# SO20 – AC – Pragmatism

### Framework (4:15)

#### Ethical questions arise in response to specific conditions and experiences in order to satisfy doubt. **Maddux 15**

[John Dewey’s Pragmatism: Implications for Reflection in Service-Learning Harry Clark Maddux Deborah Donnett Appalachian State University, Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning Spring 2015, Dr. Clark Maddux earned his PhD in American Studies from Purdue University in 2001] CL & SHS ZS

Understanding Dewey as a pragmatist entails evaluating many of our ideas about service-learning and particularly the role of reflection in it. There are four principal concepts in the philosophical tradition of pragmatism that bear on the practice of reflection in service-learning. First, **thought and learning begin in uncertainty**—**in situations that are ambiguous or dubious**. Second, **the outcomes of thought are habits of action that appease doubt**. Third, **the actions that resolve doubt also result in habits of mind that direct subsequent thought**. And fourth, **knowledge itself is productive: it results in behaviors and beliefs that have observable consequences on our own lives and on the mental as well as social lives of others**. **Reflection** as a way of learning necessarily **entails an** instrumental mode of **interrogation of existing schema of thought**. **It does not lead to new knowledge without** first causing us to **interrogate the strengths and weaknesses of our present intellectual habits**. Reflection arises as a result of a perplexing situation and as such one of its dominant characteristics is that it is disconcerting. As Dewey framed it in How We Think (1910), reflective thought is both “eulogistic and emphatic” (p. 4). **Reflection is where old thoughts are either put to rest or rehabilitated** and where a certain quality of indicativeness in our experience—a sense that what we encounter in uncertain moments of **existence implies more than bare perception**—**allows us to examine what is** both **sound** and unsound **in our current knowledge**. This means that **reflection is** something very **like an intellectual turning point in our lives**, and it deserves to be treated with that quality of seriousness. What we ask students to do **in reflection** is not reorder existing cognitive categories, but to **determine whether** or not **a new**, disruptive **experience can be assimilated into present frameworks, or if**, more radically, **one set of ideas must be put to rest so that new ones can**, albeit provisionally, **take their place**. The implications are, as this essay will attempt to show, that reflection can never be a blunt tool of active learning. As situational as inquiry itself, **reflection must emerge from the specific experience that gives rise to it** and, if new learning is to result, **lead to a re-evaluation of assumptions** (i.e., warrants of belief) and result in an instrumental claim that can be applied in later circumstances. Because this argument may seem counterintuitive, especially in light of the decades-long, though notably self-reported, success of service-learning in asking students to rethink their experience through reflection, we will endeavor to be explicit in how our ideas fit into the framework of the field. We begin by offering a necessarily truncated summary of the historical context of John Dewey and his brand of pragmatism. We explore how Dewey’s pragmatic ideas, what he called an “instrumental” approach to meaning (1903, p. 15), constitute responses to previous pragmatists. Next, we examine how the notion of reflection is typically construed in the service-learning literature. We will not attempt to be exhaustive in this review, but representative, summarizing early and formative considerations of reflection as well as more recent treatments of it. Finally, we explore the implications of Dewey’s philosophy as it relates to learning and reflection upon thought.

#### Conclusive judgements about principles cannot be made unless we fully experience them. Therefore, we must foster environments that allow for a reflection through experiences to create ethical progress. West 89.

[Cornel West, The American Evasion of Philosophy A Genealogy of Pragmatism, Cornel West, The University of Wisconsin Press, Cornel West is a prominent and provocative democratic intellectual. He is Professor of the Practice of Public Philosophy at Harvard University and holds the title of Professor Emeritus at Princeton University] CL & SHS ZS

For Dewey, **modern** **philosophy has five** paradigmatic **notions of experience**: first, **as a knowledge affair**; second, as **a psychical thing** shot through with "subjectivity"; third, as **registering what has taken place**, **with an exclusive focus on the past**; fourth, **as an aggregation of simple particulars**; and last, **as antithetical to thought**. For Dewey, these five governing conceptions of **experience constitute the** **pillars upon which rests** **the subject**-object epistemological problematic of modern philosophy. His own transactional conception of experience, buttressed by Darwinian biology and historical consciousness as well as rooted in Emersonian sensibilities, rejects each of these paltry ideas of experience. His three definitions of experience in the essay lay bare his rejection and threefold debt. **Experience is primarily a** **process of undergoing**: a process of standing something; of suffering and passion, of affection, in the literal sense of these words. **The organism has to endure,** to undergo, **the consequence of its own actions**. Experience, in other words, is a matter of simultaneous doings and sufferings. **Our undergoings are experiments in varying the course of events**; our active tryings are trials and tests of ourselves ... **Nothing can eliminate all risk, all adventure**. The obstacles which confront us are stimuli to variation, to novel response, and hence are occasions for progress. If biological development be accepted, the subject of experience is at least an animal, continuous with other organic forms in a process of more complex organization. An animal in turn is at least continuous with chemico-physical processes which, in living things, are so organized as really to constitute the activities of life with all their defining traits. And experience is not identical with brain action; it is the entire organic John Dewey agent-patient in all its interaction with the environment, natural and social. **The brain is primarily an organ** of a certain kind of behavior, **not of knowing the world**. And to repeat what has already been said, **experiencing is just certain modes of interaction, of correlation, of natural objects** among which the organism happens, so to say, to be one. It follows with equal force that **experience means primarily not knowledge, but ways of doing** and suffering. Knowing must be described by discovering what particular mode-qualitatively unique-of doing and suffering it is.46 89 Dewey's **metaphilosophy is essentially an act of intellectual regicide**; **he wants to behead modern philosophy by dethroning epistemology**. **For too long, modern philosophy has deferred to the authority of "knowledge" in the name of science, without questioning this authority and demystifying science**, i.e., bringing it down to earth, as it were. Therefore, the diversity, complexity, and plurality of experience have been "assimilated to a nonempirical concept of knowledge. "47 This impoverished empiricism "has said Lord, Lord, Experience, Experience, but in practice it has served ideas forced into experience, not gathered from it."48

#### Thus, that demands a pragmatic conception of truth and ongoing social inquiry. Ethics are never be static – the best possible moral results requires continual testing and refinement. **Arras.**

[PRAGMATISM IN BIOETHICS: BEEN THERE, DONE THAT, John D. Arras, © 2002 Journal of Social Philosophy & Policy Foundation, Porterfield Professor of Bioethics & Professor of Philosophy University of Virginia] CL & SHS ZS

Anyone in bioethics searching for methodological resources in pragmatism might naturally look to Dewey’s theory of experimental inquiry. While his books on ethics and politics discuss the substantive values that should inform our social thought, Dewey’s so-called “logical” works sketch a general, all-purpose approach to problem-solving that might prove useful 29 Nancy Dubler and Leonard Marcus, Mediating Bioethical Disputes (New York: United Hospital Fund of New York, 1994); Moreno, Deciding Together. 30 This collaborative and democratic model of contemporary bioethical practice contrasts sharply with H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr.’s characterization of bioethicists as moral experts and secular priests. See, in this volume, H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr., “The Ordination of Bioethicists as Secular Moral Experts.” Although Engelhardt tells a plausible story here about the rise of contemporary bioethics to public prominence against the backdrop of our society’s loss of faith in technocratic expertise and the public pronouncements of church leaders, his account of the social function of bioethicists is based upon highly selective evidence and, thus, bears little resemblance to the everyday reality of most bioethicists. PRAGMATISM IN BIOETHICS 41 to bioethicists seeking to refine their methods.31 **Although most philosophers understand “logic” to be a study of** the purely **formal relationships between concepts**, **Dewey conceived of his logic as** [is] **a general approach for finding fruitful solutions to any kind of scientific or social problem**. Dewey regarded the “scientific method” as a great human achievement that makes it possible for our species to rise above reflex and habit and to therefore control nature and predict the future. Although other pragmatists, such as Peirce, restricted the range of application of this method to the natural sciences, Dewey sought to extend it to moral and social thought as well. **Instead of resting the study of morals on mere intuition, Dewey sought to transform it into a field of scientific investigation**, a kind of “materials science” of the moral life.32 Thus, instead of accepting a dichotomy between science and social thought, Dewey proposed that we view natural and social phenomena as two domains approachable through the same intellectual methods. **The key similarity uniting the** natural and social **sciences with moral thought would be** a common emphasis on **experimentalism**. As Dewey sketched it in his book How We Think, this common pragmatic approach to problems involves the following logical steps: “(i) a felt difficulty; (ii) its location and definition; (iii) suggestion of possible solution; (iv) development by reasoning of the bearings of the suggestion; [and] (v) further observation and experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection.” 33 I suppose that interesting things might be said about steps (i)–(iv) that would help advance the discussion of methodology in bioethics, but I do not know what they are. **The necessity of identifying a serious** (i.e., “**felt**”) **problem**, **defining and locating it within a framework encompassing similar problems**, rehearsing possible solutions, and trying to figure out in advance the likely implications of each suggested solution **seems to me**, as it probably did to Dewey, to be nothing more than dressed up **common sense**. The fifth step, however, is more promising. Perhaps **the most crucial way in which moral thought needs to become more scientific**, according to Dewey, **resides in the ongoing experimental testing of its results**. **It is not enough to have** elevated feelings, confident intuitions, well-developed arguments, and even what we today would call **reflective equilibrium among** our intuitions, principles, and **theories**. The achievement of **the best possible moral results requires**, in addition, **a continuous process of confirming**, discrediting, and refining our **hypotheses about what should be done** or how society should be organized. Taking great pains to fasten onto a proposed means for solving a problem 31 See Glenn McGee, “Pragmatic Method and Bioethics,” in McGee, ed., Pragmatic Bioethics, 19: “John Dewey produced perhaps the clearest account of how pragmatism can revolutionize bioethics in his book about method, Logic: The Theory of Inquiry.” 32 Welchman, Dewey’s Ethical Thought, 68. 33 John Dewey, How We Think (Boston: Heath, 1910), 72, quoted in Miller et al., “Clinical Pragmatism,” 33. 42 JOHN D. ARRAS without bothering to examine how this solution actually works out in the real world is, for Dewey, a classic example of unintelligent thought and action. Yet one could argue that this is often standard operating procedure in bioethics. Take, for example, the problem of safeguarding the welfare and rights of patients and healthy volunteers enrolled in clinical trials and other varieties of human experimentation. For decades, bioethicists have been at the forefront of efforts to craft rules and regulations governing the conduct of research on human subjects. Particularly noteworthy are the federal regulations that articulated the relevant ethical principles and rules of conduct and established a vast system of institutional review boards (IRBs) charged with the important task of reviewing the ethical suitability of protocols on the local level. Although this system is currently undergoing increased scrutiny, many years have passed in which it was simply assumed that the system was working as it was designed to do. On the level of local IRBs, committees would dutifully scrutinize the risk/benefit ratios and consent forms of hundreds of protocols each year without ever investigating whether genuine informed consent was actually obtained in the clinic. Another classic example of this disconnection between theoretical elegance and concrete results is provided by the history of the living will in the United States. A great deal of ink has been spilled by bioethicists on the justifications of using living wills, on their supposed advantages and disadvantages, and on ways to expand their use by means of national and state legislation. But until fairly recently, no one thought it desirable or necessary actually to study the ways in which living wills affected (or, more to the point, failed to affect) clinical practice.34 As Dewey would have been the first to point out, though, living wills are most likely only one possible way of fostering the effective use of patients’ autonomy and helping them to secure a good (or at least decent) death. If studies show that living wills do not really alter physicians’ well-worn paths of clinical decision-making, then the bioethical community of inquiry needs to rethink its commitment to them. Perhaps some other, more systemic approach—that is, one relying less on the initiative of individual physicians—should be attempted and its comparative efficacy evaluated. At this point, a resourceful principlist might counter that a concern for the practical consequences of our elegantly articulated and theoretically justified practices could easily be accommodated within the existing methodological paradigm. She might argue, for example, that the principle of beneficence could be used to justify the sort of ongoing experimentalism called for by pragmatically oriented bioethicists. Since that principle encompasses a broad utilitarian concern for securing good consequences, 34 See, e.g., Alfred F. Connors et al., “A Controlled Trial to Improve Care for Seriously Ill Hospitalized Patients: The Study to Understand Prognoses and Preferences for Outcomes and Risks of Treatments (SUPPORT),” Journal of the American Medical Association 274, no. 20 (1995): 1591ff. PRAGMATISM IN BIOETHICS 43 the satisfaction of desires, and human happiness, then surely, it could be argued, it could justify ongoing scrutiny of the IRB system and the role of living wills in the care of actual, terminally ill patients. Indeed, if research subjects and dying patients would be better off in a society that did, in fact, routinely assess and refine its practices in these areas, then the principle of beneficence would require this sort of experimentalism—assuming, of course, that the costs of doing so were not excessively high

