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A Search For Unity In Diversity:
The “Permanent Hegelian Deposit” in the Philosophy of John Dewey

By

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ABSTRACT

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This study demonstrates that Dewey did not reject Hegelianism during the 1890s, as scholars maintain, but developed a humanistic/historicist reading that was indebted to an American Hegelian tradition. Scholars have misunderstood the "permanent Hegelian deposit" in Dewey's thought because they have not fully appreciated this American Hegelian tradition and have assumed that his Hegelianism was based primarily on British neo-Hegelianism.

The study examines the American reception of Hegel in the nineteenth century by intellectuals as diverse as James Marsh and Frederic Henry Hedge and how it flowered in late nineteenth-century St. Louis. The St. Louis Hegelians read Hegel as a particularly practical and politically liberal philosopher whose social philosophy promoted both social diversity and unity. Led by W. T. Harris, they studied Hegel in German and published their own scholarship, as well as translations of German scholarship, in their Journal of Speculative Philosophy. Their efforts to make "Hegel talk English" and to base the St. Louis public schools on Hegel's philosophy of education won them national, and even, international attention. The St. Louis Hegelians sought to
adapt Hegel's thought to their American context by assuaging elitist elements within it; Dewey's intellectual development was profoundly shaped by their appropriation of his philosophy.

Dewey drew upon Hegel's argument that humans form societies because of their differences, not in spite of them. Hegel's rejection of the self-sufficient, atomistic individual entailed that the individual is dependent upon others for the satisfaction of material needs. Moreover, like Hegel, Dewey rejected the hedonistic basis of the British political tradition by arguing that humans seek recognition from their equals as well as satisfaction of material needs. Dewey believed Hegel's emphasis upon equality and diversity provided a model of society in which there was fertile ground for the individual to conceive and articulate cultural criticism. The study ends by comparing recent Hegel scholarship to Dewey's, demonstrating that American Hegelianism has returned, in important ways, to a Deweyan reading of Hegel.
CHAPTER FIVE

The Humanistic/Historicist Hegel ................................................................. 282
The Twentieth-Century Rennaissance in Hegel Studies ................................. 286
Hegel’s Project ......................................................................................... 295
Functionalist Psychology ........................................................................ 316
The Historical Fallacy ............................................................................ 332
Hegel’s Ethics and Political Philosophy ....................................................... 336
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................................. 352
ABBREVIATIONS


INTRODUCTION

The extent to which scholars disagree in their assessments of John Dewey’s philosophy is truly remarkable. Recently, James Hoopes argued that an implicit commitment to metaphysical nominalism, the view that only particulars are real, undermined Dewey’s emphasis on the social nature of individuals because he could not account for the reality of community, a general notion. Dewey’s nominalism, Hoopes claimed, provided a deficient basis for American liberal thought because it inevitably leads to atomistic individualism and undermines community. By way of contrast, Larry Hickman maintains that Dewey formulated a “novel solution” to the “traditional problem of ‘universals’” that rejected both nominalism and realism, allowing him to construct a viable theory of values that prevents their stifling reification. And rather than an implicit atomistic individualism, David Fott argues that Dewey so emphasized the social nature of the self that “there is no, or hardly any, psychological room within which [individuals] may withdraw from society” and gain a vantage point for critical evaluation.¹

At first blush, these author’s disagreements about basic points of Dewey’s thought do not bode well for a resolution of the issues. However, they may reveal a focal point around which debate might profitably center: The core issue is Dewey’s historicization of the self. Is the self, according to Dewey, so

inextricably situated within the flux of history that it cannot rise above its context and critique its own society? This study recontextualizes the debate over Dewey’s value theory by examining his transition from Hegelianism to instrumentalism during the 1890s, with a view toward understanding what Dewey called “the permanent Hegelian deposit” in his mature thought. A clearer understanding of the influence of Hegel upon Dewey’s thought will demonstrate that, despite his historicism, Dewey did succeed in articulating a philosophy which provided for cultural criticism.

These clashing opinions recapitulate a longstanding controversy about the degree to which Dewey himself successfully maintained critical distance from his culture. The suspicion that he was unsuccessful is somewhat ironic in view of the facts that he was investigated twice by the F. B. I., and at one time or another, condemned by people on all sides of the political and cultural spectrum.² Intellectuals as diverse as Bertrand Russell, Reinhold Niebuhr, Lewis Mumford and Randolph Bourne claimed that Dewey’s thought represented the dark side of American culture, betraying a spirit of compromise and acquiescence to corporate capitalism. Similar assessments of Dewey have recently resurfaced in John Patrick Diggins’ *The Promise of Pragmatism* and Brian Lloyd’s *Left Out*. Though Diggins’ and Lloyd’s accounts differ from one another, and from those

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that precede them, their conclusions are familiar: Dewey was blinded to the critique of ends by an unyielding commitment to bureaucratic efficiency.\(^3\)

Broadly speaking, these criticisms are rooted in three concerns. First, many have objected that Dewey was naïvely sanguine about the prospects of humans sacrificing self-interest for the sake of the public good.\(^4\) But Dewey’s most optimistic writings were what Lewis Feuer called “lay sermons,” in which he sought to exhort readers to a democratic way of life, and many scholars seem to miss the ways that Dewey carefully qualified his optimism.\(^5\) Dewey never categorically asserted that the social sciences would eventually solve all social problems; rather, he held that scientific method, if used intelligently, could ameliorate, but never eliminate, social conflicts. The second concern is whether Dewey’s instrumentalism can critically assess both means and ends, and thus avoid a destructive moral relativism. Critics depict Dewey’s instrumentalism as


an uncritical reflection of the bureaucratic mentality that accompanied the rise of corporate capitalism, and construe his philosophy of education as a bourgeois attempt at social control which would mold lower class Americans into pliant factory workers for the good of the whole. The third claim, closely related to the second, is that Dewey abandoned the classical theory of truth as correspondence of our beliefs to actual states of affairs in the world, in favor of the view that truth is made in accordance with processes whereby we adapt to, rather than change, the environment. Dewey frequently replied to the latter two allegations by emphasizing his critique of philosophical dualisms and arguing that his notion of experience was fundamentally distinct from the traditional Western view that reified the distinction between subject and object. He maintained that the charge of relativism stemmed from an uncritical acceptance of the dualisms of objective and subjective reasoning, absolute and relative truth, and the individual and society, and that the problem of how thought corresponds to actual states of affairs was an insoluble conundrum created by Cartesian mind/body dualism. If, as Dewey maintained, mind is an integral part of its environment, there is no adaptation to the environment that does not involve evolution of that environment.  

Though it may not be immediately apparent that there is a relationship between controversies about Dewey’s value theory and his Hegelianism, it is

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5 Lewis Feuer, Introduction to LW 15: xxxiii.
6 This is a crucial element of Dewey’s understanding of experience, according to which, experience is always both active and passive. See Dewey, Democracy and Education (1916), MW 9: 146. “When we experience something we act upon it, we do something with it; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing and then it does something to us in return...” Intelligent action, for Dewey, always involves consideration of future consequences, of the ways our action will modify our environment and, in turn, how that modification will impact upon us.
noteworthy that polemics about Hegel’s thought have revolved around many of the same types of issues as debates about Dewey’s. Like Dewey, Hegel has been accused of naively believing in the inevitable progress of human society, going so far as to write progress into the very nature of reality which evolves according to an inexorable dialectical law. Also like Dewey, Hegel’s historicism has been blamed for a debilitating moral relativism, despite Hegel’s absolutism, and the charge that he was an apologist for the reactionary, and increasingly bureaucratic, Prussian state is legendary. Many have feared that Hegel’s statism inevitably leads to the sacrifice of the individual for the good of the whole. Finally, like Dewey, Hegel has been accused of undermining the traditional notion of truth by denying the principle of contradiction, espousing instead a coherence theory of truth according to which our beliefs are true as long as they are consistent with one another. Moreover, Hegel rejected the Cartesian dualism of mind and body, as did Dewey, dramatically undermining traditional philosophical dichotomies such as subject and object, absolute and relative truth, and the individual and society. An extreme interpretation might even compare Dewey’s ultimate support of the American war effort in 1917 to Hegel’s alleged glorification of war.⁷

The debate over the continuing influence of Hegel on Dewey revolves around two issues. First, what was the nature and timing of Dewey’s transition from idealism to instrumentalism in the 1890s? Second, what precisely was the Hegelian deposit in his mature thought? Underlying these two thorny, but

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⁷ For useful accounts and analyses of these charges against Hegel see Jon Stewart, ed., The Hegel Myths and Legends (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1996). Brian Lloyd comes
eminently rational, issues is a more emotional subtext. At times, Dewey scholars seem to have a knee-jerk reaction against the notion that there is a significant Hegelian deposit in Dewey’s mature thought because they view Hegel as an embarrassment to Dewey.\(^8\) This may be due to the fact that many contemporary Dewey scholars were trained by analytic philosophers who view Hegel’s philosophy as a prime example of everything that philosophy should not be. Further, intellectuals now have a post-1917 and post-Holocaust perspective on German culture, and may lose sight of the pre-1917 view of Germany as, in many ways, a progressive nation. This study seeks to counter this less rational subtext by carefully examining the way Dewey came to read Hegel during the 1880s and 1890s. Recent humanistic/historicist readings of Hegel suggest that Dewey’s mature thought might better be seen as a deeper understanding of Hegel’s most original philosophical insights.\(^9\) In a similar spirit, this study argues that although Dewey’s increasingly critical stance toward metaphysics entailed a rejection of a particular British variant of Hegelianism, it was a development of his Hegelianism.

Many acknowledge Dewey’s debt to the thought of the neo-Hegelians (especially the British philosopher, Thomas Hill Green, of whom Dewey did

\(^{8}\) See George Herbert Eastman’s critique of Joseph Ratner’s forward to his edition of Dewey’s writings. Eastman notes Ratner’s need to show “that Hegelianism—and idealism in general—is an effete, a somehow suspect, if not dissolute philosophy from which Dewey wisely, and heroically, freed himself.” Eastman, review of John Dewey: Philosophy, Psychology and Social Practice,” Studies in Philosophy and Education 4 (1965): 95-104. See also Ratner’s “Reply to George Eastman,” Ibid., 105-07. Similarly, in his description of Dewey’s transition from idealism to instrumentalism, Morton White invokes the image of slavery when he writes that Dewey “continued to hammer away at his chains.” White, The Origin of Dewey’s Instrumentalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), 106.
speak highly) but neglect his place within a distinctively American Hegelian tradition.\textsuperscript{10} Like their British counterparts, American Hegelians focused primarily on issues of education, social reform, and debates about the social role of philosophy which revolved around the issue of professionalization. On both sides of the Atlantic, intellectuals influenced by Hegel were particularly critical of the materialism, agnosticism, and atomistic individualism of British empiricism.

But unlike many Anglo-American philosophers today, the American Hegelians with whom Dewey associated were attracted to Hegel because they read him as an exceptionally practical and politically liberal philosopher.\textsuperscript{11} Though these philosophers, centered in St. Louis, have been characterized as right-wing, they are more accurately labeled center Hegelians because they rejected the revolutionary thought of the left Hegelians but were also critical of the Prussian reaction against liberal thought. Although these American Hegelians were certainly aware of British neo-Hegelianism, they insisted on reading Hegel in his native tongue and drew upon secondary sources written by some of Hegel’s immediate followers in Germany.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, which the St. Louis Hegelians blamed on “adamant individualism,” many American intellectuals were deeply

\textsuperscript{9} A convenient collection of essays which present Hegel in this way may be found in H. Tristram Engelhardt and Terry Pinkard, eds., Hegel Reconsidered: Beyond Metaphysics and the Authoritarian State (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994).

\textsuperscript{10} Recently, John Shook has emphasized the influence of Edward Caird, rather than T. H. Green, on Dewey’s early thought. Shook, Dewey’s Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000).

concerned about the problems of cultural and national unification, an anxiety that was only heightened by the post-war influx of immigrants and the rapid growth of American cities and industry. The strength of American Hegelianism was its emphasis on the importance of well-founded institutions and man's interdependence during a period of rapid urbanization, specialization, and bureaucratization. Its weakness lay in its holism and seemingly metaphysical and theological nomenclature. Holism, which required that problems be analyzed socially, psychologically, and historically, as well as logically, made it difficult to reconcile Hegelianism with academic specialization, just as the social sciences separated from moral philosophy into distinct disciplines within the new research universities. Hegelians' talk of spirit as opposed to mind or brain, made Hegelianism seem "unprofessional" at a time when philosophers were at great pains to demonstrate that they were not being left behind with theology by the emergence of the social sciences. For these reasons American Hegelianism collapsed, ironically, for lack of institutional support. This study will examine a distinctively American Hegelianism that powerfully shaped Dewey's philosophical development. We shall see that Dewey had close ties to the American Hegelian tradition, within which he occupied a left wing position that has eluded scholarly recognition.

Further, when Dewey scholars look for traces of Hegelianism in his mature thought it seems they look almost exclusively for indications of nineteenth-century neo-Hegelianism. They rightly conclude that there is little evidence of neo-Hegelianism, though they usually refer to it simply as Hegelianism. This study argues that Dewey's break with neo-Hegelianism, after the publication of his *Psychology* in 1887, involved a new emphasis on Hegel's
**Phenomenology of Spirit**, at a time when the neo-Hegelians, and even most American Hegelians, emphasized the *Science of Logic.* By 1891 Dewey rejected neo-Hegelianism by repudiating their commitment to transcendent realities but, for Dewey, this did not necessarily include a rejection of Hegel. In fact Dewey’s post-1891 reading of Hegel is comparable to twentieth-century humanistic, historicist readings. In an oft quoted passage, in 1943 Morton White claimed that by 1894 Dewey could “out-James [William] James.” This study will show that Dewey was able to do so because he had out-Hegeled the neo-Hegelians.

A clearer understanding of Dewey’s continuing debt to Hegel will also clarify his debt to British empiricism. Many scholars have noted the influence of British empiricism on Dewey, and it is true that in his mature thought he viewed that tradition more sympathetically. In particular, he applauded British empiricism’s focus on everyday experience and its emphasis on consequences in

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12 This was also true of Dewey’s American contemporary, Josiah Royce. According to John Smith, Royce came to view “the Hegel of the *Phenomenology* [as] superior to the Hegel of the *Logic*...Royce saw very well how prominent a place Hegel gave to experience, to concrete life and the inner development of the self in that vast and mysterious odyssey of the mind called the *Phenomenology*. Royce even suggested a parallel in James’ *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Much of the current renewal of interest in Hegel’s thought is focused on his concern for the self and for the dialectic of experience stemming from the crucial fact of self-consciousness. [Royce’s] *Lectures on Modern Idealism* anticipates this consequence and thus puts the reader squarely in the middle of current discussion.” John Smith, “Foreword” in Royce, *Lectures on Modern Idealism*, ed. Jacob Loewenberg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), viii.


14 Here I disagree with Raymond Boisvert’s claim that Dewey’s allegiance was to “Hegelianism, the movement...not to a thorough assimilation of Hegel, the individual philosopher.” Boisvert, *Dewey’s Metaphysics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1988), 27. My position is that Dewey moved beyond Morris and other late nineteenth-century Hegelians by engaging all of Hegel’s thought, including the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which was largely ignored at this time. I suspect that Boisvert’s confuses Hegel with British neo-Hegelianism. Thus, he seems to suggest that late-nineteenth-century philosophers had to choose between British empiricism, which reduced reality to material substance, or idealism, which reduced reality to spiritual substance. In fact, Hegel provided Dewey with the conceptual tools to reject the doctrine of substance altogether. Boisvert also claims that Morris was not true to Hegel because, for Morris, terms like “universal consciousness” meant that “all existence is meaningful” (25). Yet a very plausible reading of Hegel, and the one I will argue Dewey ultimately came to accept, is precisely that spirit is meant to imply that all of reality contains logical relationships and hence, is potentially meaningful.
ethics, but he consistently sought to balance those themes with an idealistic
vision of what society might become. Because critics tend to identify the mature
Dewey too closely with the British empiricist tradition, they treat his idealistic
hopes as a lapse of rigor smuggled in because he did not have the strength of his
positivistic and utilitarian convictions. When critics see elements of
Hegelianism in Dewey's mature thought, they view it as an expression of
nostalgia for the unfulfilled hopes and dreams of his youthful flirtation with
Hegel.

