talk of inquiry in relation to epistemological and logical issues, such as learning theory and the claims to knowledge. And often, these scholars read Dewey (sometimes unwittingly) scientifically or positivistically. To read Dewey scientifically is to claim that he meant for all inquiry to mimic scientific methodology—the sort practiced in high school science classrooms and university research laboratories. In a slightly weaker version, this mimicry might mean a fundamental, though not exhaustive, role for scientific methodology to play in contexts beyond science. This latter version is what Richard Bernstein calls the “positivistic temper” (Bernstein 1992, 330).

To read Dewey positivistically is to read Dewey's inquiry as endorsing the following characteristics:

- 1) Naturalism: the view that good (natural and social) science embodies the scientific method common to the physical sciences. Scientific method among the various sciences is thoroughgoing in terms of its content and its stages.
- 2) Operationalism: the view that all theoretical terms must be specified by the operations that measure them.
- 3) Behaviorism: only explanations that are based on directly observable factors are scientifically adequate.
- 4) Prediction and Inference: the use of statistics to explore predictability among phenomenal relationships.
- 5) Logical reductivism: a penchant for logical explanation as opposed to historical, social, or cultural understandings of phenomenon. In cases of strong positivism all empirically observable phenomena are reducible to logico-mathematical propositions. (Kinkaid 1998, 559)

To say a thinker is positivistic or that she endorses one or more of the above positions is often a high insult in present-day academic scholarship. Much of

the scorn can be attributed to the fall from academic grace of *logical* positivism after World War II. Succinctly put, logical positivism requires the empirical verifiability of all experimental results and the logical necessity of the propositions involved, together with communicability of results through a realistic language following from logical propositions (Shlick in Ayer, 1950) (Reichenbach in Feigl and Brodbeck, 1953). This most extreme version of positivism drew scorn because it overemphasized the importance of logic and the verifiability of phenomenon, and underemphasized the effect of context and researcher effect. Werner Heisenberg, Albert Einstein, and others criticized this species of positivism from the side of the physical sciences, while Wilfred Sellars, W. V. O. Quine, and Ludwig Wittgenstein did so from the side of philosophy. As well, there was a reaction against positivism in the human sciences, largely mounted from within the disciplines of sociology and psychology, to the effect that it licensed behaviorism and, ultimately, domination and control of peoples through manipulation of rewards and punishments.

The charges that the critics level at Dewey's supposed positivism or scientism are in some measure the charges that Dewey succumbs to one or another variant of what has come to be, with the benefit of Hegelian and post-analytic hindsight, epistemological foundationalism. Some of these charges devolve into species of Quine's two dogmas of either epistemic reductivism or an analytic/synthetic distinction. Other charges devolve into Dewey maintaining a belief in the ultimate translatability of (ostensibly) synonymous terms, or of Sellars's "myth of the given," or of Wittgenstein's polemics against representationalism.³ To say that Dewey succumbs to one or another of these is to say that Dewey's talk of inquiry is premised on a foundation. What this foundation might be depends in part, of course, on the specific dogma or myth said to be present; but in general, it is that which is precisely *not* subject to change, interpretation, further investigation, and inquiry. In other words, it is the immutable and certain, whether it be an empirical given such as a quale or a primitive, a logical one such as a perfectly translingual and/or translatable term, or a set of fixed logical steps to the solution of problems.

Some examples are in order. To say that Dewey is a foundationalist along the lines that Quine might think is to say that Dewey, in one place or another of his logical theory, privileges a distinction between analytic propositions or statements and synthetic ones. I will come back to this in more detail in chapter 2, but for now I want to simply say that if Dewey were to suggest that there are, residing somewhere in his logic, statements to the effect that all definitions that point to the same logical object or term are meaning-synonymous and, thus, universal (Quine would say, analytic), then he would be not only guilty of making a distinction where a distinction is not found, but of turning to a foundation. Likewise, if he were to suggest that logical objects had some direct or one-to-one correspondence with an object immediately beheld, he would

be guilty of reductionism to observables. This reductionism is of course premised on the copy or picture theory of knowledge, wherein to say something is logical is simply to say that it contains the same features as the object immediately beheld. This of course, was a central criticism of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* and much of linguistic philosophy after this.