#### Thus, the standard is consistency with the methodological constraints of social inquiry.

#### Prefer additionally:

#### [1] Metaphysical realism – universal knowledge does not exist because humans determine truth through their biased perspective on the current state of affairs. Aaras.

Arras 2 [Arras, John D. "Pragmatism in bioethics: been there, done that." Social Philosophy and Policy 19.2 (2002): 29-58.] CL // SHS ZS

Writing near the end of his career in 1940, Dewey contended that “**any theory of activity in** social and **moral matters**, liberal or otherwise, **which is not grounded in a comprehensive philosophy**, **seems** to me to be only **a projection of arbitrary personal preferences**.” The classical **pragmatist** outlook **is premised on a rejection of** the doctrine of **metaphysical realism**. **Pragmatists claim that we cannot** intelligibly **posit a realm of reality that exists independently of our own** language, conceptual schemes, and **practical activity**. According to traditional philosophical doctrine, the job of human knowers is somehow to produce an adequate picture or representation of reality by means of ideas or perceptions. **Our statements or theories about something are “true” whenever they accurately correspond to or mirror the state of affairs in question.** **Pragmatists call this the “spectator view**” of human knowledge, and perhaps the only thing on which they all agree is that **this traditional philosophical approach to** **reality** and knowledge **must be resolutely rejected**. In lieu of the spectator view, **pragmatists propose a vision of human knowers as active**, embodied, social agents **whose projects and practices give rise to** **conceptual schemes through which they** see and **know the world**. In place of the disembodied, disengaged, solitary Cartesian subject who seeks a purely objective and dispassionate knowledge of the real, **the subjects of pragmatist philosophy are actively engaged in shaping the world that they attempt to know**. The **knowledge** they gain **will** necessarily **be colored by** their **interests**, their projects, and their conceptual schemes. As James put it: “The trail of the human serpent is over everything.” 22 “**Truth**,” for pragmatists, thus **has a lot more to do with “warranted assertability**” **and with what the** **community of inquirers will** eventually **settle on** than it does with correspondence to a reality that supposedly exists apart from our dealings with it. Given our thoroughly situated point of view, **truth for pragmatists will never be total or absolute**. Although our contact with the world and with other people is indisputable for pragmatists, **what we know about this world is always fallible**, **always subject to revision**. And while the Cartesian knowing subject attempts to erect a philosophical system on an absolutely secure foundation of indubitable truth, **the pragmatist views the corpus of human knowledge more holistically**. **The plausibility of any new proposition is thus related not to some rock-solid foundation, but rather to how well it can be integrated into our already existing stock of cognitive commitments.**23 An important implication of the rejection of the Cartesian spectator view of knowledge is an equally emphatic rejection of many traditional philosophical dualisms. Thus**, the dualism of subject and object**, so crucial to the Cartesian viewpoint, **is swept away in favor of a fully** contextualized **knowing subject**. The dualism of mind and body is replaced by a view of **human beings as biological** **organisms whose thinking is viewed as** one means among others of **adapting to an environment**. Likewise, **ethics is taken out of the** ethereal **realm of the absolute and the a priori** A pragmatist turns his back resolutely and once for all upon a lot of inveterate habits dear to professional philosophers.

#### [2] Rule-based theories fail – Moral laws are interpreted in varying ways dependent upon the places and conditions where they will be in use which means they are subjective and fail; pragmatism solves because it is a theory of epistemology and knowledge discovery and doesn’t assume one universal principal always holds true. Burbules 02.

[Burbules and Smeyers 02 (Nicholas C. Burbules, University of Illinois, Paul Smeyers, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, "WITTGENSTEIN, THE PRACTICE OF ETHICS, AND MORAL EDUCATION,” 2002)] SHS ZS

Wittgenstein seems to hold the position that **though our actions are guided by rules** and though people generally act in consistent ways, the **reasons** for this **cannot be spelled out fully**. It cannot exhaustively be made explicit, it remains inexpressible, yet art and evocative language may be able to touch upon it (this is what he tried to do in the Lecture on Ethics). It is about what one does, not about the reasons that may be given, which seem to be superfluous. Therefore, on his view, **a systematic moral philosophy will always and necessarily fail**. Wittgenstein often compared philosophical problems with being lost, with being trapped in a fly-bottle, with not knowing one’s way about. **Rules**, he says, **are like signposts suggesting a way to go**, **but the notion of rule-following** for him **was complex and subtle**, because **there is no one correct way to follow a rule**; and, as noted, he also says that **sometimes we have to make up the rules as we go**. At the same time, **it must be possible to make a mistake**; making the rules up does not mean just acting in any way one likes. So when can one say one has understood a rule, or knows how to follow it? When one can say, “now I know how to go on.” His [a] simple illustration here is a mathematical rule, like “add 2.” If you give someone the sequence, 2, 4, 6, 8... they understand the rule when they can “go on,” when they can continue with the sequence (...10, 12, and so on). But not all rule-following is this simple. First of all, **there may be more than one way to continue the sequence**, or more than one rule that would generate it — it is the doing that matters for Wittgenstein, not the articulation of a rule. Second, and following closely on this point, the person may not be able to articulate a rule even if asked. Here rule-following is akin to Michael Polanyi’s idea of tacit knowledge: understandings that enable complex activity and decision making, but which cannot be put exhaustively into words. Such **performative abilities are typically learned through observation and emulation**, trial and error, making and learning from mistakes, not through explicit instruction or explanation: novices must watch and participate in activities with experts as gradually over time they begin to “get it,” until they reach a point where, again, they can “go on” on their own. Hence, this Wittgensteinian argument suggests a different way, not based on spirituality or the transcendent, in which **some ethical understandings may be inexpressible in words** — namely, that they are matters of conduct, learned in context through observation and emulation, and performed more or less consistently without being the result of conscious deliberation or rule-following in the strict sense of that term. Again, in Wittgensteinian terms, there is simply what we do. At a home in which he was a guest, Wittgenstein was asked by one of his hosts whether he would like some tea. Her husband, overhearing, called to her, “Do not ask — give!” This comment “most favorably impressed” Wittgenstein (Malcolm, p. 61), and this anecdote suggests a flavor of what we are talking about. For Wittgenstein, one should be gracious and generous without thinking about it, without asking, just by knowing what the proper thing is to do. There seems to be a touch here of Zen; somehow, without speaking or thinking, one simply intuits in the instant what the proper course of action should be. But Polanyi’s theory gives an alternative account of this process: that it has more to do not with mystical intuitions, but with learned habits and responses that arise from familiarity with a situation and a group of other people.

#### [3] Consequences fail – A. Induction fails – the logic of looking to the past to predict the future is all premised in the past, so it’s circular. B. Aggregation fails – there’s no way to weigh between different forms of pain and pleasure. C. Butterfly effect – no way to know when we cut off looking at consequences. D. Culpability – there are an infinite number of pretenses for actions which means assigning culpability is impossible which is necessary for a moral theory to ascribe blame for actions.

#### [4] Materiality – A Deweyan pragmatist philosophy does not devolve to abstract moral questions but shows why ethics ought to be embedded in context and materiality – only this understanding allows us to appreciate knowledge as contextual, leaving room for social improvement and revision of ideas. Glaude 7.

Glaude 7 [In a Shade of Blue: Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America By Eddie S. Glaude, Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the chair of the Center for African-American Studies and the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African-American Studies at Princeton University, University of Chicago Press, 2007] CL // SHS ZS

John **Dewey thought** of **philosophy as a form of** cultural and **social criticism**. He held the view that **philosophy**, properly understood as a mode of wis-dom, **ought to aid us** in our efforts to **overcome problematic situations** and worrisome circumstances. **The principal charge of the philosopher**, then, **is to deal with** the problems of **human beings**, not simply with the problems of philosophers. For Dewey, over the course of his long career, this involved bridging the divide between science, broadly understood, and morals—a divide he traced to a conception of experience that has led philosophers over the centuries to tilt after windmills. Dewey declared, "The problem of restoring integration and co-operation between man's - beliefs about the world in which he lives and his beliefs about values and purposes that should direct his conduct is the deepest problem of any phi-losophy that is not isolated from life."' Dewey bases this conclusion on several features of his philosophy: **(1) antifoundationalism, (2) experimentalism, (3) contextualism, and (4) soli-darity**.1° **Antifoundationalism**, of course, **is the rejection of foundations of knowledge that are beyond question**. **Dewey**, by contrast, **understands knowledge to be the fruit of our undertakings** as we seek "the enrichment of our immediate experience through the control over action it exercises."" **He insists** that **we turn our attention** from supposed givens **to** actual con-sequences, pursuing **a future fundamentally grounded in values shaped by experience** and realized in our actions. This view makes clear the experi-mental function of knowledge. Dewey emphasized that **knowledge entails efforts to control and select future experience** and that we are always con-fronted with the possibility of error when we act. **We experiment or tinker**, with the understanding that all facts are fallible and, as such, occasionally afford us the opportunity for revision." **Contextualism refers to an understanding of beliefs**, choices, and ac-tions **as historically conditioned**. Dewey held the view that inquiry, or **the pursuit of knowledge**, is value-laden, in the sense that we **come to prob-lems with interests and habits that orient us one way or another**, and **that such pursuits are also situational**, in the sense that "knowledge is pursued and produced somewhere, somewhen, and by someone."" Finally, soli-darity captures the associational and cooperative dimensions of Dewey's thinking. Dewey conceives of his **pragmatism as "an instrument of social improvement" aimed principally at expanding democratic life and broad-ening the ground of individual self-development**.'4 **Democracy**, for him, constitutes more than a body of formal procedures; it **is a form of life that requires constant attention if we are to secure the ideals that purportedly animate it**. Individuality is understood as developing one's unique capaci-ties within the context of one's social relations and one's community. The formation of the democratic character so important to our form of asso-ciated living involves, then, a caring disposition toward the plight of our fellows and a watchful concern for the well-being of our democratic life. With these four general features in mind, Dewey's view is consistent, as one would expect, with the characterization of pragmatism provided by Williams James. In Pragmatism, James powerfully describes **the pragmatist as one who turns away from abstraction and insufficiency**, from verbal solutions, **from bad a priori reasons**, from fixed principles, closed systems, **and pretended absolutes and origins**. **He turns towards concreteness and adequacy**, towards facts, towards action, and **towards power**.... It means the open air and pos-sibilities of nature, as against . . . dogma, artificiality, and the pretence of finality.'