Identifying Dewey with the British empiricist tradition misses the
principal thrust of his thought. Dewey's critics often assume that his primary
interest was epistemological, but the post-Kantian tradition Dewey studied
during his formative years reversed a crucial hierarchy of post-Cartesian
philosophy by making social and moral philosophy prior to epistemology.
Rather than a knowing consciousness, the post-Kantian idealists viewed the self
as an intentionally acting being, and self-knowledge (rather than knowledge of
an external realm) as the key to responsible action. As early as 1899 Dewey
rejected "the entire epistemological industry" as a "Sisyphean" task, precisely
because its commitment to mind/body dualism removed intelligence from the
world and made the resolution of "philosophic problems so arbitrary that they
are soluble only by arbitrarily wrenching scientific facts."16

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15 A recent example of this view is Hoopes' claim that James and Dewey's "notion of
'immmediate experience' was not radical but grew out of the tradition of British empiricism in
which the mind's knowledge of its ideas was considered immediate." Hoopes, "Objectivity and
British Empiricism and American Pragmatism: New Directions and Neglected Arguments (New York:
16 Dewey, "'Consciousness and Experience" (1899), MW 1: 22.
Like Hegel, Dewey never viewed dualisms as the technical, logical
problems of philosophers, rather he saw them as manifestations of modern
man's alienation from society, nature, and his own highest ideals. For Dewey,
Western philosophy's propensity to set the mind off from the external world
owed its appeal to the increasing depersonalization of the individual in large,
bureaucratic organizations. His critique of mind/body dualism was
fundamentally intertwined with morally laden distinctions between private and
public, individual and society, the inward-looking professional philosopher and
the more publicly focused amateur.\(^{17}\) In contrast to the isolated Cartesian self, an
entity juxtaposed to its natural and social environment, Dewey consistently
described the self as an integral part of its environment, enmeshed in a web of
dialectical relationships within society and nature. Dewey was deeply concerned
about the Western propensity to divide fact and value, especially as manifested
in the growing chasm between late nineteenth century social science research
and philosophy. As early as 1891 Dewey told William James that "the question of
the relation of intelligence to the objective world" is directly related to the degree
to which intellectuals are obligated to be actively engaged in efforts to resolve
public problems.\(^{18}\) As Thomas Bender notes, Dewey's rejection of a mentalistic
view of experience, "forced philosophy into the world."\(^{19}\)

\(^{17}\) Lewis S. Feuer, "John Dewey and the Back to the People Movement in American
Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 20 (1959): 565. In this article Feuer compares Dewey's
analysis of the psychological effects of dualisms to Freud's views on the effects of dualism
between the super-ego and the id.

\(^{18}\) JD to William James, 3 June 1891; Thomas Bender, *Intelect and Public Life: Essays on the
Social History of Academic Intellectuals in the United States* (Baltimore and London: The Johns

\(^{19}\) Bender, *New York Intelect: A History of Intellectual Life in New York City, From 1750 to the
Methodologically, this study proceeds by placing Dewey's early intellectual development more firmly within the context of the "community of discourse" in which he was directly involved during his crucial formative years of the 1880s and 1890s. The focus on community acknowledges that ideas are not disembodied and that thinkers are interesting members of communities of intellectuals. Of course, this social approach to intellectual history can itself be seen as proof of the power of Hegel's and Dewey's historicization of mind upon contemporary historical scholarship.

Contextualization within communities must, however, be complemented by close examination of Dewey's writings. For years systematic textual study of Dewey's oeuvre was greatly complicated because, as Bourne stated in 1915, "no man...with such universally important things to say...was ever published in forms more ingeniously contrived to thwart the interest of the prospective public." Bourne's remark remained true for decades, largely because Dewey himself displayed little or no interest in keeping his writings in print or compiling them into more accessible volumes. This situation has been completely reversed, however, with the publication of Dewey's *Collected Works* (1967-90) and *Works about John Dewey, 1886-1995*, both available in bound volumes and electronic editions. Dewey's correspondence (over 10,000 items) is also available in a searchable database at the Center for Dewey Studies, and as of this writing the first third of that correspondence has been published as an electronic

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Although this study does not aspire to be an exhaustive exposition of Dewey’s work, it seeks to take advantage of these electronic resources. This study arrives at conclusions that many Dewey scholars will find startling. On the contemporary reading of Hegel his absolute standpoint is analogous to Dewey’s psychological standpoint because both remain truer to experience than British empiricism by rejecting Cartesian mind/body dualism and the notion that realities exists beyond or behind experience. Because of their rejection of Cartesian dualism, both philosophers abandoned a correspondence theory of truth based upon the notion that a true idea is one that corresponds to an external state of affairs, and emphasized the logical coherence of our beliefs, coupled with an existential requirement that true beliefs are those that resolve specific practical problems. Dewey also believed Hegel’s dialectic resolved the problem of the one and the many by affirming the reality of the particular individual within an inclusive whole. Dewey modeled his theory of inquiry on Hegel’s dialectic, according to which ideas are means to action and are always subject to further revision. Both Hegel and Dewey rejected faculty psychology, and depicted the mind as something that emerges through interaction with one’s environment. This led Hegel to a rudimentary functional psychology that we see more fully developed in Dewey’s mature thought, according to which the mind and its abilities are understood as functions of our interaction with the other.

Both philosophers embraced a romantic critique of the Enlightenment by viewing human experience as much more than cognitive. Dewey advocated a much more egalitarian political philosophy than Hegel, but both viewed learning and education as a means to self-actualization within the context of one's society. Finally, for both philosophers, we do not form societies in spite of our differences, but precisely because we are different and thus complementary to one another. On this model of society, diversity is essential to the health of society.

Dewey continued to draw upon Hegel because he sought to develop a philosophy that would strengthen community in a continually changing modern society by instilling critical thought about common values through education, art, religion, and participatory government. This depiction of Dewey's philosophy helps historians recover an important American intellectual tradition, one which draws upon Hegel to address an enduring human problem, the reconciliation of the individual with the community. Dewey adapted those elements quite logically to the rapidly changing cultural reality of the twentieth century. Such a reading of Dewey counters allegations of his positivism, utilitarianism, and relativism, and shows why these charges simply miss the mark.

CHAPTER ONE

AMERICAN HEGELIANISM

The second half of the nineteenth century was a period of extraordinary ferment in American thought. Theology and philosophy declared their independence from one another as American philosophers sought to dissociate themselves from their traditional role as Christian apologists.¹ Philosophers felt a need to respond to the specific problems of their rapidly changing social milieu, and many hoped to do so by modeling their method on the example of science with confidence that this would insure genuine progress toward the resolution of philosophical and social questions. In addition, the interchange of ideas with European intellectuals was increasing tremendously in scope and complexity.

Prior to mid-century, American intellectuals generally had two philosophical alternatives available to them—British empiricism and Scottish common sense realism, or intuitionism. British empiricism had always been suspect because of its materialistic tendencies. Intuitionism had dominated American colleges since the arrival of John Witherspoon at Princeton in 1768, but the thought of Sir William Hamilton, its most able mid-nineteenth-century defender, did not long survive the devastating attack rendered by John Stuart Mill in his Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy (1865). By 1890, if not sooner, intuitionism was effectively dead, largely because it was committed to a static, unchanging reality, which was difficult to defend against Darwinian

biology and the palpable evidence of mutability forced into view by urbanization and industrialization.\textsuperscript{2} As these philosophical options lost favor, many American intellectuals began to consider German idealism as an alternative distinct from both British and Scottish thought.

Different as they were, both Darwinian biology and post-Kantian idealism relied on an historicist epistemology which held that “facts should be explained by reference to earlier facts” and an organicist metaphysics which held that the parts of reality are inherently interrelated components of greater, or all-encompassing wholes.\textsuperscript{3} Both ideas were foreign to intuitionism’s static reality of absolute truths and discrete, atomistic entities. Yet it was more than philosophical attacks which sounded the death knell of common sense realism in America. Historicism and organicism both seemed more plausible in a social setting in which interdependence was the order of the day and the rapidity with which science and technology overturned common sense increased at a maddening rate.\textsuperscript{4}

The American Reception of German Idealism, 1820-1865

German philosophy had begun to seep into American culture as early as the late eighteenth century, primarily through correspondence between American and German intellectuals.\textsuperscript{5} During mid-century, the process was

\textsuperscript{2} Intuitionism was taught at Princeton until 1888 by James McCosh, at Harvard until 1889 by Francis Bowen, and at Yale until 1892 by Noah Porter.

\textsuperscript{3} Morton White, Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism, new ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), 12.


\textsuperscript{5} Alvin S. Haag, “Some German Influences in American Philosophical Thought from 1800 to 1850” (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 1939), 96ff.
facilitated by the numerous German expatriates who came to the United States after the revolution of 1848, many of whom were politically liberal, well-educated left-Hegelians. Because the "48ers" tended to remain aloof from American society, however, the increasing number of Americans who went abroad to study at German universities did far more to bring German idealism to America.\(^6\) By the early 1870s, the infiltration of German idealism was so pronounced that Walt Whitman declared in his personal notes that, "Only Hegel is fit for America—is large enough and free enough."\(^7\)

German idealism was initially introduced to the broader community of American literati through a Vermont intellectual, James Marsh. Studying theology with Moses Stuart at Andover Seminary in the early 1820s, Marsh sought a Christian theology that would "satisfy the heart as well as the head."\(^8\) Stuart encouraged Marsh to read Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* and to study German philosophy, especially Kant and Herder. Proficient in philosophical German, by 1822 Marsh was probably the most widely read American-born student of German thought in the country. In 1825 he published the first American edition of Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* with a fifty-five page exposition of the poet's philosophy and its German origins. The following year Marsh was elected president of the University of Vermont located in Burlington and, in his


inaugural presidential address, produced what has been described as "the first published utterance of the Transcendentalists in America."9 Immediately thereafter, Marsh set to work transforming the University from a struggling provincial college into the first American sanctuary of transcendental idealism. Acting on his faith in public education as the great equalizer for all classes of people, Marsh secured the admission of part-time students to the University to allow working men to attend. In order to insure that education at the University would promote free, but critical thought, he introduced an elective system, allowing students greater flexibility to pursue their interests.10 Marsh remained at the University as president or Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy until his death in 1842. Philosophically, Marsh was, like Coleridge, persistently critical of Locke's empiricism, claiming that it bred materialism, determinism, and atheism. Because he did not admit of the existence of transcendent realities, argued Marsh, Locke could not distinguish between the natural and the spiritual or provide grounds for moral obligation. As materialists, Lockeans sought to explain all events in terms of causal law and thus could not account for free will.

According to Marsh, conscience revealed the moral law to us, but materialism "subverts the reality of conscience."\textsuperscript{11}

As we shall see, Marsh's "Burlington philosophy," as it came to be called, was a crucial factor in Dewey's philosophical development while an undergraduate at the University of Vermont. The tradition continued, largely in isolation from the rest of the country, under Joseph Torrey, a thoroughgoing Transcendentalist and close student of Kant, Schelling, and Hegel. Joseph Torrey's knowledge of German is evidenced by his translation of J. A. W. Neander's four volume \textit{General History of the Christian Religion and Church}, but he was particularly known for his developmental aesthetics. Joseph Torrey was the first in the United States to offer a course in aesthetics and his lectures on the subject were edited and published posthumously by his daughter in 1874 as \textit{A Theory of Fine Art}. In these lectures, Joseph Torrey applauded Coleridge's and Schelling's appreciation of nature and integration of fact and value, proclaiming that Schelling was "undoubtedly the philosopher to whom we are more indebted than any other individual in modern times for something like a rational hypothesis covering the whole ground of the subject now before us."\textsuperscript{12} He also drew upon Kant and Hegel, especially on the latter, for his theory that art progressively developed through historical epochs although, he believed, his present era was one of artistic decline. According to his colleague Matthew Buckham, the concept of development furnished "the key to his [Joseph Torrey's]

\textsuperscript{11} Marsh, \textit{Remains of James Marsh}, 414.
\textsuperscript{12} Joseph Torrey, \textit{A Theory of Fine Art}, (New York, 1874), 275.
whole philosophy."¹³ When Joseph Torrey died in 1867, his nephew H. A. P. Torrey became the new herald of the Burlington philosophy and, from 1875 to 1882, Dewey’s first philosophical mentor. We shall discuss H. A. P. Torrey further in the next chapter, but for now affirm that he continued in Marsh’s and his uncle’s footsteps.

Some scholars have argued that Americans were drawn to German idealism as a bulwark for Christian theology against British empiricism which, by the mid-nineteenth century, had led to the development of increasingly positivistic philosophy.¹⁴ To be sure, after the publication of Darwin’s The Origin of Species in 1859, British thought became hostile to orthodox theology as Herbert Spencer and T. H. Huxley described the theory of evolution as a final step on man’s road to the elimination of metaphysical and theological language from his descriptions of nature.¹⁵ Though developments in British thought may well have encouraged the Torreys to remain engaged with German idealism, particularly the latter Torrey who was the most orthodox of the pair, positivism arose three decades after Stuart’s and Marsh’s initial interest in German thought. Stuart and

¹⁴ According to Herbert Schneider, orthodox American ministers “turned to German idealism in the hope of finding comfort against English positivism and empiricism.” Schneider, History of American Philosophy, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 376. For a good discussion of theories about early American interest in German idealism see Lawrence Dowler, “The New Idealism and the Quest for Culture in the Gilded Age” (Ph. D. diss., University of Maryland, 1974), 13-22. Dowler concludes that, after the Civil War, Americans were drawn to German idealism because of a “loss of faith in traditional cosmic explanations” brought on by developments in science and a decline of religion, and that they looked to idealism as a philosophy of cultural unification. In the following section it will become apparent that I agree with Dowler’s analysis, as long as it is understood that post-Civil War American idealists were not particularly concerned about the preservation of orthodox Christianity. Although post-Kantian idealism can certainly be viewed as a religious school of thought, it is crucial to bear in mind that it often led to exceptionally heterodox religion.
¹⁵ Spencer had actually begun to write about evolution in 1850, proposing a theory similar to Darwin’s although with a strong Lamarckian bent. See Herbert Spencer, Social Statistics:
Marsh, it would seem, were drawn to German idealism as a resource to counter
the rationalism of Unitarians, such as William Ellery Channing, who sought to
explain away miracles and the paradoxes of the trinity by subjecting Christian
doctrine to the tribunal of reason. Stuart and Marsh found in Kant’s
transcendentalism, mediated by Coleridge, a way to defend the notion that the
most important truths are apprehended through intuition.

Aside from these debates about the origins of early American interest in
German idealism, it is important to summarize briefly the Burlington philosophy
in which Dewey was schooled. Marsh and the Torreys all emphasized intense
study of German thought, a deep appreciation of natural beauty, individual
religious experience combined with an unceasing criticism of the divisive social
implications of Locke’s “atomistic individualism,” an opposition to the
separation of “knowledge from action,” and facts from values, as “formal, cold,
and barren,” and an insistence on a union of Kant’s pure and practical reason
through religious and aesthetic experience. Though dressed in the garb of
scientific naturalism, these philosophical themes came together in Dewey’s
mature thought, perhaps most clearly in Experience and Nature (1925), The Quest
for Certainty (1929), A Common Faith (1934), and Art as Experience (1934).

Or, the Conditions Essential to Human Happiness Specified, and the First of them Developed (London: John Chapman, 1851).