Many current Dewey scholars disagree with those who view Dewey as either positivistic or scientific, and in doing so, point toward statements in Dewey that challenge this reading of inquiry. Rather than inquiry as wedded to the concerns of science and what they see as its offspring—technology—inquiry, according to these scholars, serves as the means to foment what Dewey has called the “generic traits of existence.” Science, if it is a concern at all, is a subordinate one. What really concerns inquiry, they argue, is the satisfaction of one's experiences. As such, these scholars often treat Dewey's talk of inquiry in relation to experiential and aesthetic concerns. The argument is that inquiry is, for Dewey, beholden to experience. As the goal for experience and for social institutions is read as consisting of the manifestation of or assistance toward the having of satisfying traits or qualities of existence (such as symmetry, continuity, coming-to-be and passing-away, rhythm, regularity, and relation), inquiry works to achieve, through the order and control of the environment, a maximum of these traits. The point is to get to the sort of experience in which all generic traits of existence are at a maximum: what Dewey in *Art as Experience* calls an aesthetic, consummatory experience.

For these critics and sympathizers of Dewey, inquiry functions as a means to (re) produce further and more satisfying experiences. The way inquiry (and its avatars, reflection, cognition, thought, and meaning) works in relation to experience is to relate the qualities of experiences had to each other. More accurately, it orders objects gained through the transaction of person and environment such that these have meaning. In this way habits are developed: organic complexes of transactional “products” that serve, when made routine, as a ready means to increase the likelihood and satisfaction of the generic traits of existence. This suggests that a two-level, or stage theory of experience and inquiry is in operation: the first being immediate experience—the qualities immediately had in an experience undergone—the second being relation, cognition, thought, meanings; in fine, inquiry. In this way, inquiry emerges as supervenient on immediate experiences, and the qualities of an experience had the *fons et origo* of inquiry.

This view obviously has problems of its own to contend with. For example, if we think of the criticisms of Wilfred Sellars in his characterization of what counts as the given in traditional accounts of empiricism, what these Dewey scholars put forth as an alternative reading to the positivistic comes dangerously close to Sellars's notion of the myth of the given. The idea that there are quales, qualities, traits, immediate wholes, or some roughly syn-

onymous “having” existing in and responsible for, all experiences, may well be to say that there are “givens” that exist as foundations for further knowledge or as postulates to fill in the gaps in knowledge. Sellars, of course, rejects these givens as question-begging claims for a foundation that cannot be known. I will have more to say about this criticism of immediate experience in chapter 3.

What seem to get lost in this debate are the *aims* of inquiry. What I mean is that inquiry as Dewey himself puts it, its claims to knowledge and its attention to aesthetic and experiential concerns notwithstanding, is about the capacity to solve “the problems of men.” For Dewey, these are problems at once personal, interpersonal, community, and society-wide. Inquiry, for Dewey, is a tool that is brought to bear on the problems at hand such that individual growth and community relations can flourish. The task is nicely stated by Dewey in *Democracy and Education*, wherein he argues that the ultimate achievement of inquiry is its function as a tool to foster increasingly democratic living (Dewey [1916] 1984, 83).

In the zeal to pinpoint the supposed model of inquiry, scholars sometimes lose sight of this purpose: to serve in the investigation and solution to the problems of men. Dewey himself sometimes makes this an easy task. As I maintain, Dewey’s many statements on inquiry seem not always to fit easily together. The tendency to have Dewey come down on the side of science, or the side of experience, for example, is but one consequence of this unhappy state of affairs. As I have said, critics, often paying attention to one set of statements over another, conclude that Dewey is either too scientific or not scientific enough. Inquiry becomes a contested turf, one on which the rights of ownership of Dewey is fought. This contest, I argue, is the end result of a fruitless hunt for a supposed model, a model that would ostensibly reveal, once and for all, the function, point, and purpose of inquiry.