#### [5] Pluralism – only a pragmatic theory ensures that the state can cater towards the agendas of different groups – government is not a static entity but rather is always evolving and a stage for negotiation. Ralston 11.

Ralston 11 [Shane J. In Defense of Democracy as a Way of Life: A Reply to Talisse’s Pluralist Objection sites.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/9354/2011/09/InDefenseDemocracyWayLife-SRalston.pdf] CL // SHS ZS

In this penultimate section, I present Dewey’s pluralist procedure and offer an illustration of democracy-as-a-way-of-life-in-action: the ‘reasonable accommodation’ debate in Québec, Canada. The reason for examining this case study is not only to illustrate how procedures central to Deweyan democracy operate in practical politics, but also to challenge an implicit assumption of Talisse’s objection, namely, that a single reasonable objection to a democratic theory is sufficient to disqualify it.89 **What is Dewey’s pragmatic standard of inclusion**? **It** is a highly, though by no means exclusively, procedurals standard that **asks** **and answers two questions**. The first question pertains to the plurality of interests held in common by different groups—even those espousing divergent beliefs and conflicting worldviews. Specifically, it queries those affected groups, “**How numerous and varied are the interests which are commonly shared**?”**90The second question concerns whether these groups are open to readjusting the ways in which they associate.** It asks, “How full and free is the interplay [of conventional forms of association] with other forms of association?”91 **Thus, Dewey’s procedure for addressing** the fact of **pluralism might be called the ‘mutual interest and associative flexibility’** standard of inclusion. According to this two-step procedure, **members of different groups**, first, **identify their shared interests and**, second, **propose novel and flexible ways for associating in order to address their shared problems.** **No part of this procedure is coercive or “oppressive**” as measured against Rawls’s standard of reasonable pluralism. **Moreover, no part requires that groups subordinate their separate worldviews to what Talisse terms “a substantive conception of democracy**.” Furthermore, n**o part coerces citizens to conform their values and ways of life to a governmentally endorsed regime of value commitments**, or an official conception of the good life. According to Larry Hickman, “Pragmatism holds that cultural difference per se is not an occasion that calls for inquiry, but only cultural difference that leads to a situation in which there are mutually exclusive claims about what is to be done.”92 Therefore, **democracy as a way of life represents a method, not a state-sponsored worldview**—**a procedure for negotiating, though not permanently resolving, the deeply divisive and sometimes intractable differences between groups beholden to competing forms of life.** In this way, Dewey’s democratic theory resembles, as William Caspary suggests, a framework for understanding democracy as a method for mediating conflicts.93 To demonstrate how Dewey’s pluralist procedure functions in a practical political setting, I would like to examine a recent public policy debate in Canada. When a law or norm is contrary to the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, the government has a legal obligation to modify the law or norm accordingly—to, in effect, accommodate reasonable differences between individuals and groups within a liberal regime of procedures and rules. For instance, despite the legal requirement that all voters show their face when casting a ballot, Elections Canada has permitted an exemption for Muslim women wearing the niqab (veil) or burka.94 Though these exemptions are wellintentioned, heated dispute has arisen at the margins. Those groups whose members have been granted exemptions face rival groups claiming that the exemptions violate norms of fair and equal treatment. In the province of Québec, the public debate has oscillated between civil confrontation and xenophobic denunciations. The question at issue is, under what circumstances does accommodation become unreasonable?95 To address the escalating tensions between these groups and In Defense of Democracy as a Way of Life: A Reply to Talisse’s Pluralist Objections • Shane J. Ralston 645 their competing ways of life, the provincial government has established a commission composed of two renowned Canadian public intellectuals.96 The Reasonable Accommodation Commission consults with academics, policy leaders and members of the rival groups. Though the results have been mixed, an institutional form (viz. the Commission) has been established as an initial step towards progressively arbitrating, though not permanently settling, the contested nature of what constitutes reasonable (versus unreasonable) accommodation.97 To appreciate the significance of the ‘reasonable accommodation’ debate for my overall argument, it helps to consider the rationale for examining this and other case studies. One reason is to show that in the context of practical politics it would be unreasonable to accept Talisse’s low threshold for invalidating a democratic theory, viz., a single reasonable objection. Instead, if Dewey’s democratic theory is to be criticized internally—or to borrow Talisse’s phrase, “on its own pragmatic grounds”—the theory must be evaluated with respect to its practical consequences for actual public policies. Does the Canadian policy respect the ethnic, cultural, religious and philosophical differences among citizens? Does it enhance political legitimacy and regime stability? Does it tend to bring about fair and just outcomes? Answering these kinds of questions does not fall solely within the preserve of philosophers or democratic theorists. In the real world of democratic politics, policy questions such as these are rarely sequestered to faculty seminars for philosophers and democratic theorists to settle.98 Instead, questions of this type are matters of public policy, addressing problems that are better left to ordinary citizens and their representatives to deliberate about, negotiate over and decide on appropriate policy solutions to. If political philosophers and democratic theorists have any role to play in the policy process, it is that of public intellectuals attempting to persuade their fellow citizens to see the value in sharing their views—a role to which Dewey was no stranger.99 In the world of rough-andtumble politics, unlike the faculty seminar room, a single objection, even if reasonable, is rarely enough to disqualify a candidate theory that would, by its adoption, likely improve our political practices, or the methods by which we solve our common problems. So, Talisse has more work to do if he hopes to successfully convince a critical mass of citizens and policy-makers—let alone pragmatists and Deweyans—to say “farewell to Deweyan democracy.”100

#### [6] History – Past experiences cannot be viewed as static and the sole precedent for knowledge production; it is also about projection and future anticipation. We cannot reduce experience to one psychical concept – it is simply an element in our framework of understanding the world. Glaude 7.

[Glaude 7 on Dewey 2, Eddie S. (Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the chair of the Center for African-American Studies and the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African-American Studies at Princeton University.) In a Shade of Blue : Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America. University of Chicago Press, 2007. EBSCOhost. (83-85) NP 3/3/17.] SHS ZS

John Dewey’s seminal essay “The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy,” critiques not so much the failure of his age as the scholasticism and conservatism of professional philosophy.38 Dewey believes that **modern philosophy suffers from cultural and social irrelevance because its major pre-occupation** (securing the epistemological remedy to our subject-object ailments) **yields bad ways of thinking about experience**. Consequently, he believes, **philosophy fails to speak to our everyday doings** and sufferings. **Dewey aims**, then, **to emancipate philosophy from** a “too **intimate and exclusive attachment to traditional problems**” in order to make what philosophers do—that is, to envision, imagine, and reflect—useful in deal-ing with our problems. This may at first seem unrelated to the problem of history in black theology, but it is precisely in Dewey’s discussion of ex-perience, and the notion of contingency that it presupposes, that the idea of history serving us takes on added significance. As Dewey writes inDemocracy and Education: “**Past events cannot be separated from the living present and retain meaning**. **The true starting point of history is always some present situation with its problems**.”39Dewey contrasts traditional conceptions of experience with notions he views as more congenial to present conditions. **In the views he dismisses, experience is regarded as, above all, concerned with knowledge**, **a psychical thing in which the past counts exclusively and reference to precedent is believed to be its essence**. The empirical tradition, then, is committed to particularism. **Connections and continuities are supposed to be foreign to experience, and experience and thought are antithetical terms**.40 Each of these orthodox views of experience deepens the subject-object problematic at the heart of modern philosophy. Dewey responds by arguing that **knowing can be properly understood only as a functional activity in the context of experience**. We think or in-quire within experience, for inquiry arises as we encounter difficult problems or meddlesome circumstances. Understood in this way, **experience includes both the act of experiencing and the experience**, what William James referred to as the double-barreled sense of the word. “Like its congeners, life and history,” Dewey writes, “[experience] includes what men do and suffer, what they strive for, love, believe and endure, and also how men act and are acted upon, the ways in which they do and suffer, desire and enjoy, see, believe, imagine—in short, processes ofexperiencing.”41As such, **experience cannot be reduced to simply a psychical thing**. **The problem**, then, **is not whether there is epistemic justification for the existence of a world outside our ideas but, rather, how we go about dealing and coping intelligently with our environment**.42For Dewey, such activity necessarily entails a degree of randomness, be-cause, as I suggested in chapter 1,“any reaction is a venture; it involves risk.” But **to the extent that we generate the foresight to anticipate future consequences in our present doings and sufferings, we engage in intelligent activity**. **He** therefore **rejects the notion that “the past exclusively counts.**” **Experience**, for Dewey, **is prospective; it is as much about projection and anticipation as it is about recollection and memory**. Dewey warns us to **be suspicious of eulogistic predicates**: invocations of permanence, essence, totality, verum et bonum, **and the** like **lead to an artificial simplification of our lives**.43Echoing in some ways Nietzsche, Dewey argues: “**If[the past] were wholly gone and done with, there would be only one reasonable attitude towards it. Let the dead bury the dead**.”44This connection to the future is the primary basis for critical intelligence—the primary basis, that is, for insisting on our active presence in the world. **Critical intelligence is forward-looking, and only by ignoring this, Dewey argues, “does it become a mere means for an end already given**. The latter is servile, even when the end is labeled moral, religious or esthetic.”45This prospective orientation presupposes that connections and relations are constitutive of our experiences and that we can infer from these experiences standards and norms that will help us in the future. In the orthodox view of experience, our doings and sufferings provide us no guidance for moral and social behavior. Dewey argues, however, that **it is through critical examination of our experiences that we are able to articulate our obligations intelligently and to decide**, without guarantee of success, **what is best for us to do under specific circumstances**. Let me quote in full a passage that, up to now, I have only referred to in fragments: **Experience is primarily a process of undergoing: a process of standing some-thing; of suffering and passion, of affection, in the literal sense of these words. The organism has to endure, to undergo, the consequences of its own actions**. . . . Experience, in other words, is a matter of simultaneous doings and sufferings. Our undergoings are experiments in varying the course of events; our active tryings are trials and tests of ourselves.46What is interesting about **Dewey’s conception of experience is not only his rejection of modern philosophy’s obsession with the “given,” but the role history assumes in our lives once we take his conception of experience seriously.**

#### [7] Historiography – pragmatism helps reconcile the past history of slavery that dominated the American culture to frame how we ethically make decisions today. Glaude 7.