18 Cf. Thomas Alexander’s study of Dewey’s thought in which he emphasizes the
continuity of his early and mature philosophy by arguing for the centrality of aesthetics for
Dewey. Alexander, John Dewey’s Theory of Art, Experience and Nature: The Horizons of Feeling
As early as the 1820s and 30s, many American intellectuals referred to Hegel’s thought or began to make his views known to a broader community of American intellectuals. Several of the early American assessments of Hegel were negative, however. For example, George Bancroft, one of the first of a group of Americans to study in Germany, attended Hegel’s lectures at the University of Berlin for part of a term. In his journal and a letter of 1820 he described Hegel as “sluggish” and stated that he stopped attending the lectures because Hegel’s vocabulary was unintelligible. In 1831, the year of Hegel’s death, German-American Francis Lieber’s *Encyclopedia Americana* was the first source on Hegel available in English in the United States. The article merely referred the reader to the general treatment of philosophy in a later volume, gave the titles of a number of his works, and provided a brief note on his life and place among German thinkers.

Frederich Augustus Rauch, president of the Mercersburg Seminary and Marshall College in Pennsylvania, was apparently the first enthusiastic Hegelian in the United States. A native of Germany, Rauch arrived in the United States in 1831, having received the Doctorate in Philosophy at Marburg in 1827 after which he studied Hegel at the University of Heidelberg for one year. In 1840 he published *Psychology; or a view of the Human Soul; including Anthropology*, the first statement of Hegelian psychology to appear in English. Even after Rauch’s untimely death in 1841, Mercersburg Seminary and Marshall College remained

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centers of German idealist thought for many years under the leadership of Philip Schaff and John Niven.\textsuperscript{21}

In 1838, Henry Boynton Smith, who would later strongly influence Dewey’s early mentors, traveled to Germany where he studied first with Friedrich Tholuck at the University of Halle and then studied Hegel with Friedrich A. Trendelenburg in Berlin. Smith was particularly impressed with Trendelenburg’s critique of both Kant and Hegel, as well as his knowledge of Aristotle.\textsuperscript{22} By the time he returned to the United States in 1840, Smith had mastered the theology of Friedrich Schleiermacher and J. A. W. Neander. In 1845 Smith published “A Sketch of German Philosophy” in the Bibliotheca Sacra and prepared several translations of German theological treatises for the same journal. This work earned him a position as a professor of philosophy at Amherst in 1847 and in 1850 he moved to the Union Theological Seminary where he remained until 1874. At Union, Smith encouraged several of his students to follow his path of study in Germany, most notably George Sylvester Morris and G. Stanley Hall who were both important influences upon the development of Dewey’s thought during his graduate years at Johns Hopkins.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{22} Elizabeth Lee Smith, ed., Henry Boynton Smith, His Life and Work (New York, 1881), 269.
\textsuperscript{23} Union Theological Seminary had another important but little known connection to Dewey. Lewis Feuer discovered that the University of Vermont was “a kind of training ground for the Union Theological Seminary.” From 1864 to 1867, graduates of the University of Vermont were the fourth largest group among the seminary’s students. Moreover, the most noted professor at the seminary, W. G. T. Shedd, was a Transcendentalist who had studied with Marsh at the University of Vermont.” Dewey’s undergraduate mentor, H. A. P. Torrey, studied with Shedd and graduated from Union in 1864. Feuer, “H. A. P. Torrey and John Dewey,” American Quarterly 10 (1958): 36.
German idealism was first introduced to Boston area transcendentalists by Frederic Henry Hedge. Educated chiefly in Germany, by 1830 Hedge was one of the few New England intellectuals who could speak authoritatively on German philosophy. Known in his hometown of Cambridge, Massachusetts as “Germanicus Hedge,” in the mid-1820s he befriended Ralph Waldo Emerson while the two were students at the Harvard Divinity School. Hedge was the first translator of Hegel in America; his *Prose Writers of Germany,* which contained translations of works by Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, among others, made a strong impression on Emerson and other American Transcendentalists.24

The philosophical work of Marsh and Hedge introduced Emerson, Bronson Alcott, and Theodore Parker, to German idealism. But Marsh’s Transcendentalism was relatively conservative; careful to characterize his philosophy in traditional theistic terms, Marsh tenaciously resisted the pantheism of the Concord Transcendentalists.25 Because of Hedge’s influence, however, the Transcendentalists took an interest in Schelling in the 1840s, whose philosophy encouraged their emphasis on feeling over reason and spiritual intuition over scientific knowledge. Further, Schelling’s identification of the absolute with nature reinforced the Emersonian notion of the world-soul. Like other versions of Romanticism, Concord Transcendentalism sought to reunite man with God through an emotionally charged and spiritualized nature, a

24 Frederic Henry Hedge, *Prose Writers of Germany* (Philadelphia, PA: Carey and Hart, 1847). Hedge (1805-90) was the son of Levi Hedge, Professor of Logic, Ethics, and Metaphysics at Harvard.
"natural supernaturalism." The American Transcendentalists also embraced Schelling's emphasis on individual genius, leading many of them to a libertarian political philosophy: established governments did little good for mankind and civil society had a generally corruptive influence on the individual personality. According to Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, the truly free and enlightened individual would be wise to isolate himself from society and its institutions as much as possible.

Led by Parker, America's foremost expositor of German higher criticism, the Transcendentalists also studied and accepted D. F. Strauss's characterization of true Christianity as a matter of piety rather than an adherence to dogma and ritual. In 1840 Parker published a scandalously sympathetic examination of Strauss' Das Leben Jesu (1835), in which he criticized Strauss for reducing the orthodox biblical view of Christianity to pure myth with no basis in fact, but accepted Strauss' Hegelian historicization as a valid method for Biblical studies. In 1841 Parker delivered his controversial sermon, "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity," a title taken from one of Strauss' essays. Like Strauss, Parker rejected the divine inspiration of the Bible and grouped miracles, prophecies, and the life of Jesus among the transient elements of Christianity and its moral teachings as the permanent. At the urging of Hedge and the St. Louis

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Hegelians, who we shall discuss shortly, in the 1850s the Transcendentalists began to take a greater interest in Hegel and, after 1859, they sought to combine Hegel's historical dialectic with Darwinian evolution.²⁹

In 1848 John B. Stallo of Canton, Ohio, published an extensive exposition and interpretation of Hegel's writings in his General Principles of the Philosophy of Nature. Stallo, primarily a philosopher of science and politics, was one of the four individuals who have become known as the "Ohio Hegelians." Immigrating from Germany with his family around 1820, Peter Kaufmann organized utopian socialist communities in Pennsylvania and Ohio, drawing upon Hegel's dialectical view of truth and knowledge to formulate a philosophy of social reform and moral perfectionism. A heavily industrialized city, Cincinnati attracted a number of Left Hegelians, including many German socialists who were exiled after the failed revolution of 1848. Most notable among the "48ers" was August Willich who, after the revolution of 1848 and a rupture with Marx and Engels in London, landed in Cincinnati where he edited the Republikaner, an adamantly pro-labor and abolitionist newspaper. Moncure Conway, a close associate of Emerson and Parker, arrived in Cincinnati in 1856 to accept a Congregationalist pulpit after being dismissed from a Unitarian church in Washington D. C. for his opposition to slavery. Conway had already accepted Strauss's criticisms of belief in miracles and the supernatural. His exposure to Willich in Cincinnati further radicalized his political beliefs. Both pacifist and abolitionist, Conway led a group to London during the Civil War to negotiate a settlement with the Confederacy which would end the war immediately if the

²⁹ Pochmann, German Culture in America, 204.
South freed its slaves. Roundly condemned for this effort by fellow abolitionists, Conway remained in London where he joined forces with Marx and Engels and encouraged British socialists to study American Transcendentalism.\(^\text{30}\)

In the 1850s and 60s, German idealism began to appeal to a greater number of English-speaking intellectuals. Hedge’s *German Prose Writers* went through five editions from 1847-1870. In England, H. Stowman and J. Wallon published a translation of a fragment of Hegel’s *Wissenschaft der Logik* in 1856, and J. Sibree published a translation of Hegel’s *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* in 1861. The 1865 publication of James Stirling’s *The Secret of Hegel*, marked the full arrival of Hegel in England and signaled a new departure in English thought.\(^\text{31}\) American intellectuals’ increasing interest in German idealism corresponded to the decline of Scottish intuitionism in American colleges and their ever-increasing criticism of the excessive individualism and greed of the Age of Jackson. Most importantly though, idealism, a philosophy of cultural unification, appealed to Americans during the sectional crisis and the ensuing war. As American intellectuals imbibed the thought of German idealism, they moved away from libertarian, atomistic individualism toward a more organic view of the relationship between man and


society.32 This transition is evident in the thought of an unlikely band of
Hegelians in St. Louis who did more to promote the American Hegelian tradition
that was crucial to Dewey’s early philosophy than any other group.

The St. Louis Hegelians

The St. Louis Hegelians existed as a loosely organized group from
approximately 1858 to 1880. Before the Civil War they participated in the St.
Louis Philosophical and Literary Society which dissolved when most of its
members left the city to fight in the war. After the guns fell silent, a few of these
“respectable vagabonds,” most notably Henry Conrad Brokmeyer and William
Torrey Harris, organized the St. Louis Philosophical Society in January 1866.
Both organizations were part of a larger “St. Louis Movement” which included
an art club, an Aristotle club, a Shakespeare society, the St. Louis Academy of
Science, the St. Louis Philharmonic Society, and the Academy of Useful Science.
All of these organizations were primarily composed of local
professionals—public school teachers and administrators, judges and attorneys.33

Not all members of the postwar Philosophical Society considered
themselves Hegelian, but its core figures, Brokmeyer, Harris, and Denton Snider,
were inspired by Hegel to form a group that would promote individual and

32 John Higham, From Boundless to Consolidation: The Transformation of American Culture,
1848-1860 (Ann Arbor, MI: William L. Clements Library, 1969); Pochmann, German Culture in
America, 198-207; Jean B. Quandt, From the Small Town to the Great Community: The Social Thought of
Progressive Intellectuals (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1970); and Jackson Wilson,
In Quest of Community: Social Philosophy in the United States, 1860-1920 (New York: John Wiley and

33 Snider, A Writer of Book in His Genesis; Written for and Dedicated to His Pupil-friends
Reaching Back in a Line of Fifty Years (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1910), 389. The best
accounts of the founding of both St. Louis philosophical clubs are in Kurt F. Leidecker, Yankee
Teacher: The Life of William Torrey Harris (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946), 316ff; and
Denton Snider, The St. Louis Movement in Philosophy, Literature, Education, Psychology, with Chapters
cultural goals. All three sought to pursue an Hegelian ethic of self-actualization of the human spirit by participating in the dialectical development of the World-Spirit in the Germanized social and intellectual climate of St. Louis. Self-actualization, as they understood it, necessitated support of informal and formal public schooling as essential to the education of the individual toward productive citizenship in a democratic society. Brokmeyer, Harris and Snider viewed their publications, public lectures, and social and political activities as exercises in self expression and as participation in the inevitable movement of the world-spirit. For them, philosophy was a vocation, a practical activity, rather than a profession restricted to cloistered academics. They also sought to further their goals by promoting Hegelian thought in America, and laboring “to make Hegel talk English” through translation, study and exposition of his writings. First and foremost, the St. Louis Hegelians studied, and attempted to translate, Hegel’s Science of Logic which, according to Snider, was Brokmeyer and Harris’s “one book of the Universe, their real Bible, to which they always came back for recovery after any divagation.” All three came to agree that Hegel’s greatest philosophical insight was his claim that the individual could overcome the opposition between subject and object, rendering knowledge a relation of the two rather than the power of one over the other.

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34 At least two leading members of the Society consistently argued against the ideas of Hegel. Adolf Ernst Kroeger, whose family settled in Iowa when the father had to flee Germany after participating in the failed insurrection against the Danes in Shleswig, adamantly advocated the philosophy of Fichte. Thomas Davidson, a Scottish-American intellectual, studied Hegel in great depth, but vociferously rejected his thought, preferring Schelling, Leibniz, and Aristotle instead.

During and after the Civil War, the St. Louis Hegelians appropriated Hegel’s thought to make sense of their experience and to develop a philosophy which would temper the “adamant individualism” of the antebellum period and promote gradual reform of social institutions. Many historians have documented the Transcendentalist’s transition from a prewar individualistic emphasis on inner spiritual renewal to a postwar support of social and political institutions. Yet few historians consider the possibility that the St. Louis Hegelians played a role in this intellectual transition.\(^{37}\)

Bronson Alcott met with the St. Louis Hegelians in 1859 and 1866. Although treated harshly by the abrasive Brokmeyer, at his first visit Alcott was persuaded to begin a study of Hegel’s *Philosophy of History* and when it became available in 1865, he studied Stirling’s, *The Secret of Hegel*. Ralph Waldo Emerson spoke before the Philosophical Society on three separate occasions in 1867 and became an “auxiliary” member.\(^{38}\) Moreover, the St. Louis Hegelians’ *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* (1867-1893), the first journal in the English language

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Dorothy Rogers, “‘Making Hegel Talk English’: America’s First Women Idealists” (Ph. D. diss., Boston University, 1998).

\(^{36}\) Snider, *The St. Louis Movement*, 127.


\(^{38}\) Harris was publicly embarrassed by Brokmeyer’s verbal assaults on Alcott. Pochmann, *German Culture in America; Philosophical and Literary Influences, 1600-1900*, 271-72. Cf. Bronson Alcott, *The Journals of Bronson Alcott*, ed. Odel Sheppard (Boston, Little, Brown, 1938), 340; and Brokmeyer, *A Mechanic’s Diary* (Washington, D. C.: E. C. Brokmeyer Publisher, 1910), 229-33. See Emerson’s reflections on his meetings with the St. Louis Hegelians in Emerson, *The Letters of*
devoted to serious philosophy without a specific theological agenda, was read widely by eastern intellectuals, many of whom, including Dewey and his mentors, used it as a vehicle for their first publications.\(^9\) Particularly impressed with Harris, Emerson and Alcott introduced him to other Transcendentalists, such as Frederic Henry Hedge and James Elliot Cabot. Finally, from 1879-88, Harris and Snider made a profound impression on intellectuals at Alcott's Concord School of Philosophy as they sought to promote a philosophical rigor they found lacking among eastern intellectuals.\(^40\) Thus an examination of the St. Louis Hegelians' social and political philosophy can deepen our understanding of the transition from individualism to institutionalism in postwar American thought and set the stage for the intellectual milieu in which Dewey's thought developed.

Profoundly affected by the violence of the sectional crisis, the St. Louis Hegelians expressed concerns about American Transcendentalism that mirrored Hegel's concerns about the philosophy of Fichte upon which the early Romantics drew quite liberally, giving it a twist which Fichte did not condone. Emphasizing spontaneity and autonomy, Fichte claimed the "I" or self achieves its identity

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\(^9\) It is frequently said that the Journal of Speculative Philosophy (hereafter JSP) was the first English language journal devoted exclusively to philosophy, but Harris himself stated that one-third of the journal was devoted to art.