I believe that Dewey scholarship needs to rethink this very debate. I believe that the hunt for *the* model of inquiry, a model that once and for all captures the traits, tempers, tools, and techniques that are inclusive of inquiry, is a vain pursuit and ought to be given up. This is so not because I believe that there is not a point and purpose to inquiry: far from it. Rather, I argue that, as a result of searching for a model of inquiry, scholars are in fact missing that point and purpose. To be precise, I believe that the clue to the discovery of the point and purpose of inquiry is to be found in its interconnectedness with the situations in which it is used, and in its capacity to serve Dewey’s educational and philosophical aims; that is, growth, community, and democracy. And further, I believe that epistemological, logical, experiential, and aesthetic concerns, though not by themselves inclusive of inquiry, are all deserving of important places in inquiry, inasmuch as I believe that without attention to these concerns, we (as a community) cannot achieve what it is we desire. I call this trait

of sensitivity to the contexts in which inquiry is used, “context bound” and the ability of inquiry to adjust itself accordingly, “self-correction.” My aim in this work is to read Dewey as having suggested that inquiry has just these traits and that it is of a piece not only with other traits of inquiry but with the larger aims of an education for democratic living. To say so is not only to say that Dewey’s theory of inquiry exists without foundations, but it is to say that “empirical knowledge, like its sophisticated extension, science, is rational, not because it has a foundation but because it is a self-correcting enterprise which can put any claim in jeopardy, though not all at once” (Sellars [1956] 1997, 79).

Not only is inquiry to be read as (though not exhausted by) context bound and self-correcting, the linkages between it and Dewey’s other aims must be displayed. If inquiry is seen as detached from these, or as rigid and slavish in its relationship to science or to experience, its worth to these aims will be imperiled, and these aims, torn from the soil by which they receive sustenance, will wither and die. Dewey spoke often of his commitment to experience and to growth. As voluminous as his statements on inquiry and science are, they are matched by his statements on experience and growth. Often the connection between inquiry, on the one hand, and experience and growth (for Dewey, as I shall show, made growth the *terminus ad quem* of an experience) is blurred owing to the context that Dewey is writing in, whether scientific or experiential. But this is not to suggest that the connection is somehow weak. Inquiry must presuppose experience and growth, as the increase in the fund of *meaningful*, as well as satisfying, experiences.⁴

Growth in turn requires community; a conjoint association of peoples bound together by shared experiences and common problems, to flourish. Community, the notion that Dewey uses to capture this association, presupposes for its very vitality the ability of the peoples therein to come to agreement on a topic of mutual concern. This agreement, Dewey claims, can only be had voluntarily, and not on the outcome of authoritarian means. The one way left for this to come about is through shared inquiry. It is through shared inquiry that problems can be identified, methods to their solution proffered, and results evaluated that are acceptable to all involved. But the ability for the community to engage in inquiry presupposes the presence of the skills, habits, and attitudes of inquiry.

Community in turn insists upon education: a means for the development of inquiry by the child, and a community in which shared experiences, leading to shared investigations of and solutions to the problems of men can occur. Education in the formal sense—that is, schooling—is the best means, Dewey argues, for the mass of children to learn the attitudes, habits, and skills of inquiry. As such, education, particularly of the formal variety, becomes a central concern in any attempt to expand the capacity of the populace to experience, share, inquire into, and work to resolve problems of living.

Finally, I argue that democracy, as the formalization of institutions through communicative and legislative means, cements this community. I construe democracy for the purposes of my project as the legitimation of the means to inquire. Perhaps this is the most controversial point, particularly as several Dewey scholars insist that democracy is built into the having of an experience.⁵ I have more to say about this in chapter 5, though I will say at this point that I do not think my focus on one facet of democracy is at all reductive, as long as it is borne in mind that this is for the purposes of capturing the exquisite linkage between community means, as formalized, and Dewey's other aims. For all of inquiry, growth, community, and democracy work together: this notion is best captured by the notion of *boundedness*, in which each derives from, and leads to, the other.