[Glaude 7 on Dewey 3, Eddie S. (Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the chair of the Center for African-American Studies and the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African-American Studies at Princeton University.) In a Shade of Blue : Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America. University of Chicago Press, 2007. EBSCOhost. (45-46) NP 3/3/17.] SHS ZS

I have argued in this chapter that John Dewey’s philosophy presupposes a tragic vision and that a pragmatic view of tragedy is one in which any sit-uation properly called moral entails competing and conflicting values. **Dewey sees conflict and uncertainty as constitutive** and ineliminable **features of our moral experience.** For him, **there are no guaranteed outcomes** when we choose between conflicting values. **We learn from tragedy** that crude reductions of the complexity of our moral lives can lead to an exclusive attachment to one value and disregard for another.77 **Dewey**, by contrast, **commends a process of intelligently guided experimentation** in a world we acknowledge is shot through with contingency. **We seek to secure our world**, then, not **by** way of quests for certainty but rather by practical means, **exposing our vulnerability** as fragile, finite creatures to the perils of evil. To render Dewey’s philosophy of action in slogan like form: There is so much in the world that we cannot control. **We should seek to control intelligently that which we can**, bearing in mind that even when we succeed, the hazardous character of our world is only modestly modified, never eliminated. **Intelligence**, in this view, **must be understood within the context of a** generally **humble orientation to the universe**. In relation to all that is, we are small and our world is far from grand. Yet Dewey failed to address the evils of white supremacy in his work. To be sure, his influence looms large among African Americans who have struggled to end racism in the United States.78 But he himself never substantively engaged the problems of racism in any of his major work. Such an engagement would not only have offered powerful resources for thinking about certain conceptual problems plaguing African American politics but would also have made explicit the tragic dimensions of American pragmatism. My reading of Toni Morrison’s Beloved is an attempt to re-construct a pragmatic view of the tragic in light of the devastating effects of white supremacy that continue to haunt American democracy. **Slave narratives sought melodramatically to disclose the evil at the heart of American democracy**. Morrison’s reconstruction of those **stories provides a glimpse into the tragic choices made and the consequences endured in the face of that evil**. The tragic choices that we as a nation have made in regard to race—the butchering of precious ideals, as William James putit—have, ironically, made possible our present way of life. **The knowledge that we gain from America’s past can**, however, **equip us to engage intelligently the problems that prevent democracy’s realization**. **By countering** immodest claims of America’s greatness and inevitable triumph **with the brutal reality of broken black bodies** and souls, that past, in all of its complicated beauty, **humbly orients us to the world of action**. **Beloved is a story which insists that our reflections on the future of American democracy** **begin with the remarkable irony at its root**. For me, this is the lesson the novel renders to Dewey and to pragmatism generally: if we are to think se-riously about American democracy, **we must come to terms with the tragedy of race and how it has shaped not only the life of the nation but also the choices of a blues people so deeply shaped by it**. It is to those choices, so indelibly marked by quests for certainty and security amid the brutality of others, that I now turn.

#### [8] Self-worth – A pragmatist understanding of identity as ontic not ontological enables individuals to maintain a sense of self-worth while reconciling with inevitable tragedy. West 89.

[West 89 summarizes and quotes Hook, Cornel. (Cornel Ronald West (born June 2, 1953) is an American philosopher, political activist, social critic, author, and public intellectual). The American Evasion of Philosophy : A Genealogy of Pragmatism. University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. The Wisconsin Project on American Writers. Pg 121-22. NP 2/26/17.] SHS ZS

In his conclusion, Hook adopts a Deweyan rhetoric, fused with Emersonian tropes of human creativity and possibility but purged of any utopian, optimistic, and subversive Emersonian elements. As I understand **the pragmatic perspective** on life, it **is an attempt** to make it possible for men **to live in a world of inescapable tragedy**-a tragedy **that flows from** the **conflict of moral ideals-without** lamenta-tion, defiance or make-believe. According to this perspective, even in the best of human worlds there will be tragedy-tragedy perhaps without bloodshed, but certainly not without tears ... **Pragmatism** ... **sees** in men something which is at once, to use the Sophoclean phrase, more wonderful and more terrible than anything else in the universe, viz., **the power to make themselves and the world around them better or worse**. In this way**, pragmatic meliorism avoids** ... **romantic pessimism** ... **and grandiose optimism**. Pragmatism, as I interpret **it, is the theory and practice of enlarging human freedom** in a precarious and tragic world by the arts of intelligent social control. It may be a lost cause. I do not know of a better one, and it may not be lost if we can summon the courage and intelligence to support our faith in freedom-and enjoy the blessings of a little luck.27 Unlike Emerson, Peirce, James, and Dewey, **Hook conveys the sense of being cramped and constrained, a feeling of being hemmed in.** He affirms the voluntaristic and moralistic aspects of the Emersonian theodicy, **yet he refuses to accept the Emersonian idea that the world is somehow con-genial to human-especially American-aspirations**. Hook believes **neither nature nor history is biased in favor of human progress.** In direct reference to Emerson, Hook writes: Even those unconventionally religious men like Emerson and Whitman who accept the world, and believe that man [people] can find security in cheerful affirmation of the natural conditions of his being, must recognize that **Nature is no respecter of human purposes or human existence**, that Nature can run amok-that the sufferings produced by the mindless intrusions of fire, ice, flood and wind in human affairs often dwarf those resulting from human cruelty. Jehova or Nature are bound by no rules of man.

### Offense (0:55)

#### **[1] Democracy –**Compulsory voting allows for the exchange of ideas and development within democracies, aiding knowledge production and discovery. **Hill 13.**

Hill 13 [Lisa Hill- “Deliberative Democracy and Compulsory Voting” ELECTION LAW JOURNAL Volume 12, Number 4, researchgate.net/publication/312057361\_Deliberative\_Democracy\_and\_Compulsory\_Voting 2013] UT AI

Therefore, some **deliberative democrats have** come to terms with existing practices of democracy, **conceding that** ‘‘[**v]oting and representation are** practically **necessary’’** (Bohman, 1998: 412, 416). After all, **a decision eventually has to be made: first we deliberate, then we vote**.4 O ne advantage of **voting** is that it ‘‘**settles the issue’’** **and results in a** decision and a **binding obligation** that enables us to get on with doing the things that need to be done for the benefit of all (Mackie, 2008: 6). If it is true that deliberative democracy is not so much an ‘‘alternative to representative democracy’’ as ‘‘an expansion of representative democracy’’ (Chambers, 2003: 308)5 then it is worthwhile to reflect on means by which **elections can be rendered more legitimate and authentic in the eyes of** both **aggregative and deliberative democrats**. The idea here is to explore what kinds of elections, ideally, should follow the deliberation stage. While there may be a number of possible answers to this question, I consider here the compatibility of **compulsory voting** with deliberative ideals. Procedural/participatory democrats **share** with deliberative democrats **a desire for authenticity and legitimacy**. Although they define these ideals differently, something they have in common is **a desire for decision making that is free from distortions of unequal political power**, reflecting a ‘‘form of manifest equality among citizens’’ (Cohen, 2009: 19; Dahl, 1979: 124–5). They both also value democratic practices that ‘‘embody the essential democratic principles of responsiveness to public wishes’’ (Parkinson, 2003: 180). As Robert Dahl, speaking for the proceduralists, would put it, ‘‘**the people must have the final say’’**; they ‘‘must be sovereign’’ (1979: 98–108). I argue here that compulsory voting is better able than voluntary voting to deliver legitimacy and authenticity,6 due to its capacity to deliver high and socially even turnout.7 Not only are **such elections more inclusive and less subject to distortions of unequal political power, they are also better able to reflect the objective interests of voters**. Although the latter does not equate to the disinterested pursuit of the ‘‘common good’’ as per the preference of deliberative democrats,8 one can safely say that such an outcome is superior to a situation where only certain sections of the population have their interests served. They can at least, be present at what Dahl (1979) refers to as the ‘‘decisive stage’’ so as to participate in self-government, protect their own interests and be part of the mutual enterprise of democracy.

#### That outweighs, deliberative democracies allow for the actualization of pragmatist principles. Rogers 1.

[Rogers 1, Melvin. (Melvin L. Rogers is currently the Scott Waugh Chair in the Division of the Social Sciences and Associate Professor of Political Science and African American Studies at UCLA.) Liberalism, Narrative, and Identity: A Pragmatic Defense of Racial Solidarity. 2002. NP 3/12/17.] SHS ZS

To begin, **deliberative democracy acts** both **as a device for achieving political justification and** a **problem-solving** mechanism. It aims at justification because it demands, as Joshua Cohen argues, that **the legitimacy of** the "**terms and conditions** of association **proceed through public argument and reasoning** among equal citizens."[70] But it is simultaneously a problem-solving activity to the extent that **deliberation** in public forums **is context specific**; it **grows out of problems or tensions that develop** in the course of collective organization **that demand citizens to reason dialogically** as to possible solutions.[71] The product of deliberation is registered directly or through legislative representatives, and this in turn connects deliberation to actual legislative institutions that can produce change. It places emphasis on equality, the freedom of individuals from coercion, and publicity. Although this last feature has been the source of disagreement, for our purposes it means that reasons offered in the public sphere regarding proposals must be accessible by the audience to which it is addressed.[72] So political institutions in the U.S. that foster structures that support free and public deliberation can be understood, on one level, as more or less legitimate to that extent. I say "on one level" since **deliberative democrats wish** to say **something substantive about the legitimacy of deliberation** that accrue to the outcome rather than the procedure itself. So the system is never legitimate so long as the procedure is fair, but must also be assessed by its ability to extend more substantive goods such as equality of opportunity. ￼￼￼45. This should immediately draw us to our previous discussion relating to reciprocal accountability. But it is important to see that it works on two different fronts. The first of these is the relationship between individuals and political representatives. The second is the relationship among citizens. Let us take up the first of these. 46. 47. **Deliberative democrats require** as part of their justificatory matrix that "**others" see the validity of the principles that underwrite political and economic institutions** and the policies that follow. **This is vital to the** understanding of the **public sphere** that deliberative democrats endorse. **The public sphere is an arena in which individuals understand themselves as members of a political community** **to the extent that they can register their opinions in response to potential laws and policies** and those already in existence to influence their shape. So if fairness and equality are to be secured for historically excluded groups, **public policies must**, by dint of their claims to legitimacy, **gain the assent of those who they claim to serve or those most likely to be affected**. So, for example, **deliberation about** what **sanctions** should be put in place **to** effectively **deal with racial profiling** in legal enforcement units **cannot** legitimately **get off the ground if those most impacted by profiling are excluded from the conversation**. Yet, we all know that topics can be excluded from the agenda, and specific problems such as racial profiling can be blocked from being thematized. However, **reciprocal accountability views policy responses to discrimination and the historical results of racism**, or the absence of such policies by political officials as actions for which they can be held to give an account. If "others" can see the rationality of policies, they can also dispute policy agenda setting by pointing to important features of social reality (i.e. blacks being indiscriminately pulled over on interstate highways) that are necessary to do justice to justice. To see the validity of **political principles and policies is to understand them to be candidates for praise and endorsement or blame and rejection.** And so **this institutionalizes a** **mechanism of opposition**, the nature of which not only contributes to the strength of legitimacy, but is also its life's blood. **This begins to shift our emphasis** from the institutions that support deliberation**, to the content of deliberation that is coextensive** with what legitimizes its outcome. If social identities, actions, and institutional developments are constituted through narrative, then **deliberation must also be narratively mediated in the public sphere to understand the recurring presence of race and racial solidarity**. In other words, one cannot adequately describe the process of deliberation and its origination without presupposing the elements of narrativity. Deliberation's origination in the pressures of collective organization underscores the centrality of setting; its attempt to follow changes in the environment as information for a possible reorientation in action denotes its temporal dimension; and its goal to achieve intersubjective understanding becomes possible because of acknowledged reciprocal accountability. Thus, **deliberation turns out to be an instantiation of narrativity.** Given this, **political legitimacy itself is narratively formed through an on-going dialogue regarding political principles and the institutionalization of policies** among those who share a common political horizon. Let me first try to say something about what this does for conversations about race.