\(^40\) Louis J. Block, "The Philosophic Schools of St. Louis, Jacksonville, Concord and Chicago," in A Brief Report of the Meeting Commemorative of the Early Saint Louis Movement in Philosophy, Psychology, Literature, Art and Education, David H. Harris, ed. (St. Louis: n. p., 1922), 25. Harris seems to have been the primary attraction at the Concord school. Several other lecturers were from Illinois and were closely associated with the St. Louis Hegelians. Austin Warren, "The Concord School of Philosophy," New England Quarterly 2 (April 1929): 199-233; and Henry A. Pochmann, New England Transcendentalism and St. Louis Hegelianism: Phases in the History of American Idealism (Philadelphia: Carl Shurz Memorial Foundation, 1948); Leidecker, Yankee Teacher, 357-72, 403-21. For Harris's profound impact on Alcott see Teck-Young Kwon, "A.
only in struggle against and conquest of the sphere of the "not-I" (everything outside of the self). Jena Romantics who hovered around Friedrich Schlegel, appropriated this theme in Fichte's thought to argue that man's true vocation was to achieve ever fuller freedom and ever more loyal devotion to one's own spiritual ideals, transcending the moral claims made upon the individual by society. Believing with Fichte that speculative understanding is superior to Kant's principle of reflective understanding, Schlegel gave primacy to the creative fancy for which the world is simply an occasion to express itself in all its fullness. Individual fulfillment and freedom is achieved in artistic activity in which the artist becomes increasingly aware of himself as creator, and discovers his genius, the divine within himself. For Hegel, on the other hand, freedom consisted in fully reciprocal, mutual imposition of norms within society, not in the one-sided imposition of norms upon oneself, which he feared would soon lead to the one-sided imposition of norms upon others as one "discovered" his divinity.\textsuperscript{41} Hegel believed, and Brokmeyer, Harris, and Snider came to agree that, this celebration of the "I" led to the fanaticism of the Reign of Terror, and would led to a dangerous extremism in any society. For the St. Louis Hegelians, Emerson's conviction that "the only right is what is after my constitution; the only wrong what is against it," expressed the sort of sentiment which could easily be misappropriated by fanatics.\textsuperscript{42}


\textsuperscript{42} Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self Reliance" in Selections from Ralph Waldo Emerson, ed. Stephen E. Whicher (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957), 150.
The Appeal of Hegel

Although the St. Louis Hegelians have been characterized as right-wing Hegelians, that designation obscures their thought. The appellations left- and right-wing Hegelian first emerged as Hegel’s followers disagreed about the extent to which his thought supported or undermined orthodox Christianity. Although Harris defended the doctrine of the trinity on Hegelian grounds, this alone would not definitively associate him with the right Hegelians because, unlike them, he was not concerned with the preservation of the entire Gospel story. Moreover, the St. Louis Hegelians’ political philosophy can be compared to a group that Karl Löwith has more accurately characterized as the Hegelian center—Eduard Gans, Karl Ludwig Michelet, Karl Rosenkranz, and Johannes Schulz—immediate followers of Hegel who opposed Prussian conservatism as well as the revolutionary thought of the Young Hegelians. Rosenkranz was an auxiliary member of the St. Louis Philosophical Society, and Brokmeyer, Harris and Snider were diligent students of his writings. Rosenkranz corresponded with them frequently and praised Harris’s theistic reading of Hegel in the pages of

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43 In general, other St. Louis Hegelians did not share Harris’s concern about the doctrine of the trinity. According to Denton Snider, the group sought to overthrow traditional American religion in favor of one that was more universal. “We sought to win a fresh spiritual communion with the Divine Order and its Orderer, and to create for the same a new unborn expression. But to accomplish any such purpose we had to throw aside the old carcass of tradition...and to begin over.” Snider, The St. Louis Movement, 24-26. Thomas Davidson was also highly critical of Harris’s concerns about orthodox doctrines. See Thomas Davidson to William Torrey Harris, 4 August 1884, Davidson Papers, Missouri Historical Society (hereafter MHS). For scholarship that characterize the St. Louis Hegelians as right-wing see John Watson, “Idealism and Social Theory: A Comparative Study of British and American Adaptations of Hegel, 1860-1914” (Ph. D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1975), 50; and Merle Curti, Social Ideas of American Educators (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1935), 310-47. On the Hegelian center see John Toews, Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 71-154, 203-42. Arnold Ruge characterized Rosenkranz as “the most liberal of all the Old Hegelians.” Quoted in Karl Löwith, From Hegel to Nietzsche: The Revolution in Nineteenth-Century Thought, trans. David E. Green (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 54.
their *Journal*. The St. Louis Hegelians referred to themselves as “58ers,” not only to commemorate the founding of their pre-war philosophical society, but also to contrast themselves with their more liberal German-American counterparts in St. Louis, the “48ers.” The 48ers had fled Germany after the failed revolution of 1848 and were proponents of the Young Hegelian’s political thought. The St. Louis Hegelians criticized the 48ers and radical abolitionists such as John Brown in the same terms; neither group appreciated the importance of well-founded institutions.45

It is significant that the St. Louis Hegelians chose to translate and publish Rosenkranz’s essay, “Hegel as Publicist.” The essay is based on Rosenkranz’s study of Hegel’s life and his short political writings, to which virtually no one except Rosenkranz had access at that time. Rosenkranz’s thesis was that one can appreciate Hegel’s practicality throughout all of his writings, if one is familiar with his political tracts, and the momentous political events of his lifetime, including his support of the French Revolution as a young man. The article effectively counters the myth that Hegel was an apologist for the reactionary

44 Rosenkranz, “The Difference of Baader from Hegel,” trans. W. T. Harris, JSP 2 (1868): 55. Ludwig Feuerbach, theologically a left-Hegelian, and J. H. Fichte were also auxiliary members. For an extensive list of members of the St. Louis Philosophical Society see William Schuyler, “German Philosophy in St. Louis,” *The Bulletin of the Washington University Association*, no. 2 (23 April 1904): 72-73. One hundred twenty nine pages in the JSP were devoted to translations of Rosenkranz’s commentary on Hegel. See “Index,” In 1872 Rosenkranz protested the way he was criticized in an article by Professor Hoffman of Würzburg in the first volume of the JSP (see Hoffman, “Letter on the Philosophy of Baader,” JSP 1: 190). Hoffman and Rosenkranz continued the debate, which revolved around whether Rosenkranz was correct to argue that Hegel was properly understood as a theist rather than a pantheist, in the JSP and in the *Philosophische Monatshefte*, published in Berlin. In the course of this debate, in 1870 Hoffman published “Die Hegelsche Philosophie in St. Louis in den vereinigten Staaten Nordamerika’s,” *Philosophische Monatshefte* (1871): 58-63, in which he criticized W. T. Harris for falling into Rosenkranz’s error among other things. See “Correspondence,” JSP 2 (1868): 175-84. An article published by E. Hartmann in the JSP also touched on a debate between him and C. L. Michelet in the *Philosophische Monatshefte* about Hegel’s dialectic. “Correspondence,” JSP 6 (1872): 181-82.
Prussian state. Because of the "rediscovery" of Hegel's early years and political tracts, this interpretation of him is now widely accepted among Hegel specialists, and it reveals how the St. Louis Hegelians and the young John Dewey could view Hegel as a practical and politically liberal philosopher.\(^{46}\)

But like the Hegelian center, the St. Louis Hegelians were not uncritical disciples of Hegel. Snider commented that "to be true to Hegel in the deepest sense, we are to unfold Hegel out of Hegel." In an expression of Manifest Destiny, he explained that Hegel could not have appreciated the United States' potential to bring underdeveloped peoples into the modern state, nor the nation's potential, fully realized only after the Civil War, to generate free states on its western frontier and beyond.\(^{47}\) And as we have already noted, the St. Louis Hegelians also criticized what they believed were elitist tendencies in Hegel's thought, insisting that anyone with an inquiring mind could learn to apply speculative logic to practical problems. Yet their anti-elitism was limited by a conviction that western Europeans were on the leading edge of the historical dialectic. Although Harris and Snider believed that other groups could and should be brought into the modern state, they framed this in terms of a benign

\(^{45}\) During his involvement in state and local politics, Brokmeyer opposed the "48ers," who "he branded as negative—hostile to all positive thought and its institutions." Snider, The St. Louis Movement, 29.


\(^{47}\) Snider, Modern European Philosophy: The History of Modern Philosophy, Psychologically Treated (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1904), 737. See Snider's discussion of the "genetic or creative" state in Ten Years' War, 1855-1865, (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1906), 17.
concern for "backward races." Brokmeyer’s racism is undeniable and offended even Harris and Snider.

During the sectional crisis, the St. Louis Hegelians were most attracted to Hegel’s thought as a philosophy of cultural and national unification. Napoleon’s invasions forced the post-Kantian idealists to grapple with the unification of individual and societal interests; the Civil War raised the same issues for the St. Louis Hegelians.48 Brokmeyer, Harris and Snider drew explicitly upon Hegel’s analyses of freedom, slavery, and the state, as well as his philosophy of history. Hegel’s criticisms of radical French revolutionaries provided them with the conceptual tools to argue that the radical abolitionists suffered from a deficient understanding of the relationship of the individual to society. Radical abolitionists believed they could judge society on the basis of transcendent morality. They also accepted what Hegel called a negative or abstract theory of freedom, the notion that man is free and equal in the absence of social restraints. In good Hegelian fashion, the St. Louis Hegelians argued that this one-sided perception of freedom led the radical abolitionists to mistakenly conclude that the destruction of the institution of slavery would fully emancipate American slaves. Hegel’s analysis of the Reign of Terror convinced the St. Louis Hegelians that negative freedom would inevitably lead to the indiscriminate destruction of social, religious, and political institutions as the way to protect transcendent rights. As institutions were destroyed in the Terror, Hegel argued, restraints

upon individuals were diminished, resulting in an accelerating frenzy of
annihilation. In the same way, the St. Louis Hegelians feared that negative
freedom would inevitably lead to "some sudden eruption...of madness and
fury." ⁴⁹

To correct the deficiencies of American thought, the St. Louis Hegelians
embraced Hegel's organicism, the theory that each individual is an organic part
of society and the condition of any one individual affects the condition of all. On
this view, freedom only arises within the constraints of social relationships and
can only be achieved in the face of opposition presented by those constraints. As
Harris explained, "the individual...can not exist as human apart from the
institutions of society." ⁵⁰ To be free and rational, the individual must draw upon
the resources of an organized and differentiated society and must be educated to
do so. The educated individual's will is in harmony with the ends of the various
social groups by which he has been influenced and, in civilized societies, with
the more complex ends of the state. In conforming to these pressures and in
obeying the laws of the state, the individual achieves his own rational ends and
becomes free. The St. Louis Hegelians also accepted Hegel's claims that only the
state was rational and disinterested enough to simultaneously protect individual
freedom and advance the general will. By "the state," however, they understood
Hegel to mean much more than the government. In essence, the state was the

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⁴⁹ Harris, Psychologic Foundations: An Attempt to Show the Genesis of the Higher Faculties of
the Mind (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1898), 287. Harris's discussions of the "spontaneous or
formal will," and the "moral or rational will," closely follow Hegel's analyses of abstract and
relevant sections of Elements of the Philosophy of Right, such as "Abstract Right," §§34-40.

⁵⁰ Harris, Psychologic Foundations, 291.
articulated totality of human relations, including family, civil, and political spheres.51

Taking seriously Hegel’s proclamation that “America is... the land of the future,” Brokmeyer, Harris and Snider developed an Hegelian vision of the historical role of their nation, state and city.52 The St. Louis Hegelians explained the war between the states as a manifestation of a profound development in the World-Spirit, a decisive advance in the movement of world history toward the actualization of concrete freedom. Because of its internal contradictions and central location between North and South, East and West, Missouri was a focal point in the struggle. Though officially Unionist, Missouri was a slave state and a hotbed of pro-slavery sentiment. St. Louis, the focal point of the state, was poised to become a world-historical city, promoting the cause of freedom in the war and cultural advance on the cusp of the frontier.53 Brokmeyer, Harris and Snider were encouraged in their reading of American history by correspondence with Karl Rosenkranz, as well as Franz Hoffman, whose son was killed at the battle of Wörth in 1870 fighting for the unification of Germany. In a letter that was published in the JSP, Hoffman averred that his son had died for “a great cause.... The restoration of the German Empire on a national basis makes an onward

51 See Hegel’s description of the state as the “actuality of the ethical Idea—the ethical spirit as substantial will...” Hegel also argued that “it is only through being a member of a state that the individual himself has objectivity, truth and ethical life.” Hegel, The Philosophy of Right, §§257 and 258.


53 Snider ultimately conceded that they were caught up in the “Grand Illusion” propagated by St. Louis boosters, but claimed that their grounding in philosophy equipped them to rise above the particular passions of the moment, which were shattered when the 1880 census showed that Chicago had surpassed the city in size and economic importance. Snider, St. Louis Movement, 70-137.
move in the history of the world. North America and United Germany will certainly approach each other....” Hoffman went on to remark that he had “just finished an essay on Hegel’s Philosophy in St. Louis, which I shall send to-day to Dr. Bergmann for the Philosophische Monatshefte.”

Though the St. Louis Hegelians’ interpretation of the war and the role of their state and city may seem naïve in retrospect, one must bear in mind the chaos they witnessed during the sectional crisis. Whereas the Transcendentalists lionized John Brown for his raid on the federal armory at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia in 1859, the St. Louis Hegelians saw Brown through the lens of Lawrence, Kansas, where in 1856 he and his sons hacked five pro-slavery settlers to death with broadswords. On 9 May 1861, just four weeks after the war began at Fort Sumter, pro-Union Congressman Blair ordered Captain Lyon to muster German-American troops and oust Governor Jackson’s militia from Camp Jackson. As Lyon marched the captured militia through St. Louis, a raucous crowd shouting “Damn the Dutch” threw stones and bricks at the German-American soldiers. Soon a riot began and by the end of the day twenty-eight civilians and two soldiers lay dead or dying. Anarchy prevailed in St. Louis for the following five weeks as pro-southern mobs roamed the city searching for lone German-Americans. But Lyon’s victory at Boonville, Missouri on 17 June 1861 permitted Union troops to take control of the city. Although the city remained in Union hands, for the following four years the violence of guerilla

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55 Snider, The American Ten Years’ War, 219-43.
terrorism in Missouri exceeded anything else in the war. Pro-Confederate "bushwackers" and pro-Union "Jayhawking" Kansans pillaged and plundered civilians with impunity.\(^{56}\) These events made the Hegelian dialectic especially poignant to the St. Louis Hegelians who compared them to Hegel's 1806 experience of completing *The Phenomenology of Spirit* in Jena as the city fell into Napoleon's hands. Snider compared the sectional crisis to the "European Teutonic Movement"—the Prussian subjugation of Schleswig-Holstein in 1864, the defeat of Austria in 1866, and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.\(^{57}\) The bloodshed in Missouri and seemingly parallel events in Germany led the St. Louis Hegelians to conclude that they had witnessed a necessary moment in what Hegel called "the slaughter-bench" of history.\(^{58}\)

**The Individual and National Dialectic**

Harris and Snider were both convinced Unionists from the beginning of the war, while Brokmeyer initially had reservations about supporting either side. Harris, as principal of Clay School, was exempted from military service, but Brokmeyer and Snider both saw combat. Harris and Brokmeyer began to apply insights gleaned from Hegel's *Science of Logic*, *The Philosophy of Right*, and *The Philosophy of History* during the war. Snider joined the group after the war and, in addition to the above mentioned works, he drew upon Hegel's *Phenomenology of

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\(^{57}\) Snider, *The St. Louis Movement*, 143-44.