Conceiving of inquiry as context bound, self-correcting, and in a close relationship with growth, community, and democracy is, I claim, the best way to avoid the mutually contradictory readings of Dewey as scientific or positivistic, on the one hand, and what I will henceforth call "aestheticized" on the other. It functions equally to preserve what I believe is inquiry's chief task—the necessary means to the realization of growth, community, and democracy. But this concern can seem to some to be merely of scholarly interest. There is equally a practical side, an educational side, to this conception. I claim that if inquiry is to work toward a solution to the problems of men, not only must it keep close to the aims of growth, community, and democracy, but that this has a strong bearing on the point and purpose of inquiry as used in our schools. This is a point that is often overlooked by Dewey scholars—particularly in the discipline of philosophy—in their various attempts at synthesizing Dewey for the purposes of a unified outlook. Too many introductions and treatises on Dewey's philosophy have been written that treat education as an appendage to Dewey's overall thought; a nice attachment, but superfluous to the functioning of his philosophic or social thinking. As Dewey spent much time and labor on education so, I suggest, should Dewey scholars; and the fact that this is seldom done with the exception of those writing in the field of education betokens a sad ignorance of what is a central concern for Dewey, to wit: the "how" of fostering the habits of inquiry. For education is the means by which inquiry is developed, and therefore one cannot talk of growth, community, or democracy without education at once being invoked. Inquiry that is detached from education will not only not accomplish these aims but may emerge, through its misuse or bastardization in educational institutions, as serving the interests of those inclined to less-than-savory aims, with tragic consequences for our democracy. Clearly, if we as a community are serious about the fostering of these aims, we cannot afford to support an inquiry that is at odds with these aims. This effort is put forth as a contribution to the conversation of how inquiry is to be best utilized in our communities and educational institutions.

Overview

Each chapter is split into four parts. In part 1 of chapter 2, I begin with the debate on the nature of inquiry. I turn to some of Dewey's early critics: philosophers and educators that conceive of Dewey's theory of inquiry as overly scientific or positivistic, and on this basis, question the feasibility of Dewey's entire project. After this, I turn to some of Dewey's early supporters: philosophers and educators that believe his theory of inquiry can be defended from the critics' charges. If the reader feels somewhat overwhelmed by the various names and disputes discussed in these first sections of each chapter, he or she may omit this section without penalty of confusion with respect to what follows. In part 2, I turn to contemporary critics and apologists of Dewey's theory of inquiry. I demonstrate that many of the criticisms from the early and middle twentieth century have not disappeared: variants of one or another of these continue to surface. I demonstrate that apologists cannot, without further work, defend the position of inquiry as beholden to science. In part 3, I begin to provide some context to this debate by detailing what seems to critics to be ambiguous statements that Dewey himself makes concerning the subject. I claim that it is not enough to take these passages at face value, for these are passages that do seem to be in disagreement with each other. I then examine Dewey's statements on inquiry very closely, paying particular attention to the works *How We Think*, *The Quest for Certainty*, and *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, as well as other texts and articles. In part 4, I reread Dewey's theory of inquiry as strongly supporting the traits of context-boundedness and self-correction.⁶ I provide what seem to me to be instances of similarity between contemporary epistemological thinking, as outlined in Michael Williams's *Problems of Knowledge*, and Dewey's theory of inquiry.

Chapter 3 deals with the relation of inquiry to Dewey's talk of experience. In part 1, I look at specific early criticisms and apologies of Dewey's talk of experience. In part 2, I do the same with respect to Dewey's contemporary critics and apologists. In these sections, I look at the possibility of reconceiving inquiry along the lines of Dewey sympathizers; that is, as an experiential endeavor. I turn to critics of this reading—philosophers and educators who suggest that a different set of problems emerges when one reads Dewey as privileging an inquiry that is chiefly experiential or, what I shall call in this chapter aesthetic, as opposed to scientific or positivistic. I also turn to proponents of this reading and lay out their arguments for why it is that conceiving of inquiry as experiential is superior to other conceptions. I conclude that the arguments for the view that inquiry is an experiential affair are, as put by Dewey's sympathizers, unsatisfactory. In part 3, I claim and defend the position that the way out of this impasse is to link the conclusion of the previous chapter—that Dewey should be read as advocating the traits of context-boundedness and self-

correction—with Dewey’s greatest aim for experience: growth. I concentrate heavily on Dewey’s experiential texts in this section: notably *Experience and Nature* and *Art as Experience*, as well as other texts and articles. I discuss growth fully in part 4 and define it as the continuous augmentation of the fund of one’s (satisfying) experience and meanings. I look again at Michael Williams’s *Problems of Knowledge* and discuss how Dewey anticipates solutions to prevailing problems in the theory of knowledge.