#### [2] Self-Reflection – Compulsory voting forces people to reflect on their experiences, values, and ethics, when making a decision for their own political candidate. Fostering this self-reflection helps achieve the pragmatist ideal of reevaluating experiences to guide future ethics and values. This outweighs –its procedural that is intrinsic to the aspect of voting.

#### [3] Participation – By involving more people in the political arena, we are able to better incorporate and understand the experiences of other subjects. This is key – we need to best understand the world around us and open ourselves to new perspectives to best guide ethics.

### Underview (0:45)

# Frontlines

## Extensions

### Generic Overview

#### Questions of ethics are formed through specific human experiences. We therefore have to embrace new ethical experiences in order to best develop our ethics and engage in meaning creation – that necessitates following a pragmatist framework.

### Framework

### Offense

#### [Democracy] Extend the democracy offense which says CV allows for the exchange of ideas and development with democracies; that best improves the process of a deliberative democracy which is good under a pragmatist framework because it allows for more deliberation and experience to be incorporated into the political sphere, developing ethics.

#### [Self-Reflection] Extend the self-reflection offense which says CV forces people to reflect upon their own experiences and values when choosing a poltical candidate which aids in the development and experimation for new ethical principles under the frameowrk. This outweighs – it’s procedural because it forces people to think about what necessitates a good ethical theory when choosing a candidate.

#### [Participation] Extend the participation offense which says involving more people in the political arena is an intrinsic good because we can incorporate more perspectives and understand the experiences of even more ehtical subejcts to develop the best guide to ethics.

## AT Ks

### Afropess

#### [Overview] Questions of ethics are formed through specific human experiences. Afropess was developed to reconcile the ontological dimension of blackness after the middle passage – that proves the validity of the framework. Since ethics are never static, we must embrace pragmatism and subject ourselves to new experiences to learn more.

#### [Ontology takeout] Extend the 1st point, Aaras, which says universal truth cannot exist because all agents form ethics based on their subjective experiences that cannot exist independently of their practical activity. Experiences literally defines the subject, and since all subjects have different upbringings, they will understand the world in different ways – even among black people. That takes out ontology which is dependent upon a universal understanding of identity.

#### [Ontology takeout] Extend the 6th point, Glaude 7, which says past experiences cannot be the sole determiner for knowledge production. This takes out ontology, we cannot phrase an entire ethics on the middle passage, because we have to consider how *experience will frame the future*, not only how it defines the past relations. An analysis only grounded in the past is far too static and not forward looking enough.

#### [Perm; Unflinching Analysis] Extend the 7th point, Glaude 7. Pragmatism helps reconcile the history of slavery and justifies engaging in an unflinching paradigmatic of the way blackness structures society by using experience to frame future ethics. That justifies the permutation, use the aff’s methodology is a prerequisite to engaging in the kritik’s alt. The net benefit is an improvement in the ethics and material conditions for blackness.

#### [Perm; Understands Pessimism] Perm, do both: adopt the kritiks anti-state orientation while understanding that that certain actions can improve the material safety of blacks even if the system of anti-blackness can’t be removed. Wilderson agrees with reform- it should be combined with the alt.

[Wilderson 16 (Frank B. III, interviewed by Samira Spatzek and Paula von Gleich, “‘The Inside-Outside of Civil Society’: An Interview with Frank B. Wilderson, III.” Black Studies Papers, 2.1 (2016): 4–22, https://www.academia.edu/26032053/\_The\_Inside-Outside\_of\_Civil\_Society\_An\_Interview\_with\_Frank\_B.\_Wilderson\_III) OS] SHS ZS

The question is, can Black political organizing in Ferguson and Balti-more and these places catch up with that, because unfortunately, we have a problem in that the country is so much more of a police state than it has ever been and you know that just by watching television. When I was in school, if you liked the American flag, if you liked the police, you didn’t have any friends. Now, I find young college students are very slow to say that they hate America, very slow to say that they hate the police. **What we’re trying to do now is** to **infuse an antagonistic orientation in Black people who are white-collar** people in college so that their intellectual skills can be enhanced by the orientation that is felt by Black people in the ghetto. **If this doesn’t happen they run risk of being anointed** and ap-pointed (by the power structure) **to manage the anger of Black people** in the street, **rather than relate to that anger.** So that’s a hurdle that we have to overcome. You know, I’ve been doing political education workshops for Black Lives Matter in New York and Los Angeles, and probably will do more in Chicago. And what I hope to have people do workshop exercises around is this concept that I have called “Two Trains Running (Side by Side).” By that I mean, **you can do your political organizing that will help us get relief from police brutality right now**. **We need that**. We need that. But that **work that we do should be seen as puny in terms of its philosophical and theoretical orientation so that we can educate ourselves politically** to be against the police as an institution and against the United States as a country, even while we are working to reform police practices, because we do not have the strength right now that we had in the 1960s and 1970s to act in the way the Black Liberation Army did, or Baader-Meinhof, we do not have the strength to act in the revolutionary mode, but that lack of strength, that lack of capacity, should not contaminate our orientation. **We should not feel that we have to accept the existence of police even if we’re working in reformist measures politically**. Hopefully this idea of two trains running will pick up. **Black Lives Matter has done a great job in opening up a new Black political organizing space**. That’s great. Now **let’s use that space for an educational project that is soundly anti-American, and soundly anti-police even if tactically, we have to work for police reforms.**

#### [Perm; Allows for Optimism] Perm – vote aff to embrace my conception of identity as co-constituted by experience and action. Your essentialist and reductive understanding of black identity erases particularity and deprives the black community of agency.

[Glaude 7, Eddie S. (Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the chair of the Center for African-American Studies and the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African-American Studies at Princeton University.) In a Shade of Blue : Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America. University of Chicago Press, 2007. EBSCOhost. (78-79) NP 3/3/17.] SHS ZS

In my view, three difficulties—descriptive, theoretical, and existential—attend such accounts. The descriptive problematic involves the plotline of the story. I am reminded here of James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison’s criti-cisms of Richard Wright. Both worried that **Wright’s representations of black life betrayed the complexity of African American existence**. **The same can be said of stories** of African American experience **that are mainly about liberation and presuppose a subject in constant struggle**. **There is much more to** our **living** **than** simply **resisting white supremacy**. More-over, **the singular focus** often **results in a relatively coherent** **account in which the internal fissures of black communities are obscured**. **Suffering and resistance** then **subordinate all other considerations**—**even** the **dif-ferential experience of that suffering** and the different aims of resistance. The theoretical problematic refers to the Christian dimension of the problem of being both black and Christian. Like Anderson, I worry that God talk among black theologians, at least in their worst moments, functions merely as a source of the strenuous mood, serving simply to justify and sanctify a particular political orientation—even though it is precisely in our relation to God and His relation to us that we resist oppression.24.Lastly, **the existential problematic** again **entails a simplification of the complexity of African American lives**. The existential involves how to live, how to hope, and how to love. But **if our lives are reduced simply to struggle** and our stories presume an understanding of black agency as always already political, then **the various ways we have come to love and hope are cast into the shadows** as we obsess about politics, narrowly un-derstood, and as History orients us retrospectively instead of prospec-tively. **We end up**, despite our best intentions, **ignoring the sheer joy of black life** and unwittingly reducing our capacity to reflect and act in light of the hardships of our actual lives. Perhaps, more importantly, “our abil-ity to make delicate distinctions” is lost as History settles beforehand the difficult existential questions “Who am I?” “How should I live?” and “What should I do?”

### Anti-Ethics

#### A Deweyan conception of philosophy is necessary to understand material human experiences and methodologies to resolve struggles.

[West 89, Cornel. (Cornel Ronald West (born June 2, 1953) is an American philosopher, political activist, social critic, author, and public intellectual). The American Evasion of Philosophy : A Genealogy of Pragmatism. University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. The Wisconsin Project on American Writers. Pg 86. NP 2/25/17.] SHS ZS

On the philosophical front, **Dewey articulates** a conception of **philos-ophy** **that gives professional expression to** **the** Emersonian **evasion of epistemology-centered philosophy**. In fact, the dominant theme of his **meta-philosophy is** that philosophy is **neither a form of knowledge nor a means to acquire knowledge**. Rather **philosophy is a mode of cultural critical action that focuses on the ways and means by which human beings have**, do, and can **overcome obstacles**, dispose of predicaments, and settle prob-lematic situations. He states this succinctly in his "Philosophy and Democ-racy" address to the Philosophical Union of the University of California (November 29, 1918), the place where James publicly put forward pragma-tism in 1898 and Santayana mused about the genteel tradition in 1911. There is, I think, another alternative, another way out. Put badly, **it is to deny that philosophy is in any sense whatever a form of knowledge**. It is to say that **we should return to the original and etymological sense of the word**, and **recognize** that **philosophy is a form of desire**, of effort at action-a love, namely, of wisdom; but with the thorough proviso, not attached to the Platonic use of the word, that wisdom, whatever it is, is **not a mode of science or knowledge**. A philosophy which was conscious of its own business and province would then perceive that it is an intellec-tualized wish, an aspiration subjected to rational discriminations and tests, **a social hope reduced to a working program of action**, a prophecy of the future, but one disciplined by serious thought and knowledge. 40 For Dewey, **philosophy is a mode** not of knowledge but **of wisdom**. And wisdom is conviction about values, a choice to do something, a pref-erence for this rather than that form of living. **Wisdom involves discrimi-nating judgments and a desired future**. It **presupposes some grasp of con-ditions and consequences**, yet it has no special access to them. Rather methods of access must be scrutinized in order to decide which ones are most reliable for the task at hand. In this way, **Dewey does not devalue knowledge but only situates it in human experience**.