Spirit in a series of historical books, one of which was published in 1874, the rest between 1902 and 1920.\textsuperscript{59}

Brokmeyer, a native of Minden, Prussia, was undoubtedly the most eccentric member of the St. Louis group. Immigrating to New York in 1844 at the age of sixteen, Brokmeyer worked his way to Kentucky where he studied for two years at Georgetown College. Threatened with dismissal because of a theological dispute with the president of the school, he attended Brown for two years where he discovered Hegel in Hedge’s Prose Writers of Germany. Inspired by Thoreau, in 1854 Brokmeyer migrated to Missouri where he lived for three years as a recluse in an abandoned cabin. He then moved to St. Louis where he befriended Harris, worked in a stove foundry, and devoted his evenings to study. In 1859

\textsuperscript{59} Snider, The American State (St. Louis: n.p., 1874). The American State was the republication of an article by the same title which appeared in The Western, another journal associated with the St. Louis Hegelians. See also Snider, Social Institutions in their Origin, Growth, and Interconnection, Psychologically Treated (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Pub. Co., 1901); Snider, The State, Specially the American State, Psychologically Treated; Snider, The American Ten Years’ War; Snider, Abraham Lincoln, an Interpretation in Biography (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1908); Snider, Lincoln in the Black Hawk War, an Epos of the Northwest (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1910); Snider, A Writer of Books; Snider, Lincoln and Ann Rutledge; an Idyllic Epos of the Early North-west. Souvenir of Abraham Lincoln’s Birth-day, 1912 (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1912); Snider, Lincoln in the White House; a Dramatic Epos of the Civil War (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1913); Snider, Lincoln at Richmond; a Dramatic Epos of the Civil War (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1914); and Snider, The St. Louis Movement in Philosophy, Literature, Education, Psychology (St. Louis, MO: Sigma Publishing Co., 1920). Lawrence Dowler is critical of the thesis that the St. Louis Hegelians were drawn to idealism primarily for political reasons, seeking to counter American individualistic political philosophies with an organic theory of the state. Instead, Dowler opts for the theory that the St. Louis Hegelians viewed the sectional crisis primarily as a spiritual conflict and that, therefore, they were drawn to idealism for spiritual reasons. His argument is based primarily on the premise that “evidence for the ‘political’ interpretation rests heavily on three books by Denton Snider,” all of which were written after 1900, a time when Snider claimed he had moved beyond Hegel. The three books Dowler names are Social Institutions (1901), The State, Specially the American State, Psychologically Treated (1902), and The American Ten Years’ War, 1855-1865 (1906). Dowler, “The New Idealism and the Quest for Culture in the Gilded Age” (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1974), 19-20, n. 36. Dowler seems to have overlooked Snider’s The American State which was originally published in 1867, and belittled the fact that although Snider does claim to have moved beyond Hegel to psychology, his books on American history draw heavily upon Hegel’s Philosophy of History, which we will note in our discussions of Snider’s interpretation of the war. Moreover, the above list demonstrates that there are many more than three books by Snider that provide Hegelian analyses of American history.
Brokmeyer quit his job and again retired to the wilderness where he hunted and read "the Greeks." According to Snider, this "flight to the backwoods was [Brokmeyer's] grand act of negation by which he would do away with society and state."\textsuperscript{60} Alarmed by his long absence, in 1860 Harris discovered Brokmeyer dying from a "severe attack of congestive chills," brought him back to St. Louis, and commissioned him to translate Hegel's \textit{Science of Logic}.\textsuperscript{61}

Brokmeyer's thoughts on the sectional crisis revolved around the proper way to abolish slavery and the conflict between individual conscience and national obligation raised by the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 and federal conscription. Brokmeyer's \textit{Mechanic's Diary}, a self-flattering account of his rise from foundry worker to esteemed lawyer and public figure, contains ominous predictions of war and virulent assertions of racism. The protagonist, "Henry B—," abhors slaves but unconditionally condemns the institution of slavery. As he decries slavery, he demands its legal protection from the attacks of fanatical abolitionists, which he believes hurt the prospects of eventual abolition. Though he declares that God has no chosen people, he asserts that the white race—"the brightest, the most hopeful of all the peoples of the earth!"—is dragged down and ruined through the subjection and oppression of the black. He predicts that


\textsuperscript{61} For details on Brokmeyer's life see E. C. Brokmeyer to Charles M. Perry, 14 June 1929, in Charles Milton Perry, ed., \textit{The St. Louis Movement in Philosophy: Some Source Material} (Norman, OK: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1930), 49-50; and Schuyler, "German Philosophy in St. Louis," 63-74. Harris claims Brokmeyer was suffering from "bilious fever," in "Books That Have Helped Me," 147-149. Harris, George Stedman and J. H. Watters "clubbed together and out o: their slender means paid for Brokmeyer's support while he should translate the Greater Logic of Hegel for their use and edification." Schuyler, "German Philosophy in St. Louis," 68.
slavery will precipitate war, implying that the slaves are as much to blame as the slaveholders or abolitionists.\textsuperscript{62}

Brokmeyer’s views on the Fugitive Slave Act are related in the novel of a close friend Johann Woerner, \textit{The Rebel’s Daughter}. Like many Americans, Brokmeyer struggled with legal and moral dilemmas raised by the act. Brokmeyer, in the character of Dr. Rauhenfels (literally “Roughstone”), protests that the “statute...degrades every freeman...to the level of a Jack-Ketch, condemning him...to help hunt down...run-away ‘chattel,’ and deliver back into slavery a man or woman, to be scourged by an enraged master for the crime of having aspired to their God-given freedom!”\textsuperscript{63} Could (and should) the federal government protect an institution which was opposed by the majority of the nation’s citizens? Should the individual obey a duly established law that supported an unjust system or invoke Thoreau’s notion of civil disobedience? As the war progressed, Brokmeyer came to believe that the laws of the land expressed the current Folk-Soul. The fact that the Fugitive Slave Act was passed demonstrated American’s partial understanding of morality. The law was unjust, but it had to be overturned through institutional channels out of respect for the Folk-Soul. Snider described Brokmeyer’s wartime transition from social recluse to institutionalist as a “spiritual transformation from social hostility and inner

\textsuperscript{62} Henry C. Brokmeyer, \textit{A Mechanic’s Diary}, 111–13. The Diary was published posthumously by Brokmeyer’s son. William Goetzmann notes many historical inaccuracies in the book and concludes that Brokmeyer “intended it to be a utopian extension of his own experiences rather than a strictly historical account.” Goetzmann, ed., \textit{The American Hegelians}, 35.

discord, and even anarchism, to a reconciliation with his government and indeed with the World-Order..."\(^{64}\)

Brokmeyer's belief in the prerogative of law, however, did not extend to an acceptance of national conscription. One of the romantic legends of the St. Louis group is that Brokmeyer immediately recognized his civic duty in 1861, trading his Henning's *Logic* for a handbook of infantry tactics.\(^{65}\) Yet in a letter to Harris dated May 1861, Brokmeyer vacillated between individualism and active participation in the historical dialectic:

As for drafting *me* into any army or militia—I don't think the thing "would be did"...For I can defy fifty men with my rifle, and my knowledge of the woods, at any time...*Let them try me!*...All I ask is that I be left alone—I ask no assistance from any government, to govern myself, and therefore, I am entitled to uninterrupted peace in my labors.\(^{66}\)

In the same letter, Brokmeyer conceded the futility of his individualism and reminded Harris of the impossibility of isolating oneself from the "historic action of...[the] age." He reconciled his statism with his objection to conscription by voluntarily serving in the state militia which, in his view, was merely preserving law and order against "bushwackers" and obstructionists.\(^{67}\) Brokmeyer rejected the legality of secession on similar grounds. Individual states did not have the right "to be left alone." Secession was only legal through the mutual agreement of national and state governments. Although he would not fight in the Union army, Brokmeyer held it to be within the rights of the federal government to

\(^{64}\) Snider, *The St. Louis Movement*, 13.


\(^{66}\) Brokmeyer to Harris, 1 May 1861, Box 1, W. T. Harris Papers, MHS Collections.

\(^{67}\) Brokmeyer to Harris, 5 September 1861, Box 1, W. T. Harris Papers, MHS Collections.
wage war to prevent states from seceding, "for no government on earth can idly
tolerate its own disruption."68

Turning to politics, Brokmeyer served as a delegate in the Missouri House of Representatives from December 1862 to December 1864. He wrote to Harris on 8 November 1862, "I am elected and so is my entire ticket.... There is however a
great deal of gnashing of teeth on the one side and every damn Dutchman feels
10 feet high."69 As a "Union Democrat," Brokmeyer sought to reconcile state and federal interests and policies, defending gradual emancipation of slaves with full compensation to slaveowners. This approach, he hoped, would balance the
demands of freedom with the demands of property rights. Brokmeyer was also
one of the staunchest supporters of Lincoln in the state legislature. In a
controversial election for U. S. Senate at the beginning of the 1863 session, he cast
his vote for Sam T. Glover, a personal friend of Lincoln. In the same session
Brokmeyer cast a vote of confidence in the Missouri House for the Emancipation
Proclamation and lobbied vigorously for a loyalty oath intended to compromise
pro-South state officials.70

In 1864 Brokmeyer delivered a strident speech in which he denounced the legislature for not endorsing the Lincoln administration during its first term. He presented Lincoln as the true savior of the nation and contested the platitude that he himself had applied only a few years earlier, that "Man is capable of
governing himself." "The next consequence," he asserted, "is, if every man, in

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68 Woerner, The Rebel’s Daughter, 459.
69 Brokmeyer to Harris, 8 November 1862, Box 1, W. T. Harris Papers, MHS Collections.
Cf. Snider, The St. Louis Movement, 141-42.
70 Journal of the House of Representatives of the State of Missouri, 1st Session of the 22nd General Assembly, MHS Library, 33, 34, 52.
the sense of each man, has a right to govern himself, it is obvious that he has no right to govern anyone but himself." Such a belief leads to the "absolute impossibility of all government whatsoever." Lincoln acted not as a mere individual but in his capacity as president, an executive institution. In essence, Brokmeyer eliminated the conflict between institutional and individual obligations by regarding the presidency as an institution of one individual.\footnote{Brokmeyer, "Speech of Mr. Brokmeyer of Warren County, In Support of Resolutions introduced by him, Endorsing the National Administration." Delivered in the House of Representatives, 15 January 1864. Pamphlet, MHS Library.}

Harris's immediate defense of the Union cause is not surprising in light of his New England heritage. Born in Connecticut in 1835, as a boy Harris was inspired by Emerson, Thoreau, Alcott, and Theodore Winthrop. He entered Yale University in 1854 and began a study of Goethe and Schiller which led him to reject the Transcendentalists' radical individualism and Carlyle's "hero-worship." According to Harris, he began "to realize that the abstract independence of the spirit of protest," which he identified with the Confederate cause, "is only a half-freedom, and in this respect not entitled to its assumption of airs of superiority over blind obedience to authority."\footnote{Harris, "Books That Have Helped Me," \textit{Forum} 3 (March 1887): 145. Cf. F. B. Sanborn and William Torrey Harris, \textit{A. Bronson Alcott: His Life and Letters} (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1893), 2: 612-14, 550. Cf. Hegel's claim that "the common man thinks he is free when he is allowed to act arbitrarily, but this very arbitrariness implies that he is not free. When I will what is rational, I act}
In a letter to his uncle dated nine days after the Union victory at Boonville, Harris invoked Hegelian language to declare that the United States had "an idea posited at the basis of its consciousness" to "develop and bring out in all its forms." Already, Harris depicted the Union cause as a world-historical idea. In October 1861, Harris penned a letter to the editor of the Missouri Republican as he worked on a translation of Hegel's Philosophy of History. He traced the idea of freedom in American history, arguing that the Revolutionary War had established the form of freedom by liberating the American colonists from foreign domination, but unresolved tensions had hindered the substantiation of freedom in the new republic. Because of these internal tensions a period of social and economic dissatisfaction—manifested as greed and arguments over slavery—peaked in the three decades preceding the Civil War. Though Hegel had conjectured that "the burden of the World's History" would someday "reveal itself" in a struggle between the nations of North and South America, Harris asserted that the historical dialectic had instead resulted in the current conflict between the northern and southern states. The Union represented industry, democracy, and self-determination for all. The Confederacy embodied aristocratic values—passivity and slavery—according to which freedom was maintained through the enslavement of a racial group, and a person’s social class was determined hereditarily rather than on the basis of their talents. War would prepare the nation for a synthesis of these conflicting principles.\footnote{Harris to Dr. Peckham, 26 June 1861, Box 10, W. T. Harris Papers, Missouri Historical Society (hereafter MHS) Collections.}
\footnote{Harris, ‘Philosophy of History,” Missouri Republican, 8 October 1861. (Signed “H”; identified as Harris by Leidecker in Yankee Teacher, 204–206.)

not as a particular individual, but in accordance with the concepts of ethics in general..." Hegel, Philosophy of Right, §15.
In the midst of the terror in Missouri, Harris praised the institutionally sanctioned behavior of Lincoln. For Harris, Lincoln "mediated" between the world-spirit and the particular passions of individual Americans. He argued that Lincoln’s pursuit of the war was truly legitimate, not because he catered to "public opinion" which could never grasp more than "one side of the subject and that generally the unessential," but because he fully understood the historical dialectic. Lincoln moved beyond mere opinion to "knowing," which "grasps both sides of the subject," and understood that the federal government’s cause was consistent with the relentless direction of history. According to Harris, Union victory was inevitable and would mark a necessary reconciliation of interests because, as Lincoln declared, the nation could not survive half slave and half free. The war’s conclusion would effect an enduring transformation of the concepts of liberty and freedom and be a fulfillment of American history up to that time.\(^{75}\) In later years, Harris’s friend Snider echoed his arguments by according Lincoln a prominent role in American politics and world history in his books *Abraham Lincoln, The State*, and *The Ten Years’ War*.\(^{76}\)

In 1862 Snider received the A. B. from Oberlin College, a center of abolitionist sentiment. Although at Oberlin he witnessed three fugitive slave rescues and engaged in interminable debate about the war, he believed in the gradual abolition of slavery within the parameters of American institutions. Upon graduation from Oberlin, he reluctantly enlisted in the Union Army, rising to the rank of second lieutenant in the Tenth Ohio Cavalry, but resigned after a

\(^{75}\) Harris, "Philosophy of History," *Missouri Republican* (emphasis in the original). Cf. Harris’s journal entry for 20 July 1865, Journal, Box 10, W. T. Harris Papers, MHS Collections.
year of service because of ill health. Snider arrived in St. Louis in 1864 and became an original member of the postwar Philosophical Society two years later. Snider’s expertise in five foreign languages, world history and literature made him an important addition to the St. Louis Movement.\textsuperscript{77}

In \textit{Ten Years’ War}, Snider highlighted the importance of the western states in the war by articulating an Hegelian interpretation of conflict between free and slave systems, from the Missouri “border ruffians” invasion of Kansas in 1855 to the ultimate northern victory of 1865, which marked “the elimination of the dualism introduced into the Union at its birth.”\textsuperscript{78} The Confederate cause represented adherence to the letter of the law, because the Constitution protected slavery as a form of property, while the Union cause represented commitment to the universalization of freedom.