I turn to the question of inquiry and one of Dewey’s other chief aims, community, in chapter 4. I turn to early critics and supporters of Dewey in part 1: philosophers and educators that have taken the thinker to task for supposedly advocating a rationalized, bureaucratic, and expert society, in the service of corporate interests, and the attendant consequences this has for education, as well as early sympathizers of Dewey: those that have responded positively to Dewey’s theories of society and democracy. In part 2, I turn to contemporary critics and supporters of Dewey that have engaged in the same debates. I argue that, even in defending Dewey, these supporters see problems inherent in Dewey’s response to the critics’ concerns. I conclude that, rather than being dismissive of these concerns as some Dewey scholars have been, these be taken seriously. I argue that, as it stands, the issue remains begged, and further work remains to be done to see the way for Dewey to escape the charges. In part 3, I turn to Dewey. As in chapters 2 and 3, I look at statements of Dewey’s that give critics pause: statements that seem to support the claim that inquiry of a strongly scientific sort is the way to alleviating social concerns. I then present statements that run counter to these. Again, I suggest that these statements by themselves cannot address the quandaries arising from this state of affairs. I then address the concerns of the critics, and in so doing, argue that, if Dewey is to be read as not promoting these interests, then linking his notion of community tightly with inquiry and with education and growth is the best way out of this impasse. I make this argument with attention to Dewey’s “social” texts, notably *The Public and Its Problems*, *Individualism, Old and New*, *Theory of Valuation*, and *Freedom and Culture*, as well as other texts and articles. In part 4, I finish with a discussion of what the implications of rereading Dewey’s notion of community in this are for education theory, and I address at length the importance of how inquiry, growth, and community are to be read for the practice of what Dewey considered the most important institution for the development of growth, of community, and of democracy: school. I turn to statements that Dewey makes tying inquiry to the shared concerns of growth, community and democracy: those that arise out of particular school and classroom settings. I also look closely at Dewey’s laboratory for a democracy in miniature: the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago, 1896–1903. I believe that some of Dewey’s strongest statements on the role and scope of in-

quiry are to be found here, in his discussion of the classrooms, subject matters, and pedagogical techniques of the Laboratory School.

In chapter 5, I turn to the question of inquiry and Dewey's conception of democracy. Part 1 deals with Dewey's early critics and supporters. With regard to the critics, I demonstrate how and why it is that they are suspicious of Dewey's theory of inquiry as leading the community and the schools toward a nondemocratic, even war-supporting state. I then turn to an early sympathizer of Dewey's—Sydney Hook—and see whether he is able to defend Dewey from these charges. I then turn in part 2 to contemporary critics and supporters of Dewey: those who see pragmatic theory as unhelpful at best and democratically dangerous at worst, and those that dismiss these charges as unfounded. I conclude that Dewey's notion of democracy needs work. In part 3, I begin with statements of Dewey's: in this case, statements Dewey makes regarding the Great War, America's involvement in it, and the role and scope of education therein. I show that when juxtaposed, some statements seem to be in disagreement with others. Indeed, Dewey seems to be of two minds regarding America's involvement and the subsequent role for education. Taking Dewey's critics seriously, I argue that conceiving of Dewey's notion of democracy as bound to his other aims of inquiry, growth, community, and democracy is the best defense against the critics' charges. Here, I concentrate heavily on Dewey's statements on democracy in *Democracy and Education* and articles on the Great War. I finish by responding to those critics who see the future of pragmatism as a nontheoretical enterprise and agree, in the main, with these. I challenge, however, the reading of inquiry as wholly theoretical and suggest that, even if pragmatism turned away from theorizing, inquiry would still have work to do. In part 4, I conclude by noting the consequences that this reading of democracy sets for education theory.