#### Only pragmatism enables us to reconstruct philosophy to better understand social crises

[West 89, Cornel. (Cornel Ronald West (born June 2, 1953) is an American philosopher, political activist, social critic, author, and public intellectual). The American Evasion of Philosophy : A Genealogy of Pragmatism. University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. The Wisconsin Project on American Writers. Pg 71.-2 NP 2/25/17.] SHS ZS

John Dewey is the culmination of the tradition of American pragmatism. After him, **to be a pragmatist is to be a social critic**, literary critic, or a poet -in short, a participant in cultural criticism and cultural creation. This does not mean that Dewey provides panaceas for philosophical prob-lems or solutions to societal crises. Rather, Dewe**y helps us see the complex and mediated ways in which philosophical problems are linked to societal crises**. More important, **Dewey** enables us to **view clashing conceptions of philosophy as struggles over cultural ways of life**, as attempts to define the role and function of intellectual authorities in culture and society. For Dewey, **to take modern historical consciousness seriously in philosophy is** first and foremost **to engage in** **metaphilosophical reflection, to reform and reconstruct philosophy as a mode of intellectual activity**. To reform and reconstruct philosophy is both to demystify and to defend the most reliable mode of inquiry in modern culture, namely, critical intelligence best manifest in the community of scientists. And **to demystify and defend critical intelligence is to render it more and more serviceable for the enhancement of human individuality**, that is, **the promotion of human beings who better control their conditions and thereby more fully create themselves** (Le., advance creative democracy).

### Abstraction

#### YOU CAN’T READ IDEAL THEORY BAD JUST BECAUSE YOU HEARD THE WORDS VALUE CRITERION.

#### Pragmatism is non-ideal experimental philosophy interested in the possibility of institutional change.

[Ralston 10, Can Pragmatists Be Institutionalists? John Dewey Joins the Non-Ideal/Ideal Theory Debate. Shane J. Ralston - 2010 - Human Studies 33 (1):65-84.] SHS ZS

Practical philosophy, **non-ideal theory** and the most recent incarnation, "**experimental philosophy**," **have**, in a sense**, cleared the way for philosophical inquiry aimed at the design and improvement of institutions**.31 Stated differently, arm-chair philosophy, ideal theory and non-experimental philosophy are of little use to the institutional designer. According to Colin Koopman, **Dewey** "did not **protest against the** very **idea** of philosophy but only against the pretentious and unsustainable idea **that philosophy might be able to grow its own flowers for itself without a care as to whether anyone else finds them beautiful**" (2008, p. 17). So, if we take seriously the propositions that, one, **philosophy is a "method... for dealing with the problems** of men" and, two, **philosophers should "care [about]... whether anyone finds it" relevant**, these are two prima facie reasons for believing that pragmatists, who endorse both propositions, can be institutionalists. In short, **they are willing to demonstrate philosophy's relevance to contemporary problems and to trace out the practical implications of their theoretical positions**, including the institutional consequences. Moreover, **pragmatists have not been shy to disclose their presuppositions about institutions**, defining what they are (i.e. funded habits, beliefs and practices) **and clarifying how institutional change should occur** (i.e. through experimentation and reconstruction).

#### Extend Glaude 7: Dewey’s philosophy does not devolve to abstract questions of philosophers but rather is embedded in context and materiality – only his understanding of knowledge allows us to appreciate it as contextual and gives room for social improvement and revision of ideas

#### You can’t just read anti-ethics when you hear the words value criterion – pragmatism is just not abstract.

[Glaude 7, Eddie S. (Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the chair of the Center for African-American Studies and the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African-American Studies at Princeton University.) In a Shade of Blue : Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America. University of Chicago Press, 2007. EBSCOhost. (7) NP 2/26/17.] SHS ZS

With these four general features in mind, Dewey’s view is consistent, as one would expect, with the characterization of pragmatism provided by Williams James. In Pragmatism, **James powerfully describes the pragmatist as one who turns away from abstraction and insufficiency, from verbal solutions, from bad a priori reasons, from fixed principles, closed systems, and pretended absolutes and origins**. He turns **towards concreteness and adequacy, towards facts, towards action, and towards power**.... It means the **open air and possibilities of nature, as against . . . dogma, artificiality, and the pretence of finality**.15The good pragmatist, then, **encourages a view of philosophy as social and cultural criticism**, where the neat conundrums of the scholar’s professional practice give way to a certain kind of responsibility in our intellectual lives, **where we take the tools of our training and work to offer some insight into specific conditions of value** and into specific consequences of ideas. In this view, **philosophy becomes**, as Dewey argued, “**a method of locating and interpreting the more serious of the conflicts that occur** **in life and a method of projecting ways for dealing with them**: a method of moral and political diagnosis and prognosis.”

### (Unfinished) Setcol

#### [Overview] Questions of ethics are formed through specific human experiences. Setcol was developed to reconcile the ontological dimension of the colonization of the americas – that proves the validity of the framework. Since ethics are never static, we must embrace pragmatism and subject ourselves to new experiences to learn more.

#### [Ontology takeout] Extend the 1st point, Aaras, which says universal truth cannot exist because all agents form ethics based on their subjective experiences that cannot exist independently of their practical activity. Experiences literally defines the subject, and since all subjects have different upbringings, they will understand the world in different ways – even among natvies. That takes out the ontological dimension of their theorywhich is dependent upon a universal understanding of identity, which proves progress is possible.

#### [Ontology takeout] Extend the 6th point, Glaude 7, which says past experiences cannot be the sole determiner for knowledge production. This takes out ontology, we cannot phrase an entire ethics on the colonization of the americas, because we have to consider how *experience will frame the future*, not only how it defines the past relations. An analysis only grounded in the past is far too static and not forward looking enough.

### (Unfinished) Cap

#### Reducing understanding to class struggles erases plurality and diversity making them inconsistent with the pragmatist method – no one theory of history can account for the totality of society – reject their absolute route cause claims. West 89.

[West 89 summarizes Dewey, Cornel. (Cornel Ronald West (born June 2, 1953) is an American philosopher, political activist, social critic, author, and public intellectual). The American Evasion of Philosophy : A Genealogy of Pragmatism. University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. The Wisconsin Project on American Writers. Pg 110-111. NP 2/25/17.] SHS ZS

Notwithstanding his relative neglect of Marxism, **Dewey's** one effort to write about and against it is still noteworthy. In his book Freedom and Culture (1939), he attempts to take on foes of creative democracy on cultural grounds; that is, he **critically compares the pluralistic and individualistic ways of life in a "democracy" and the monistic and collectivistic ways of life under "totalitarianism."** The words in quotes remain abstractions throughout the book-atypical for Dewey. Yet **his analyses do point out the significant degree to which Marxist conceptions of society often valorize totality, universal classes, unified movements, and homogeneous groupings at the expense of different social spheres**, **particular strata within classes, and diverse and heterogeneous ethnic, racial, and gender groups across classes.** While Dewey hammers away at his old theme of allying democracy "with the spread of the scientific attitude,"116 **he also** makes **claims** some-what similar to those currently debated **in** contemporary **post-Marxist circles concerning the explanatory weight of economic, political, cultural, and psychological spheres in history and society**. Like Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, Stanley Aronowitz and Frank Cunningham, Dewey raises the methodological question: **Is there anyone factor or phase of culture which is dominant, or which tends to produce and regulate others,** or are economics, morals, art, science, and so on only so many aspects of the interaction of a number of factors, each of which acts upon and is acted upon by the others?1l7 Dewey quickly replies that his **pragmatism rejects any attempts to invoke necessity and discern any single all-embracing causal force**. **Instead, "probability and pluralism are characteristics of the present state of science." Therefore, "the fundamental postulate of the discussion is that isolation of anyone factor, no matter how strong its workings at a given time, is fatal to understanding and to intelligent action."118**

#### Perm – do the alt in every other instance – the Deweyan education is necessary training grounds for resisting capitalism.

[Brooks 94, William Brooks. "Was Dewey a Marxist?" St. Lawrence Institute for the Advancement of Learning. Discourse 13, Winter 1994. [www.stlawrenceinstitute.org/vol13brk.html](http://www.stlawrenceinstitute.org/vol13brk.html).] SHS ZS

Dewey's other early essay on education, The School and Society, continues in the same vein. Most chapters were designed to stand alone as lectures in education, so they tend to repeat and elaborate on familiar themes in Dewey's work. In a chapter on "The School and Social Progress," readers are reminded that the **school is much more than a collection of individuals**. Students should not enter simply to acquire knowledge as a businessman enters the marketplace to acquire profit**. The progress of an individual can only be seen in relation to the needs of the community**. Dewey asserted that in the school "**individualism and socialism are at one"** and it was "especially necessary to take the broader view" over the narrow and acquisitive course. Like Marx, Dewey informed his readers that **inevitable changes were forthcoming in the "modes of industry and commerce**" and, again like Marx, Dewey was convinced that his predictions were based on scientific laws generated through the methods of dialectical materialism. Indeed, in one of his later works, Dewey was very forthright in declaring that "**we are in for some kind of socialism**, call it whatever name we please, and no matter what it will be called when it is realized, economic determinism is now a fact not a theory." In the light of his convictions, Dewey sought to conceive a new philosophy of education. **Dewey's school would be intricately connected with the unfolding of materialist history** or as Dewey put it "part and parcel of **the** whole **social evolution**." The new school would become **an instrument of dealienation**. Dewey echoed the Marxist contention that the intimate connection between men and their occupations which had existed in preindustrial societies, had been lost in the capitalist mode of production. **He alerted his readers to the concentration of industry and division of labour that "had practically eliminated household and neighbourhood occupations**." **The** **new mission of the school was to become a training ground for cooperative labour**, instead of a place set apart in which to learn lessons. The "mere absorbing of facts," Dewey warned, was a selfish act in which he could see no redeeming value: There is no obvious social motive for the acquirement of mere learning; there is no clear social gain in success thereat. Dewey was convinced that **the introduction of manual training and the activity method would create a vigorous occupational spirit in the educational process**. The school would affiliate itself with the life of the child and the community. It would become an embryonic socialist community. The new **school communities would become incubators for peaceful social revolution**. Dewey saw the new school providing a unique and irresistible example to capitalist society because its aim was "not the economic value of the product but the development of social power and insight." **School**, liberated from the religious influences -- which, like Marx, he regarded as medieval superstitions -- **would demonstrate to all that it was neither God nor Providence but the earth and man's labour that were responsible for all progress**. Training in "social directions" would raise the child's consciousness and allow him to "locate the source of our economic evils." Evil was hidden in the structures of late capitalism, and, like Marx, De**wey saw a rewrite of history as the key tool of the exorcist**. For Dewey, there were no grounds for including classical history in the curriculum, but: Not so when history is considered as an account of the forces and forms of social life ... Whatever history may be for the scientific historian, for the educator, it must be an indirect sociology -- a study of society which lays bare its process of be-coming and its modes of organization. Dewey's entire chapter on "The Aims of History in Elementary Education" recommends nothing less than a Marxist history for the new curriculum. **If history was to become "dynamic" and "moving," its "economic and industrial aspects" had to be emphasized**. This alone could prevent the tendency to "swamp history in myth, fairy story and merely literary renderings" of the bourgeois culture he sought to usher out.