Much like Harris, Snider described the allegedly inexorable march of history and presented Lincoln as the true genius of the era, the man who read “the Folk-Soul aright.” Yet Snider depicted leaders as more passive vehicles of the World-Spirit than did Harris. Lincoln, Jesus, Napoleon, and other “World-Historical individuals did not act for their own selfish interest, but at the command of a power higher than themselves.” When he reminisced about Blair’s accomplishment at Camp Jackson, “the First Great St. Louis Deed” on the world-historical stage, Snider proclaimed that “the cosmical energy…took possession of [Blair] and made him perform things which appear to ordinary life

\textsuperscript{76} Denton Snider, \textit{Abraham Lincoln: An Interpretation in Biography}; and Snider, \textit{The State, Specially the American State, Psychologically Treated}.  
superhuman." But "Blair... was chosen just the one time by the Spirit of the Age to execute its supernal behest."\textsuperscript{79} Snider's heroes were always men who, even in protest, upheld established institutions. The violent actions of John Brown, Snider asserted, were no better than the violence inflicted upon southern slaves by their masters or the violence committed by the insurrection of the southern states.\textsuperscript{80}

Snider also developed an Hegelian interpretation of American slavery. In \textit{The Philosophy of Right}, Hegel maintained that slavery was immoral and that the slave is not morally bound to obey his master, because he "can have no duties; only the free human being has these" (§155). Moreover, in his celebrated discussion of "Lordship and Bondage" in the \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit} (§§178-96), Hegel argued that the relationship of master and servant inevitably leads to a subtle reversal of roles in which the master becomes dependent upon the slave for his material needs and, through his ability to produce goods, the slave gains a certain mastery over the physical world. For Hegel, the slave ultimately achieves a higher state of consciousness in this relationship, while the master remains stagnant. In the same way, Snider argued that "the best and most liberal minds of the South [had] become... intolerant upon the subject of slavery" because the "spiritual effects of the... relation of master and slave..." had stunted their

\textsuperscript{78} Snider, \textit{Ten Years' War}, 526.
\textsuperscript{79} Snider, \textit{Ten Years' War}, 187; Snider, \textit{The State}, 492; Snider, \textit{The St. Louis Movement}, 52, 59, 62. Cf. Hegel's claim that although World-Historical individuals have "no consciousness of the general Idea they [are] unfolding," they are "thinking men, who [have] an insight into the requirements of the time." When World-Historical individuals' purpose is fulfilled "they fall off like empty hulls from the kernel." Hegel, \textit{The Philosophy of History}, 30, 31.
\textsuperscript{80} Snider, \textit{Ten Years' War}, 230; Snider, \textit{Biography of Ralph Waldo Emerson}, (St. Louis, MO: W. H. Miner, Co., 1921), 347-49. One might quibble with Snider's belief that Lincoln acted within the parameters of established institutions by noting his suspension of the writ of habeas corpus during the war.
psychological development. Snider argued, however, that the lack of slave rebellion before and during the war demonstrated that blacks were not "socially ready" for freedom; "it was really the white man," and the world-spirit, "who was ready for the abolition of slavery." The Union army would free the ruling southern oligarchy from its anti-democratic control of the region, allowing whites to progress toward a greater understanding of freedom and democracy.

Snider drew upon Hegel's *Philosophy of History* to justify his belief that African-American slaves are inferior to their American masters. Hegel claimed that the history of freedom began in the Oriental world but that those cultures had stagnated because only the despot was free. Africa was even more backward than the Orient because "Negroes moral sentiments are quite weak, or more strictly speaking, non-existent." Although Hegel condemned slavery in *The Philosophy of Right*, in *The Philosophy of History* he stated that the Negroes' "lot in their own land is even worse" than it is in American slavery. For Hegel, Oriental and African cultures were outside world history because they had not internalized notions of law and morality which are necessary to the attainment of concrete freedom. By the same token, Snider maintained that mere abolition of slavery would not emancipate slaves because they had to be "disciplined into the civilized order of the world." At one time slavery was justified because it was a

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81 Snider, *Ten Years' War*, 373-74, 323. Snider seems not to have considered that fact that Hegel was working with a very different model of slavery, that of ancient Greece and Rome, which was far less oppressive than that of the American South. Had he taken this point into consideration, Snider might have been able to explain the lack of slave rebellion in the South as a result of oppression rather than racial inferiority of African-Americans. This may simply reveal the extent to which Snider was conditioned by the racial prejudices of American culture.

way of including “the African...by nature a docile, submissive, clinging, parasitic, race” into the social organism. Slavery had “trained the African to steady labor—no small or unimportant task by the way.” But according to Snider, “slavery was educative indirectly,” and the World-Spirit had now decreed that Americans should “train the backward races through...education directly.” Proper education would lead to economic opportunity and, Snider asserted, “Political freedom...cannot even be real without economic freedom.” The abolition of slavery would give southern blacks abstract, formal freedom; education and economic justice would provide its substance by allowing them to participate in society. Institutionalization of “racial freedom” was America’s rational purpose, “what the World-Spirit [had] enjoined upon the American Folk-Soul.”

The Continuing Dialectic after the War

In 1865 Brokmeyer, Harris and Snider believed the Civil War had prepared the nation for an era of social solidarity. Governmental institutions, such as the presidency, state legislative and administrative bodies, and the citizen militia had proved their utility and legitimacy. Their wartime experience inspired them to focus more on social action and practical solutions to specific problems. Above all, the war convinced them that greater cooperation between individuals and institutions was essential to the development of their nation. In the midst of the continuing social and economic unrest of the postwar era, they argued that a dialectical appreciation of institutional and individual claims was more necessary than ever to negotiate the changes the nation was experiencing.

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83 Snider, Ten Years' War, 316-317, 321-323.
They continued to encourage intellectuals to pursue a life of political and social action, criticizing anti-institutional thinking as “brittle individualism,” yet calling for active involvement in the gradual reform of institutions.\textsuperscript{84}

Brokmeyer was a force in Missouri politics for twenty years. After serving as state representative, he was elected state senator in 1870 and was instrumental in drafting the State Constitution of 1875 which guaranteed education to all from the age of six to twenty and mandated racial segregation in the public schools. In 1876 he rose to the position of lieutenant governor and, for a short period in 1877, served as acting governor. Disgusted by political wrangling, in 1882 Brokmeyer traveled to the town of Muskogee in the future state of Oklahoma, where he worked as legal counsel to the M. K. and T. Railroad, befriended the Creek Indians, and reworked his translation of Hegel’s Science of Logic in “the realm of primal solitude.” According to his son, Brokmeyer ultimately conceded that perhaps it was unrealistic to expect an infant nation to devote itself much to philosophy while it was “carving civilization out of wilderness.”\textsuperscript{85}

Harris continued to struggle with social issues until his death in 1909. In a letter written to Snider in 1906, he described the war as a “gigantic object lesson of the dialectic in human history.” The war had furthered Americans’ understanding of the nation’s rational purpose, but “a long series of portents,” such as labor unrest and giant corporations, “threaten[ed] the stability of democratic government,” revealing that the historical dialectic was far from

\textsuperscript{84} W. T. Harris, “To the Reader,” JSP 1 (January 1867): 2.
\textsuperscript{85} E. C. Brokmeyer to Charles M. Perry, 5 July 1929; and E. C. Brokmeyer to Cleon Forbes, 16 January 1929; both reprinted in Perry, ed., The St. Louis Movement in Philosophy, 48, 50.
complete. Harris sought to address these social problems through education, gaining national recognition for his supervision of the St. Louis schools from 1867 to 1880 and international recognition for his work as U. S. Commissioner of Education from 1889 to 1906. In the interim, he was a resident sage of the Concord Summer School from 1879 to 1888. Harris lectured and published extensively on Hegelian philosophy, but added educational theory, which he argued should be based on social science research, to his repertoire.

Harris extolled the virtues of the caretaker state but believed individual self-cultivation was the source of excellence in society. He maintained that individual initiative could be nurtured by the guidance of strong, mediating institutions, such as well-administered public schools. The school was to mediate between the family and the world, facilitating the transition to an adult life of independence. Through his friendship with Rosenkranz, Harris developed an interest in Hegel’s *The Philosophical Propaedeutic*, a collection of writings. Rosenkranz compiled after Hegel’s death and Harris translated into English. In these writings, which he composed as rector of the Nuremberg *Gymnasium* (1808-1815), Hegel articulated his philosophy of education, which was based upon the notions of *Bildung* and *Selbstätigkeit*. *Bildung*, for Hegel, meant a certain type of education which entailed self-cultivation, as opposed to *Erziehung*, which was

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86 Harris to Snider, 24 September 1906, Box 1, W. T. Harris Papers, MHS Collections.
merely passive education. Moreover, to Hegel, Bildung was fused with the ideals of the French Revolution and thus required Selbsttätigkeit, or self-activity, self-development, and self-direction, as opposed to acceptance of established authority.

_Bildung_ required a conscious self-alienation in which one would rise above one’s own natural inclinations and seek to follow universal norms of conduct. Practically speaking, the ideal of Bildung was that one would become not only a man of knowledge, but also a man of good taste, combining the study of cutting-edge research with the appreciation of literature and the fine arts, thus uniting head and heart, thought and feeling. Advocating the revolutionary sentiment that “careers should be open to talent,” Hegel believed that the moral and spiritual renewal of the German people would be realized through the establishment of a new elite of educated and cultivated leaders who would replace the corrupt, undereducated aristocracy, who held their positions simply by virtue of their birth.\(^8^8\) Brokmeyer, Harris, and Snider, as well as the other members of the Philosophical Society, believed that free, public education, available to all, should be founded upon the notion of Bildung. In this regard they believed they were less elitist than Hegel, and in fact their support of equal

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\(^{88}\) Harris, “The Definition of Social Science and the Classification of the Topics Belonging to its Several Provinces,” _Journal of Social Science_ 22 (June 1887): 1-7.

\(^{89}\) See Terry Pinkard’s and Lewis Hinchman’s discussions of Bildung. Pinkard, _Hegel: A Biography_, 288ff; and Hinchman, _Hegel’s Critique of the Enlightenment_ (Gainesville and Tampa, FL: The University Presses of Florida, 1984), 104ff. Bildung was a highly contested term in Hegel’s day. Many associated it with Enlightenment, which was controversial enough, and more reactionary Germans associated it with Jacobinism which they understood as a desire to murder the aristocracy and the leaders of the church. See James Sheehan, _German History: 1770-1866_ (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 215.
education for women did make them more egalitarian than the German philosopher.\textsuperscript{90}

Hegel described education as alienation of the mind from our ordinary point of view, and contended that this is best done through the study of the ancient world and its languages because they are sufficiently alien to separate us from our natural state, but sufficiently close to our own language and world for us to return to ourselves enlarged and transformed. In his first annual speech as rector of the Gymnasium (29 November 1809), Hegel extended this pattern of estrangement and reconciliation to every phase of childhood development. The goal of education was to help students realize the ideal of modern humanity, which is to become a self-directed, self-formed person. Harris described this process of self-estrangement and return as “the process of the adoption of the social order in place of one’s mere animal caprice.”\textsuperscript{91} Like Hegel, however, Harris viewed the social order as the universal order discovered through the study of the knowledge and wisdom of the ages, rather than the particular circumstances of one’s current social environment. Proper education would mediate between particular selves and “universal humanity in its eternal process.” Moreover, for Harris, self-estrangement was not a sublimation of individual desires and talents;

\textsuperscript{90} On the St. Louis Hegelians’ anti-elitism as an Americanization of Hegel see Frances Harmon, \textit{The Social Philosophy of the St. Louis Hegelians} (New York: Columbia University, 1943). Hegel’s belief that careers should be open to talent manifested itself in a concern, throughout his teaching career, for economically disadvantaged students. His sense of egalitarianism toward economically disadvantaged, male students was not matched, however, by his attitudes toward women. Further, Hegel did not believe everyone was suited for \textit{Bildung}, but that it was necessary for those who sought to pursue professional careers. On his views toward women see Terry Pinkard, \textit{Hegel: A Biography}, 112-113, 281-282, 290, 481-482, 636; Hegel, \textit{Elements of the Philosophy of Right}, §§ 166-167; and Hegel, \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit}, §§457-460.

it was a realization of one’s “identity with the social whole.” If one “rebels against [the social order] it crushes him...if he obeys it implicitly and passively, it crushes him still.” Like Hegel, Harris believed that the strength of the modern state was the insights that only self-determining individuals (not determined by or dependent on something other than itself) are free, and that concrete freedom consists in choosing to harmonize one’s particular desires with the social whole.

In order to comprehend the social whole, Harris argued, children needed instruction in the “tool subjects,” the “five windows of the soul”—grammar, literature and art, mathematics, geography, and history. He opposed Pestalozzi’s theory about the importance of vocational education, claiming that his emphasis on tactile learning was based on a deficient sensationalistic epistemology which assumed “we derive all our knowledge from sense-perception.” Though he believed Hegelian philosophy supported Christianity, Harris denounced religious instruction in public schools because it was authoritative and claimed education should promote the independent verification of ideas. But Harris criticized the notion of self-government in the schools that Dewey would champion, claiming that education should teach children to respect authority.

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92 Harris, Psychologic Foundations, 281, 287, 289.
95 Harris, “The Psychology of Manual Training,” Educational 9 (May 1889): 571-582; Harris, “Religious Instruction in the Public Schools,” Independent 55 (6 August 1903): 1841-1843; and Harris, “The School City,” School Bulletin 32 (March 1906): 113-114. Hegel had also opposed vocational education in the German Gymnasia, arguing that education should prepare students for life rather than merely for jobs, but he supported the teaching of religion for the secular rationale that it would link students to social customs and traditions. He also believed that students should be treated with respect, as ends in themselves, and at the Gymnasium.
In his social thought, Harris accepted urbanization and industrialization, but worried about the ways these developments contradicted traditional cultural values. He defended private property, free competition, industrial capitalism, and the accumulation of immense fortunes, but accused the wealthy of self-indulgence. By analyzing social problems in terms of conflicting class interest, Harris argued, socialists merely aggravated those problems. Cultural education (Bildung), on the other hand, would teach people to recognize their common interest. As the city’s ghettos swelled with Irish-American immigrants, Harris argued that charity would undermine self-respect, but education would spiritually and morally elevate the poor.  

Harris’s social thought was shaped by political struggles in St. Louis, as he worked to improve the public schools. During this period debates over the St. Louis schools divided citizens along ethnic, religious, and class lines, pitting recent Irish-American Catholic immigrants against more established Lutheran or freethinking German-Americans. John O’Connell, an Irish-American member of the school board, objected that Harris’s policies favored the more established citizens. The long depression of the 1870s created an excess of teachers, as young women sought employment. Partly as a response to this situation, Harris championed the professionalization of public school teachers and administrators but, as O’Connell alleged, the demand for professional training effectively limited the number of Irish-American teachers because they could not afford to attend normal school. But Harris maintained that society must tolerate and

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encouraged discussion in class, but would not tolerate giving students complete freedom in the schools. Pinkard, Hegel: A Biography, 288-290, 304-307, 324-326, 504-505.

*6 Harris, “Education to Regenerate the Slums,” Brooklyn Eagle (30 December 1900).
respect the ethos of immigrant groups and advocated equal educational opportunity for all. He also criticized the notion that only an upper class should receive cultural education, because such a class would oppress those who “have to spin and dig for them.” The ordinary man, argued Harris, was destined to partake of “the realized intelligence of all mankind.”

During the Spanish-American war, Harris used similar reasoning to actively support American imperialism on paternalistic grounds, arguing that war was the result of the inevitable conflict of ideas. Convinced of the superiority of western culture, Harris claimed cultural education would bring colonized peoples into the modern state and eventually make war obsolete.

Because Harris believed that unity can only be achieved through the opposition of diversity, he advocated equal education for African-Americans and co-education of women, arguing that women should have equal access to cultural education and to the newly emerging professional schools. According to Harris, diversity is such only through the one; they mutually delimit and thus define one another. Therefore neither can exist without the other. The one and the many are simply moments or reciprocally complemenal elements of

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society. Because of Harris's commitment to diversity, under his supervision, the St. Louis public schools had more women in administrative positions than any other city. He officially mandated that salaries be equal for men and women, and all teachers in the St. Louis schools were paid exceptionally well for the time. In opposition to O'Connell, Harris fought for women's right to continue working after they were married.

Harris worked closely with a number of women, most notably Susan Blow, the daughter of a prominent St. Louis businessman, and Anna Brackett, a school teacher originally from Boston. Harris and Blow developed the first successful public kindergarten program in the United States. Invoking the pedagogical theories of Friedrich Froebel and Rosenkranz, Harris and Blow argued that kindergartens would improve children's personalities, helping them learn through properly structured and supervised play. Harris compared the "history" of childhood to the early history of the United States. He claimed that "caprice and arbitrariness" reign in the pre-school child because the "character," the "rationally consistent" basis of behavior, had not yet discovered itself. Children from poor families, Harris claimed, should begin school before their character was ruined by ghetto life. Blow published five books on early childhood education, in which she also depicted education as a dialectical process. Through the adaptation of roles in play, Blow argued, the child learns by encountering opposition. By assuming various characters, the child is

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discussion of Harris's willingness to hire and promote women in the public schools. McIntyre, "Our Schools are Not Charitable Institutions," 41-43.

100 See Harris, "Record Book," W. T. Harris Papers, MHS Collections, 9-12.

101 Harris, "Analysis and Commentary [of Rosenkranz's Pädagogik als System]," 52-62.

estranged from him or herself, and then returns to the original self, expanded and transformed by what he or she has learned of the other and his or her own abilities. Self-estrangement and return also appeared in the writings of Anna Brackett, the first women appointed principle of a secondary school and, during its first few years of operation, director of the St. Louis Normal School that Harris had established. Primarily interested in secondary education, Brackett postulated that older children can undergo the process of self-estrangement and return through the study of characters and different worlds in literature. The primary difference is that older children are much more conscious of the process than kindergarteners.\textsuperscript{103}

After a successful experimental kindergarten program, Harris and Blow lobbied for its extension, arguing that the children of wealthier families would also benefit from kindergarten because they were pampered by their parents and left in the care of uneducated servants. In 1877 the nationwide railroad strike, which was aggravated by a socialist led general strike in St. Louis, greatly assisted Harris and Blow in their efforts as they argued that union organizing, labor unrest, and political corruption resulted from the ease with which rabble-rousers could manipulate uneducated immigrants.\textsuperscript{104}

In addition to publishing four philosophical books and countless articles on theoretical and practical aspects of public education, Harris also engaged in

\textsuperscript{103} Unlike Blow, Brackett was a feminist, and applied her philosophy of education specifically to women and girls. The best source on Blow and Brackett, as well as other women of the St. Louis movement, is Dorothy Rogers, "'Making Hegel Talk English': America's First Women Idealists."

many highly theoretical polemics in the JSP. Alongside Rosenkranz, he defended Hegel against the charge of pantheism; additionally, he wrote a critical analysis of the thought of Herbert Spencer, articles on the freedom of the will, and one on "Nominalism vs. Realism."\(^{105}\)

Perhaps most interestingly for our purposes, Harris engaged in a spirited debate about Friedrich Adolf Trendelenberg’s critique of Hegel’s logic. Rather than delve into the intricacies of this complex debate, which also involved A. E. Kroeger, one of the St. Louis group, the Italian Hegelian philosopher Augusto Vera, G. S. Morris, and G. Stanley Hall, we shall simply note that Trendelenberg’s primary objection to Hegel’s logic was that the “dialectic of pure thought” could not address the realities of lived experience, the practical problems of everyday life.\(^{106}\) The Hegelian dialectic, he argued, did violence to the facts of history and science by forcing them into a dialectical pattern rather than letting them speak for themselves. In Germany, the search for a “logic of life,” as this new philosophical quest was often described, spawned some of the most important philosophical movements of the late nineteenth and twentieth


centuries and began the age of rebellion against the Hegelian system, the age of Ludwig Feuerbach, Arnold Ruge, Max Stirner, and Karl Marx. In America, the quest for a "logic of life" was just as intense. Thirty five years ago Gershom Rosenstock noted a remarkable, and somewhat mysterious similarity between Dewey's mature thought and the philosophy of Trendelenburg. Though Rosenstock discussed the fact that Dewey's graduate school mentors, G. S. Morris and G. Stanley Hall, studied with Trendelenburg in Berlin, he seems to have been unaware of the debate that took place among American intellectuals in the 1870s, buried primarily in the pages of the JSP.107 Given this debate, coupled with the fact that Dewey spent many summers with several of the interlocutors at Thomas Davidson's Glenmore Summer School for the Culture Sciences, it is quite likely that Dewey knew a great deal about the thought of Trendelenberg.

In 1879 Harris and Snider traveled to Concord, Massachusetts, at the invitation of Emerson and Alcott, to lecture at the Concord School of Philosophy. In 1872 Alcott confessed to his journal that philosophical discussion was superficial in Boston; "philosophy," he proclaimed, "is published in St. Louis."108 Emerson facetiously referred to Harris and his "active propagandists" as atheists, and unlike the Transcendentalists, many of whom were discontented Unitarian

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107 Gershom Rosenstock, *F. A. Trendelenburg: Forerunner to John Dewey* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Press, 1964), 11, 36-62, 76-100. In his review of Rosenstock's book, Herbert Schneider, a colleague of Dewey's at Columbia and a noted expert on the history of American philosophy, claimed that the close parallels between Trendelenburg's and Dewey's logic and psychology, which Rosenstock correctly describes as being much more striking than anything in Morris [Dewey's graduate school mentor] seem to me still somewhat of a mystery. Schneider, review of *F. A. Trendelenburg: Forerunner to John Dewey*, by Gershom Rosenstock, in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 4 (1966): 266. Schneider's puzzlement may be due to the fact that Dewey never acknowledged a debt to Trendelenberg despite their uncanny similarity. I can only address that issue by noting that Dewey and Trendelenberg were deeply influenced by German idealism, and both sought to modify idealism in the light of advances in science, especially Darwinian biology without succumbing to a deterministic materialism.

ministers, the Hegelians focused more on social and political thought than on theology. But Emerson formed a close friendship with Harris and welcomed the 58ers' philosophical rigor to New England. Harris and Snider viewed the Concord School as an extension of the St. Louis Movement, and they sought to introduce a genuinely distinct alternative to New England intellectuals. In Concord, Harris's speaking ability and philosophical expertise made a strong impression as he and Hiram Jones, a Platonist from Illinois, became the two primary attractions.\textsuperscript{109} Alcott marveled at Harris's ability to command "unbroken attention and interest" as he spoke on abstruse philosophical topics, remarking that Harris's "audiences increase in numbers from day to day."\textsuperscript{110}

Less enamored with New England than Harris, after 1884 Snider worked primarily in the Midwest, where by the end of his life in 1925, he published more than forty books on literary, philosophical and psychological topics. Ultimately, Snider concluded that the Americanization of Hegel consisted in making his abstractions practical. Influenced by Hegel's study of consciousness in the \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit}, and impressed by advances in psychology, in the mid-1890s he decided he could best accomplish this goal by replacing Hegel's philosophy of the absolute with a science of the individual ego. Snider described Hegel as "the last European philosopher," and argued that philosophy should be replaced by psychology, the science of self-understanding.\textsuperscript{111} Though there is no evidence that Snider influenced Dewey, in chapter three we shall see that Dewey

\textsuperscript{110} Alcott, \textit{The Journals of Bronson Alcott}, 499.
\textsuperscript{111} Snider, \textit{Modern European Philosophy}, 788. On Snider's claim that philosophy should be replaced by psychology see Ibid., 690-691, 695.
was also influenced by the Phenomenology to argue that psychology was
philosophic method, and for one of his most important doctrines, "the
psychological standpoint." Like the pragmatists, Snider argued that theory was
not the "speculative play of idle minds," but must always be harmonized with
"the deed." He criticized Hegel for limiting the individual's potential to that of a
philosopher rather than recognizing that no individual is complete until he has
understood the absolute and then reproduced it in practical action.  

Snider demonstrated his practical idealism by becoming increasingly
active in social reform. He assisted Blow in the St. Louis kindergartens, taught in
the Chicago Kindergarten College, and worked with Jane Addams at Hull
House. He organized "free universities" in St. Louis, Chicago, and Milwaukee,
where he spoke frequently and eloquently on Shakespeare, Goethe, and Greek
drama. He also established the Communal University in Chicago (1887-1895) and
St. Louis (after 1895) which met in private homes and public libraries and
provided free lectures to the general public. When in St. Louis, he insisted on
living in the ghetto, sharing his knowledge of philosophy and classical literature
with his neighbors until his death in 1925. The "Snider Association" met
annually at his grave for many years.  

Two other members of the St. Louis group had a significant impact upon
the development of philosophy in America. Thomas Davidson, a Scottish

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112 Snider, Modern European Philosophy, 690ff. Cf. James Wayne Dye "Denton J. Snider's
Interpretation of Hegel," 153-67. Snider published ten books on psychology between 1896 and
113 Mrs. D. H. Harris, "The Early St. Louis Movement and the Communal University," in
A Brief Report of the Meeting Commemorative of the Early Saint Louis Movement, 31-47. Snider
describes his association with Hull House, including actually living and working there for a few
months in the fall of 1893, in The St. Louis Movement, 498-510.
immigrant who had taken a degree at King's College (now Aberdeen) with the highest honors, was an expert in the classics and espoused an Aristotelian philosophy. A peripatetic scholar, Davidson traveled all over Europe studying philosophy, art and architecture and corresponded with many European intellectuals. Davidson lectured at the Concord Summer School two summers, and organized the Glenmore Summer School of the Culture Sciences in the Adirondacks which attracted eminent scholars from 1890 until after his death in 1900. Harris, Dewey, Josiah Royce, William James, George Santayana, Morris R. Cohen and George Herbert Mead all participated at various times in Davidson's summer school. We will discuss Davidson and Glenmore in greater depth in chapter three.

George Holmes Howison, a charter member of the St. Louis Philosophical Society, participated in the Concord and Glenmore summers schools and studied for several years in Germany with Rudolf Lotze, Jules Michelet, and Friedrich Paulsen. He formed friendships with many other distinguished German scholars as well as British neo-Hegelians Edward and John Caird and J. H. Stirling and the embattled British pragmatist F. C. S. Schiller. Frustrated in his efforts to obtain a position in the Harvard philosophy department, Howison taught at a series of universities, including one year at the University of Michigan—preceding Dewey there. Finally, in 1885 Howison was hired to build the philosophy department at the University of California at Berkeley, where he remained until his death in 1917. At Berkeley, Howison established the Philosophical Union which, in the spirit of the St. Louis Philosophical Society, drew intellectuals from the broader San Francisco community into philosophical study. The Union focussed on a philosophical topic for a year, with monthly
meetings, ending the session with lectures from a celebrated philosopher and
publication of the years’ work. Josiah Royce spoke on the conception of God in
1896. William James introduced pragmatism in a lecture in 1898, and the
following year Dewey spoke on “Psychology and Philosophic Method.”\textsuperscript{114}
Howison also trained numerous Ph.D.s, including Arthur O. Lovejoy, who went
on to Johns Hopkins by way of Washington University in St. Louis, and Charles
Bakewell, philosophy professor at Yale for thirty years.\textsuperscript{115} Both Thomas Davidson
and Howison ultimately embraced a pluralistic philosophy which came to be
known as personal idealism.

Though the St. Louis Hegelians have been described as amateurs left
behind by the professionalization of philosophy, their focus on philosophy rather
than theology, their high standards of scholarship, the JSP, and their efforts to
refine philosophical thought in the East, promoted the professionalization of
American philosophy. The Hegelians were known as critics of academic
philosophy, but they were most critical of American philosophers’ slavish
obedience to Scottish realism. As the denominational colleges were transformed
into research universities, many of the intellectuals who displaced Scottish
thought published their earliest articles in the St. Louis Hegelians’ \textit{Journal}.\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{114} Josiah Royce, Joseph LeConte, George Howison, and Sydney Edward Mezes, \textit{The
Conception of God: A Philosophical Discussion Concerning the Nature of the Divine Idea as a
Conceptions and Practical Results,” \textit{University Chronicle} 1 (1898): 287-310. Dewey’s lecture was
\textsuperscript{115} Elizabeth Flower and Murray G. Murphey, \textit{A History of Philosophy in America} (New
\textsuperscript{116} Both Dewey and Josiah Royce published their first article in the JSP. Dewey, “The
Metaphysical Assumptions of Materialism,” JSP 16 (April 1882), 208-13; Royce, “Schiller’s Ethical
Studies,” JSP 12 (1878): 373-92. G. Stanley Hall published his second scholarly work in the JSP.
out “the conclusion that all thought was in signs and required a time’ from which he developed
“his pragmatism, his theory of signs, and his search for a functional logic” in a series of articles
Yet with the exception of Marshall College and Mercersburg Seminary, Hegelianism did not begin to take root in American higher education until the 1870s, and then primarily as a system of social thought. The transition toward German thought was promoted by the increasing number of Americans who studied at German universities, impressed by the German model of academic freedom and the division of moral philosophy into the emerging disciplines of history, political science, political economy and sociology. Hegelian terminology, if not full-blown Hegelian philosophy, briefly spread to many of the newly emerging disciplines. John W. Burgess, who taught social and political thought at Amherst and Columbia, earned the sobriquet “Weltgeist” for his theory of the inherent rationality of the state. Richard T. Ely, an economist at Johns Hopkins, was inspired by Hegel to proclaim “that it is a grand thing to serve God in the State.” And Albion Small, sociologist at the University of Chicago, applied the Hegelian dialectic to social and intellectual history, claiming that “Conventionality, [i.e. laissez-faire individualism] is the thesis, Socialism is the antithesis, Sociology is the synthesis.”

Hegelian metaphysics and epistemology appeared more gradually in the universities. G. S. Morris propagated Hegelian philosophy at the University of Michigan from 1870 until his death in 1889, and at John Hopkins where he


trained Dewey, from 1877 to 1884 as he alternated semesters between Hopkins and Michigan. In 1884, Morris’s Hegelian philosophy was supplemented when Dewey was added to the faculty at Michigan and was continued at Michigan by Alfred H. Lloyd until 1927, Robert M. Wenley until 1929, and DeWitt Parker until 1949. In 1880-81 George Palmer offered the first seminar on Hegel at Harvard. William James attended the seminar and recalled that their copy of Hegel’s Logic was translated “by an extraordinary Pomeranian immigrant, named Brokmeyer.” The manuscript was brought to Concord in 1879 by Samuel H. Emery and his brother-in-law Edward McClure, associates of the St. Louis Hegelians and leaders of the Quincy, Illinois Plato Club. In 1882, American Hegelian philosopher Josiah Royce received a one year appointment while James was on leave, and so impressed his colleagues that he was able to remain at Harvard until his death in 1916. Although all of these academic Hegelians studied German idealism by reading the JSP, all but Dewey traveled to Europe to study Hegel. Palmer studied Hegel with Edward Caird at Glasgow in 1879, Royce in Germany with Lotze and Wilhelm Wundt, and Morris in Germany with Hermann Ulrici and Trendelenburg.

In spite of the emergence of pragmatism in the 1890s, and analytic philosophy after World War I, idealism never completely disappeared from American universities. Yet during the mid-1890s, while Dewey made his

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119 James, Memories and Studies (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1917), 81-82. Anderson, Platonism in the Midwest, 142-50. In Memories and Studies, James indicates that he studied the Logic with Emery and McClure in 1872, but they did not arrive in Boston until 1879.
transition from absolutism to instrumentalism, American idealism made a transition from the monistic absolute to pluralistic forms of idealism, especially personal idealism, which sought to emphasize the importance of the finite individual. This shift was prefigured in concerns raised by the Trendelenburg debate, and occurred in a rather dramatic fashion when Royce, undoubtedly the most respected absolute idealist in the country at the time, delivered his lectures at Howison’s Philosophical Union in Berkeley. Howison vigorously criticized Royce for, in effect, emphasizing the absolute to the point that he denied the reality of the individual. Though Royce never admitted defeat, when he published *The World and the Individual* four years later, he had clearly changed his position, emphasizing the extent to which each individual is not merely a part of the absolute, but also a representation of the absolute.¹²⁰

Royce never explicitly embraced personalism, but in addition to Howison, there were many personal idealists, quite a few of whom studied with Lotze in Germany. The first personal idealist was the British neo-Hegelian, Andrew Seth, who announced his break with his fellow Hegelians in 1887. In the United States, Susan Blow and Mary Whiton Calkins, who studied with James and Royce at Harvard, were both personal idealists. At the University of Boston, Borden Parker Bowne started the Boston school of personalism which included Edgar Sheffield Brightman, Walter George Muelder, Albert Cornelius Knudson, Peter

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Anthony Bertocci, and W. Gordon Allport. James Creighton, first president of the American Philosophical Association in 1902, led a group of personal idealist philosophers at Cornell who were actively involved in the founding of the A. P. A. Other personal Idealists included William Ernest Hocking at Harvard from 1914 to 1943, and John Elof Boodin who taught at UCLA from 1928 to 1950. One of Bowne’s students, Ralph Tyler Flewelling (1871-1960), directed the School of Philosophy at the University of Southern California, and founded The Personalist: A Quarterly Journal of Philosophy, Theology, and Literature which was published from 1920 to 1979.\textsuperscript{121}

But Hegelian thought receded in importance before the new scientific empiricism of the late nineteenth-century Germany social sciences (\textit{Geisteswissenschaften}).\textsuperscript{122} The rise of the social sciences meant the simultaneous division of philosophy into rigorously defined, social science disciplines, taught by experts trained in empirical investigation that was to be conducted in laboratories.\textsuperscript{123} Nonetheless, it would be difficult to overestimate the degree to which idealism left its mark on American philosophy, including pragmatism.