#### The alt fails -- Marxist views of history are totalizing and reductive and ignore the complexities of emancipation.

[West 89, Cornel. (Cornel Ronald West (born June 2, 1953) is an American philosopher, political activist, social critic, author, and public intellectual). The American Evasion of Philosophy : A Genealogy of Pragmatism. University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. The Wisconsin Project on American Writers. Pg 71. NP 2/25/17.] SHS ZS

True to the American pragmatic grain, **Dewey rejects the metaphysical residues in Marx**: the Hegelian-inspired penchant toward totalizing history, **universalizing collectivities, and simplifying emancipatio**n. **These residues tend to overlook the vast complexities of history**, the sheer heterogeneity of collectivities, and **the various complications of emancipation**. Therefore, for Dewey, **Marxist perspectives** (given his rather frail yet still noteworthy grasp of them}2 **tend toward premature totalities, and homogeneities that ignore uniqueness, difference, and diversity.** Yet, like any other viewpoint, Marxisms have to be put to the tests of critical scrutiny, experimental consequences, and moral valuation. In the twenties (after his visit to Russia), Dewey celebrates the Soviet experiment in education, but by the mid-twenties he castigates Stalinism in quite harsh terms.3 For Dewey, **the march of freedom in history is embodied in the best of American democracy**, and the march of America in history is to be viewed criti-cally in light of the best of American democracy. **He puts pragmatism on the international historical stage**, yet he still views history through an American lens. In this way, **Dewey** -like Hegel and Marx - **historicizes philosophy**; and, like Emerson, James, and Peirce, Americanizes history. In short, Dewey **tries to take history seriously as he creatively revises the Emersonian evasion of modern philosophy**, carefully affirms the Emersonian theodicy, and critically enriches the American pragmatic tradi-tion. John Dewey is not only the giant of this tradition and the towering force in American philosophy; **he is also the sifting funnel through which much of the best and some but little of the worst of American culture flow**. As Horace Kallen noted in 1939, "As I see it, it will be Dewey, not Ford, not Edison, not Roosevelt, who, when the last word has been said and the last vote has been counted, will figure as the pregnant symbol of what is best in the America of today and most hopeful for the American-ism of tomorrow."4

## AT FWs

### Util

#### [Overview] Questions of ethics are formed through specific human experiences. We therefore have to embrace new ethical experiences in order to best develop our ethics and engage in meaning creation – that necessitates following a pragmatist framework. Our theory comes before util because it’s a question of epistemology – knowledge formation itself, which questions why we ought to value constructs like pain and pleasure, and what they actually entail.

#### [Hijack; Moen] Extend West 89 which says we cannot made conclusive principles about judgements without experiencing. This hijacks Moen – it proves we can’t understand pain or pleasure without actually experiencing the action itself which means our theory is a prerequisite.

#### [Fluidity] Extend Arras which proves truth is always dynamic and never static. Societies have not always valued util; look back to the dark ages and medieval times when punishing people were a regular occurrence for entertainment. That disproves Moen and proves the only intrinsic part about ethics can be experimentation and discovery; not substance.

#### [Metaphysical Realism] Extend the metaphysical realism argument which proves why we cannot value other people’s pain or pleasure because we simply will never understand them; I don’t know what will cause you pleasure, and vice versa, which takes out the FW.

#### [Rule Paradox] Extend the rule following paradox, Burbules, which says following a moral rule, i.e. maximins pleasure, will always fail because there are an infinite amount of ways to interpret it. There are many different ways to maximize pleasure, whether through rule util act util, etc., so agents cannot understand.

### (Unfinished) Kant

### (Unfinished) Hobbes

#### Hobbes misses the constant need to adjust in a process of inquiry- legal intelligence must be pragmatic. Kellogg 10,

Kellogg, Frederic R., Hobbes, Holmes, and Dewey: Pragmatism and the Problem of Order (August 8, 2010). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1655307 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1655307

What is missing from Hobbes’s view is the constant need for continuous adjustment in any real scheme of social ordering. It is this that I refer to as the dynamic order characteristic of pragmatism, the transactional and transformative aspect of inquiry found in Dewey’s work. The logic of the law is not the a priori dictate of legal reason but rather, paraphrasing Dewey, the product of inquiry. The dimension highlighted in retrospect through Holmes is the element of constant conflict as a catalyzing force. As Ralph Sleeper notes, Peirce’s doubt-belief formula directed Dewey’s attention to the actual processes of thought. Inherently vague, the idea of doubt has always sought specificity in Dewey’s work. For Sleeper the key to Dewey’s logic was understanding inference “as a real event of transformational force and power, causally real in the emergence of new features of things ‘entering the inferential function.’ It takes inference as action, as behavior that causes changes in reality through interaction with things.” (1986, 83). If the real process of inference begins with doubt, the doubt-belief formula needs to acknowledge that doubt is not merely spectral but must have its own physiology and history. From Holmes we gain the insight that legal intelligence is a special case of inference deriving from constant controversies that find their way into the judicial system. Doubt is palpable in the difficult case. The gradual hammering-out of belief through case-specific resolutions is visible in the record of litigation. Flawed and chaotic though it may be, the resolution of conflict by legal problem-solving provides a written record of naturalistic and pragmatic ordering, revealed in its full flawed and chaotic nature. This aspect of knowledge needs to be recognized equally in relation to the dynamic growth of universals and ideals. In an address given to the New York State Bar Association in 1899, Holmes summarized this point in a way that Dewey must have appreciated: It is perfectly proper to regard and study the law simply as a great anthropological document. It is proper to resort to it to discover what ideals of society have been strong enough to reach that final form of expression, or what have been the changes in dominant ideals from century to century. It is proper to study it as an exercise in the morphology and transformation of human ideas. (1899, p. 212) This extraordinary passage demonstrates that Holmes saw law entirely differently from Hobbes. Rather than an autonomous force suppressing conflict as pathological, it is embedded within the social processes assimilating and meliorating conflict as a natural condition. Rather than viewing legal and political theory as a prophylactic program for a discrete governing entity, legal theory is cognate with the rest of knowledge and law is viewed as a written record offering evidence of social norms and ideas as continuously cogenerated. Ideals are products of this view of knowledgeas-inquiry, and they are constantly developing in response to the changing nature of the human endeavor.

# Other Cards

## AT Ks

### Afropess

#### Totalistic understandings of race that view black identity as fixed because of antecedent phenomena deny agency and moral complexity and contingency that are essential parts of life – your methodology dehumanizes

Glaude 7, Eddie S. (Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the chair of the Center for African-American Studies and the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African-American Studies at Princeton University.) In a Shade of Blue : Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America. University of Chicago Press, 2007. EBSCOhost. (83-85) NP 3/11/17.

My general aim in this chapter has been to insist on the complexity of African American religious life and to resist naïve attempts to reduce that complexity to an easily manageable political reality—a tendency that is, I believe, typical of this country’s melodramatic approach to the problems of race. I am of the firm belief that appeals to a fixed and stable notion of black identity, to a conception of history as a storehouse stocked with an-swers to all of our problems, or appeals to an idea of black agency that presumes our inclination to resist limit our imaginations and in various ways blunt our capacity to modify our conditions of living, precisely be-cause each denies the active work we do in the face of problematic situations. Such appeals too often direct our attention to antecedent and notconsequent phenomena. They seek to tame the potential chaos of contin-gency but end up obscuring the moral imperative that we act intelligently and earn our deaths by passionately embracing the conundrum of life. In short, bad thinking about African American history, identity, and agency compromises what James Baldwin referred to as all of that beauty—thosefunded experiences, colored in a dark shade of blue, that enable us to invade the future with a bit more than luck.

#### Your view of history over-homogenizes – the pragmatist attention to the particular creates space for contextualizing meaningful reforms and resistance

Brown ’09 Vincent Brown, Prof. of History and African and African-American Studies @ Harvard Univ., December 2009, "Social Death and Political Life in the Study of Slavery," American Historical Review, p. 1231-1249

THE PREMISE OF ORLANDO PATTERSON’S MAJOR WORK, that enslaved Africans were natally alienated and culturally isolated, was challenged even before he published his influential thesis, primarily by scholars concerned with “survivals” or “retentions” of African culture and by historians of slave resistance. In the early to mid-twentieth century, when Robert Park’s view of “the Negro” predominated among scholars, it was generally assumed that the slave trade and slavery had denuded black people of any ancestral heritage from Africa. The historians Carter G. Woodson and W. E. B. Du Bois and the anthropologist Melville J. Herskovits argued the opposite. Their research supported the conclusion that while enslaved Africans could not have brought intact social, political, and religious institutions with them to the Americas, they did maintain significant aspects of their cultural backgrounds.32 Herskovits ex- amined “Africanisms”—any practices that seemed to be identifiably African—as useful symbols of cultural survival that would help him to analyze change and continuity in African American culture.33 He engaged in one of his most heated scholarly disputes with the sociologist E. Franklin Frazier, a student of Park’s, who empha- sized the damage wrought by slavery on black families and folkways.34 More recently, a number of scholars have built on Herskovits’s line of thought, enhancing our understanding of African history during the era of the slave trade. Their studies have evolved productively from assertions about general cultural heritage into more precise demonstrations of the continuity of worldviews, categories of belonging, and social practices from Africa to America. For these scholars, the preservation of distinctive cultural forms has served as an index both of a resilient social personhood, or identity, and of resistance to slavery itself. 35Scholars of slave resistance have never had much use for the concept of social death. The early efforts of writers such as Herbert Aptheker aimed to derail the popular notion that American slavery had been a civilizing institution threatened by “slave crime.”36 Soon after, studies of slave revolts and conspiracies advocated the idea that resistance demonstrated the basic humanity and intractable will of the enslaved—indeed, they often equated acts of will with humanity itself. As these writ- ers turned toward more detailed analyses of the causes, strategies, and tactics of slave revolts in the context of the social relations of slavery, they had trouble squaring abstract characterizations of “the slave” with what they were learning about the en- slaved.37 Michael Craton, who authored Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies, was an early critic of Slavery and Social Death, protesting that what was known about chattel bondage in the Americas did not confirm Patterson’s definition of slavery. “If slaves were in fact ‘generally dishonored,’ ” Craton asked, “how does he explain the degrees of rank found among all groups of slaves—that is, the scale of ‘reputation’ and authority accorded, or at least acknowledged, by slave and master alike?” How could they have formed the fragile families documented by social historians if they had been “natally alienated” by definition? Finally, and per- haps most tellingly, if slaves had been uniformly subjected to “permanent violent domination,” they could not have revolted as often as they did or shown the “varied manifestations of their resistance” that so frustrated masters and compromised their power, sometimes “fatally.”38 The dynamics of social control and slave resistance falsified Patterson’s description of slavery even as the tenacity of African culture showed that enslaved men, women, and children had arrived in the Americas bearing much more than their “tropical temperament.”The cultural continuity and resistance schools of thought come together pow- erfully in an important book by Walter C. Rucker, The River Flows On: Black Re- sistance, Culture, and Identity Formation in Early America. In Rucker’s analysis of slave revolts, conspiracies, and daily recalcitrance, African concepts, values, and cul- tural metaphors play the central role. Unlike Smallwood and Hartman, for whom “the rupture was the story” of slavery, Rucker aims to reveal the “perseverance of African culture even among second, third, and fourth generation creoles.”39 He looks again at some familiar events in North America—New York City’s 1712 Coromantee revolt and 1741 conspiracy, the 1739 Stono rebellion in South Carolina, as well as the plots, schemes, and insurgencies of Gabriel Prosser, Denmark Vesey, and Nat Turner—deftly teasing out the African origins of many of the attitudes and actions of the black rebels. Rucker outlines how the transformation of a “shared cultural heritage” that shaped collective action against slavery corresponded to the “various steps Africans made in the process of becoming ‘African American’ in culture, orientation, and identity.”40

#### A categorical definition of blackness essentializes and ultimately fails – a pragmatic view of black identity is best since it accounts for particularity and the complexity of moral decision-making

Glaude 7 on Dewey, Eddie S. (Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the chair of the Center for African-American Studies and the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African-American Studies at Princeton University.) In a Shade of Blue : Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America. University of Chicago Press, 2007. EBSCOhost. (50-51) NP 3/3/17.

I am also not interested in defending an essentialist conception of race or of black identity. Talk of racial essences is at best a bad way of talking about particular experiences; at worst it encourages misguided quests for certainty that aim to secure us from the contingency that is an inherent part of our lives. My intention is to offer a pragmatic way of thinking about black identity that takes seriously the problem-solving activity intrinsic to being a moral agent. My emphasis, then, will be on our capacity as black individuals to judge the respective claims of duty and desire asthey arise in concrete experience, understanding that in some cases they may indeed conflict. We will still speak of black identity but will attempt not to overextend its reach. When someone utters a sentence such as “I am an African American” in the context of a debate about public policy, she is not disclosing some-thing that was previously internal; instead, her words indicate to those around her that, in discussing this particular topic with her, another set of issues must be taken into account. Richard Rorty makes the point best: Such sentences are not used to report events going on within the Cartesian Theatre which is a person’s consciousness. They are simply tools for coordinating our behavior with those of others. This is not to say that one can “reduce” mental states such as beliefs and desires to physiological or behavioural states. It is merely to say that there is no point in asking whether a belief represents reality, either mental reality or physical reality, accurately. That is, for pragmatists, not only a bad question, but the root of much wasted philosophical energy.4The question, then, is not whether our beliefs about race and racial identities represent reality, but for what purposes it would be useful to hold such beliefs and to invoke them as crucial aspects of our identities. In what follows I sketch two ways of understanding black identity—what I call an archeological approach and a pragmatic historicist approach—in each case focusing on its ethical dimensions.5I argue that the pragmatic approach better enables us to understand the complex ethical choices that attend any talk about black identity. I further draw out the implications for contemporary debates about black identity of what I have called elsewhere a pragmatic tradition of racial advocacy, which emerged in the early nineteenth century as African Americans drew on the biblical story of Exodus to articulate a sense of peoplehood and racial obligation.6 end, I suggest that we have approached the issue of black identity from the wrong direction: it is not simply a question of who we are determining how we act in the world. Rather, the choices we make in the face of problems and meddlesome circumstances turn out to be our lives, requiring of us continual cultivation of our ability to make delicate distinctions.

#### The pragmatist view of identity that sees ourselves as constantly evolving and becoming through action = good//a static conception of blackness fails

Glaude 7, Eddie S. (Eddie S. Glaude Jr. is the chair of the Center for African-American Studies and the William S. Tod Professor of Religion and African-American Studies at Princeton University.) In a Shade of Blue : Pragmatism and the Politics of Black America. University of Chicago Press, 2007. EBSCOhost. (55-56) NP 3/3/17.

The pragmatic view of identity does not hold that identity is about discovery. Rather, identities are seen as consequences of human activity—specifically, our problem-solving activity.15In this view, character and conduct are interrelated and mutually dependent. The self is not some stable, un-changing frame of reference; rather, it is an organization of habits that is relatively stable and enduring. These habits—formed, at least in part, from previous experiences and always subject to modification as we act—constitute our character.16Or, as Dewey writes, “Character is the interpenetration of habits. If each habit existed in an insulated compartment and operated without affecting or being affected by others, character would not exist.”17 No self stands still; it is, for better or worse, constantly be-coming, and “it is in the quality of that becoming that virtue resides.”18 Moreover, our understanding of the beliefs, choices, and actions that rely on these habits arises in the context of bringing these experiences to consciousness in narrative—the history of the self. What we have done and are doing, and the stories we weave about these experiences, are absolutely critical for a pragmatic view of black identity. Unlike Tommie Shelby, I do not deny the relevance or centrality of black identity to black political struggle. Shelby argues powerfully in We Who Are Dark for a position he calls pragmatic black nationalism—“the view that black solidarity is merely a contingent strategy for creating freedom and social equality for blacks, a pragmatic yet principled approach to achieve racial justice.”19In making his argument, Shelby rejects a standard claim that African American politics requires, if it is to be successful, a notion of collective identity. He notes that such views often result in a reification of race and a conception of black life that obscures relevant differences among African Americans and frustrates individual freedom. In his view, the shared experiences of antiblack racism are sufficient for our efforts to secure racial justice. Black identity talk is simply not necessary. But Shelby fails to take seriously what a pragmatic view of black identity might suggest. The term pragmatic, as he uses it, seems to have only heuristic value and not to refer to a set of philosophical commitments. Shelby would have us believe that our identities are not particularly relevant to how we engage in struggles for racial justice. But if identities are the products of our efforts to overcome problems, then the content and consequences of our efforts impact the content of our character. We need not discard identity talk, then, but simply to reconstruct the term in light of our pragmatic commitments. The kinds of dispositions requisite for the kind of society both of us desire are, in part, formed in the context of political struggles. To the extent that character and conduct are intimately interrelated and mutually dependent, identities matter. The problem is with a certain view of collective identity, one that Shelby puts for-ward and rightly distrusts. This view motivates political practices and justifies political choices on the basis, more often than not, of an already fixed conception of black identity. But individual and collective identity can be thought of differently. Black identities and the identities of those who struggle for racial justice are as much the products of principled struggle as they are the motivation for that struggle. Who we take our-selves to be—that is, how we understand ourselves as moral agents—often guides how we engage in politics, and the sorts of choices we make while engaging in politics fundamentally shape who we take ourselves to be. Identity talk matters, then, because of its ethical and moral implications for and beyond politics.

#### Structural racism is not determinant – agents both act and are acted upon, meaning that the external world alone can not define them

Rogers 2, Melvin. (Melvin L. Rogers is currently the Scott Waugh Chair in the Division of the Social Sciences and Associate Professor of Political Science and African American Studies at UCLA.) *Liberalism, Narrative, and Identity: A Pragmatic Defense of Racial Solidarity*. 2002. NP 3/12/17.

Yet, Appiah fails to see that as a black American I am at least implicitly aware of myself as actively and purposefully projecting myself onto the external world in an effort at self definition, and simultaneously being called into question by the features of that external world. Coming to understand who I am requires others to attend to what it means to live within a set of ongoing stories that constitute my setting. "We are" -- to borrow language from another narrative theorist, Paul Ricoeur -- "oriented, as agents and sufferers of actions, toward the remembered past, the lived present, and the anticipated future of other people's behavior."[50] In the case of racial solidarity these features are the past and continued existence of racism and discrimination that continue to play a role in the U.S. These elements of the landscape are part and parcel of what is meant by setting, and they impinge on our sense of who we are and how we should orient ourselves in the world. As a result, it is partly the continued presence of discriminatory practices in the U.S. that informs the self-definition of black agents in such a way that prompts them to create and sustain camaraderie and community among similarly situated agents as a response. Apprehension and assessment of other subjects with whom we relate is partly determined by the larger context in which we find ourselves. This points, I believe, to a central problem that has long since been acknowledged regarding liberal theory, and which is appropriate in light of Appiah's argument -- namely, that moral agency is reified as a theoretical feature for understanding human subjects, political or otherwise, which, is in tension with their own historicity.[51] But we impoverish out attempts at achieving intelligibility regarding why social beings act as such in specific contexts when we fail to be attentive to what that context means to them.

### Anti-Ethics

#### Pragmatism is non-ideal experimental philosophy interested in the possibility of institutional change.

Ralston 10, Can Pragmatists Be Institutionalists? John Dewey Joins the Non-Ideal/Ideal Theory Debate. Shane J. Ralston - 2010 - Human Studies 33 (1):65-84.

Practical philosophy, non-ideal theory and the most recent incarnation, "experimental philosophy," have, in a sense, cleared the way for philosophical inquiry aimed at the design and improvement of institutions.31 Stated differently, arm-chair philosophy, ideal theory and non-experimental philosophy are of little use to the institutional designer. According to Colin Koopman, Dewey "did not protest against the very idea of philosophy but only against the pretentious and unsustainable idea that philosophy might be able to grow its own flowers for itself without a care as to whether anyone else finds them beautiful" (2008, p. 17). So, if we take seriously the propositions that, one, philosophy is a "method... for dealing with the problems of men" and, two, philosophers should "care [about]... whether anyone finds it" relevant, these are two prima facie reasons for believing that pragmatists, who endorse both propositions, can be institutionalists. In short, they are willing to demonstrate philosophy's relevance to contemporary problems and to trace out the practical implications of their theoretical positions, including the institutional consequences. Moreover, pragmatists have not been shy to disclose their presuppositions about institutions, defining what they are (i.e. funded habits, beliefs and practices) and clarifying how institutional change should occur (i.e. through experimentation and reconstruction).

### Cap

#### Marxist social structures erase plurality and diversity making them inconsistent with the pragmatist method – no one theory of history can account for the totality of society

West 89 summarizes Dewey, Cornel. (Cornel Ronald West (born June 2, 1953) is an American philosopher, political activist, social critic, author, and public intellectual). The American Evasion of Philosophy : A Genealogy of Pragmatism. University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. The Wisconsin Project on American Writers. Pg 110-111. NP 2/25/17.

Notwithstanding his relative neglect of Marxism, Dewey's one effort to write about and against it is still noteworthy. In his book Freedom and Culture (1939), he attempts to take on foes of creative democracy on cultural grounds; that is, he critically compares the pluralistic and individualistic ways of life in a "democracy" and the monistic and collectivistic ways of life under "totalitarianism." The words in quotes remain abstractions throughout the book-atypical for Dewey. Yet his analyses do point out the significant degree to which Marxist conceptions of society often valorize totality, universal classes, unified movements, and homogeneous groupings at the expense of different social spheres, particular strata within classes, and diverse and heterogeneous ethnic, racial, and gender groups across classes. While Dewey hammers away at his old theme of allying democracy "with the spread of the scientific attitude,"116 he also makes claims some-what similar to those currently debated in contemporary post-Marxist circles concerning the explanatory weight of economic, political, cultural, and psychological spheres in history and society. Like Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, Stanley Aronowitz and Frank Cunningham, Dewey raises the methodological question: Is there anyone factor or phase of culture which is dominant, or which tends to produce and regulate others, or are economics, morals, art, science, and so on only so many aspects of the interaction of a number of factors, each of which acts upon and is acted upon by the others?1l7 Dewey quickly replies that his pragmatism rejects any attempts to invoke necessity and discern any single all-embracing causal force. Instead, "probability and pluralism are characteristics of the present state of science." Therefore, "the fundamental postulate of the discussion is that isolation of anyone factor, no matter how strong its workings at a given time, is fatal to understanding and to intelligent action."118