\textsuperscript{121} See Andrew Seth, \textit{Hegelianism and Personality} (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1887); and Howison, \textit{The Limits of Evolution, and Other Essays Illustrating the Metaphysical Theory of Personal Idealism} (New York: Macmillan, 1901). Martin Luther King Jr. studied with Brightman and Mueller at Boston University. In 1985 Thomas Buford founded \textit{The Personalist Forum} at Furman University to take over where Flewelling’s \textit{The Personalist} left off. Buford, “What We are About,” \textit{The Personalist Forum} 1, no. 1 (1985): 1-4.


Charles Sanders Peirce, who is often characterized as the founding father of American pragmatism, was well aware of the emerging tradition of American Hegelianism. In 1868 and 1869 he published four articles in the JSP in which he began to elaborate a pragmatic theory of the mind, and at Johns Hopkins Peirce taught alongside G. S. Morris. Peirce was philosophically indebted to German idealism as well. He claimed that his philosophical career began when he read Schiller’s Letters on Aesthetic Education. Peirce’s debt to Kant was crucial; he himself referred to Kant as “the King of modern thought,” and claimed that he knew the Critique of Pure Reason “almost by heart.”  

Many scholars have also noted that Peirce’s triadic metaphysics, with its principles of firstness, secondness, and thirdness, demonstrates a Hegelian influence on his thought. Frederic Young remarks that Peirce’s “expressed opinion of Hegel is a rather fascinating compound of a thoroughgoing rejection of Hegel’s specific doctrinal formulations, and an equally thorough sympathy with Hegel’s objectives and methodology.” In 1893, Peirce stated that some of his principles bore “a close affinity with those of Hegel,” and “perhaps are what Hegel’s might have been had he been educated in a physical laboratory instead of in a theological seminary.” The previous year Peirce claimed that his theory of tychism, “must give birth to an evolutionary cosmology, in which all the regularities of nature


and of mind are regarded as products of growth, and to a Schelling-fashioned idealism which holds matter to be mere specialized and partially deadened mind." Peirce also acknowledged the possibility that he might have picked up his idealism as a youth, "born and reared in the neighborhood of Concord...at the time when Emerson, Hedge, and their friends were disseminating the ideas that they had caught from Schelling...." Harvard, Peirce claimed,

held many an antiseptic against Concord transcendentalism; and I am not conscious of having contracted any of that virus. Nevertheless, it is probable that some cultured bacilli, some benignant form of the disease was implanted in my soul, unawares, and that now, after long incubation, it comes to the surface....

Even William James, known for his acute criticisms of Royce's "block universe" and his description of Hegel's system as "a mouse-trap, in which if you once pass the door you may be lost forever," made friendly overtures to Hegel's insight that all things are related to one another. In the mid-1880s James wrestled with an idealistic philosophy of his own, but abandoned it primarily on moral grounds. Like the personal idealists, James could not reconcile the notion of the absolute with the reality of the individual finite mind. According to Ralph Barton Perry, James "had a sneaking fondness for Hegel," but "he liked him in undress, stripped of his logical regalia." For James, there was "a homely insight" in Hegel: "the fact that things contaminate one another, thus becoming something other than themselves." This homely Hegelian insight, perhaps


most clearly expressed as the principle of continuity, which we will have occasion to discuss in subsequent chapters, suffused the pragmatism of Peirce, James and Dewey.

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CHAPTER TWO
DEWEY'S DEVELOPMENT IN
BURLINGTON AND BALTIMORE,
1859-1884

It is frustrating to scholars that Dewey frequently spoke of philosophers' "habit of neglecting the indispensability of context," yet throughout his life he showed little interest in autobiographical reflection.\(^1\) The historian of Dewey hopes to frame his intellectual development squarely within the context of his life and times, but is left to speculate about how events in his life may have affected his thought. Aside from a few scattered remarks, Dewey left only two brief autobiographical sources. When he was sixty years old he wrote an autobiographical essay, entitled "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," and when he was eighty, his daughter Jane edited an essay written "by the daughters of its subject from material which he furnished." Dewey's daughters explained that "in the emphasis on varied influences and in the philosophical portions [the essay] may be regarded as an autobiography, but its subject is not responsible for the form nor for all the details."\(^2\)

Nevertheless, in "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," Dewey provided useful clues about his interest in Hegelianism. He noted that "the 'eighties and 'nineties were a time of new ferment in English thought; the reaction against atomic individualism and sensationalistic empiricism was in full

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\(^1\) Dewey, "Context and Thought" (1931), LW 6: 7. Herbert Schneider comments that "We tried to get [Dewey] to reminisce. And it was very difficult. I think on principle Dewey wouldn't reminisce. He liked to look forward to the future, and he certainly liked to keep au courant with the present. But to get him to reminisce about his early days was very difficult." Corliss Lamont, ed. Dialogue on John Dewey (New York: Horizon Press, 1959), 15.

swing.” This reaction was led by British and American Hegelians, and “was at the time the vital and constructive [movement] in philosophy.” Dewey also tantalized would-be biographers when he remarked that, as a young man, “Hegel’s thought…supplied a demand for unification that was doubtless an intense emotional craving, and yet was a hunger that only an intellectualized subject-matter could satisfy.” Hegelianism, he asserted, alleviated “a painful oppression,” an “inward laceration,” that stemmed from “a heritage of New England culture” with its “divisions by way of isolation of self from the world, of soul from body, of nature from God.”

Because Dewey wrote this reminiscence forty years after he left his hometown of Burlington, Vermont, we must be careful about placing more interpretative weight on it than it can bear. But the essay makes it apparent that Dewey believed that New England religious thought tended to separate the natural from the supernatural, the physical from the spiritual, and that this led to psychologically unhealthy dualisms. This reading is reinforced by Dewey’s daughters’ claim that, “From a present-day point of view, too much moralistic emotional pressure was exerted by the religious atmosphere, evangelical rather than puritanic, which surrounded [John and his brothers].” The only debates about the importance of religion in Dewey’s complaint about this oppressive laceration is the extent to which it can fully explain the pain he described, and what it might reveal about his mature religious thought. Recently, Steven Rockefeller closely examined Dewey’s comment within an intense study of his life. Rockefeller concluded that a youthful religious angst profoundly shaped the

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trajectory of Dewey’s mature thought, which was essentially religious. While there can be little doubt that Dewey’s youthful anguish was partly religious, as we shall see, Rockefeller’s larger agenda of depicting Dewey as a religious philosopher overpowered his evidence. Less well known, but published years before Rockefeller’s book, is Lewis Feuer’s supplementation of the religious hypothesis with a class-based account of Dewey’s sense of oppression. While a philosophy professor at the University of Vermont during the 1950s, Feuer did a great deal of research on Dewey’s youth and uncovered some evidence that he was painfully aware of class tensions in his hometown.\textsuperscript{5} In conjunction, the religious and class-based hypotheses about Dewey’s early development shed light on his angst, but ultimately, the available evidence leaves us with little more than speculation about his innermost psyche. The evidence may, however, tell us a great deal about the sort of Hegelianism he espoused in the 1880s and 90s, as well as ways that it may have survived in his mature thought.

Our examination of Dewey’s early life will focus on elements that provide evidence about his inward laceration, but our ultimate goal is to consider why Dewey may have been predisposed toward Hegelian thought. The chapter begins with an examination of Dewey’s youth in Burlington, through the time he graduated from the local university in 1882, focusing only on biographical issues that have a direct bearing on his intellectual development. From there we shall proceed to a discussion of his earliest publications and his early training in

\textsuperscript{5} Feuer was at the University of Vermont from 1951-57. See his interesting discussion of his fascination with the life of Dewey in “A Narrative of Personal Events and Ideas” in Philosophy, History and Social Action: Essays in Honor of Lewis Feuer, eds. Sydney Hook, William O’Neill, and Roger O’Toole (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988), 35-7. Feuer was particularly
Hegelian thought at the Johns Hopkins University from 1882 to 1884. This will shed light on the type of Hegelianism Dewey championed.

**Burlington**

Clearly, there was something about Vermont that bothered Dewey. Although in later years he praised Vermonters' commitment to democracy and their belief that government should be adaptable to the "developing needs of the human family" and "contribute to human welfare," Herbert Schneider claims Dewey "told me he left that God-forsaken country as soon as he could." In point of fact Dewey seems to have avoided Vermont from the time he left in his early twenties until the end of his life at age ninety-three. He had no immediate family in Vermont after his parents went to live with him and his wife in Ann Arbor, Michigan at the end of 1890, and he only returned three times after that, each time to attend brief ceremonies at the University of Vermont (1904, 1929, and 1949). Dewey’s final visit to the university was to attend festivities in honor of his ninetieth birthday, during which he suddenly left town while a lecture was being delivered in his honor at the university chapel. We shall examine his boyhood family, community, and religion to search for clues about his apparent dislike of Vermont.

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*intrigued with the psychological issue of why Dewey, ostensibly a staid Vermonter, should be such a progressive thinker and drawn all his life to flamboyant personalities.*


Dewey was born in Burlington in 1859, just four days after John Brown and his men seized the armory at Harper's Ferry.\footnote{The most important sources on Dewey's youth are: Neil Coughlan, \textit{Young John Dewey: An Essay in American Intellectual History} (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973); Jane Dewey, ed., "Biography of John Dewey"; George Dykhuizen, \textit{The Life and Mind of John Dewey} (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973); Robert B. Westbrook, \textit{John Dewey and American Democracy} (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991). Unless otherwise indicated, the factual material in the account of Dewey's boyhood is drawn from these sources.} It was a particularly important year for intellectual history. In addition to Dewey, Henri Bergson and Edmund Husserl were born in 1859. By the 1890s Dewey was directly influenced by Bergson's emphasis upon process, specifically his notion that consciousness was a stream of thought rather than an association of discrete, atomistic ideas. And although the work of Husserl had no apparent influence on the development of Dewey's thought, both philosophers, as well as William James, would ultimately seek a \textit{via media} between the horns of the late nineteenth century philosophical dilemma of materialistic empiricism versus idealism by emphasizing phenomenological immediacy.\footnote{See the comparison of Dewey to Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty in Victor Kestenbaum, \textit{The Phenomenological Sense of John Dewey} (Atlantic Heights, NJ: Humanities Press, 1977). Dewey's only mention of Husserl appears in his 1921 "Syllabus: Types of Philosophic Thought," MW 13: 351.} It was also a year of historically important publications: John Stuart Mill published "On Liberty"; Karl Marx published the "Critique of Political Economy"; and Darwin published \textit{On the Origin of Species by Natural Selection}. At one point or another all three of these intellectuals would figure prominently in the development of Dewey's thought which can be seen as part of a secularizing, historicizing, and naturalistic trend in Western philosophy.\footnote{Yet complex philosophical doctrines were far removed from the young John Dewey as he grew up in Burlington. Sydney Hook claimed that the}
Burlington of Dewey’s childhood “was a community in which no great disparities in wealth or standards of living were to be found,” but in fact the city was marked by class, ethnic and religious diversity. Rather than a product of an idyllic small New England town, Dewey grew up in an industrializing city whose population doubled within five years after the end of the Civil War. Burlington was the connecting rail link between the Canadian lumber industry and other New England cities, with a flourishing textile mill nearby. Social and political tensions developed as the city faced complex urban problems brought on by overcrowding and immigration. There was an old-stock New England bourgeoisie, the “aristocratic Old Americans,” who advocated political and economic laissez-faire, resolutely opposed slavery, but also opposed all forms of political radicalism. There was also a growing working class composed primarily of Irish and French-Canadian immigrants living in battered tenements. Dewey learned little about town-meeting democracy in Burlington, which was abolished by a new city charter in 1865, but a great deal about rapid urbanization and economic disparity. Like the St. Louis Hegelians, Dewey witnessed what Robert Wiebe has described as the erosion of “island communities” and the middle class.


12 See Matthew Buckham’s indignant defense of the “Old Americans” aristocracy as homegrown, “not imported from Beacon Street or Fifth Avenue.” Because these families “cleared the woods, raised the first corn, built the first houses, established the first churches and schools...drove out the Yorkers and kept out the Britishers” they were “entitled to have their names and achievements kept in remembrance as long as any family pride can perpetuate them.” Buckham, “Burlington as a Place to Live In,” The Vermont Historical Gazetteer 1, no. 8 (1867): 724. In 1870 Henry James was struck by the number of Catholic French Canadians in Burlington. Mary Jane Harvey, “Henry James Describes Vermont,” Vermont History 23 (1955): 348.
search for a bureaucratic order in which people were identified more by their function in the economy and less by their reputation or family name.\textsuperscript{13}

Dewey was the third of four sons; the first-born son died as a young child, but John grew up with two brothers, Davis Rich, who was one and half years older, and Charles Miner, who was two years younger.\textsuperscript{14} Davis went on to receive a doctorate in economics from Johns Hopkins University under the direction of Richard T. Ely and became a prominent economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Charles was a moderately successful businessman in California who, in his adult life, remained distant from the rest of the family, geographically and emotionally. Although Dewey’s father, Archibald Sprague Dewey, was descended from a long line of Vermont farmers, as a young man he had moved to Burlington to become a grocer. The family was not wealthy, but they were comfortable. According to his granddaughters, Archibald directed little effort “toward advancing himself financially and he was said to sell more goods and collect fewer bills than any other man in town.”\textsuperscript{15} Archibald was known for his dry wit, his exceptional memory and his literary interests. He enjoyed Shakespeare, Milton, Charles Lamb, Thackeray and Burns, and regularly quoted Milton as he worked.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} Wiebe, \textit{The Search for Order}, 1877-1920 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).
\item \textsuperscript{14} The first born son, named John Archibald, died in a tragic accident at the age of two and half. After he had fallen backward into a pail of scalding water, his parents tried to treat his wounds “swathing him in ‘sweet oil and cotton batting,’” but the dressing caught fire and the boy died the following morning as a consequence of his burns. Coughlan, \textit{Young John Dewey}, 3. Nine months after this traumatic event John Dewey, the subject of this paper, was born, presumably as a replacement child (although he had no middle name).
\item \textsuperscript{15} Jane Dewey, ed., “Biography of John Dewey,” 6. Davis received the A.B. from the University of Vermont in 1879, the same year as John, and his Ph.D. in 1886, two years after John. He quickly found employment at M.I.T where he was an instructor of history and political science from 1886 to 1888, professor of economics and statistics from 1888 to 1933, and chair of the Department of Economics from 1893 to 1933.
\end{itemize}
At age forty-four Archibald married Lucina Artemesia Rich, nearly twenty years younger than he and from a more prosperous and educated family. Lucina was descended from seventeenth century New England Puritan stock; her grandfather was a United States Congressman, her father, a highly respected local judge, served in the Vermont General Assembly. By the mid-nineteenth century the religion of Lucina’s family had evolved to a rational Universalism, but in her late adolescence she went to Ohio to visit another branch of the family where she attended revival meetings and was converted to evangelicalism. In contrast, Archibald Dewey was a liberal Congregationalist, but showed little interest in theology or religion, except for a dislike of the unconventional theology of the Transcendentalists.\textsuperscript{16} Feuer notes that Dewey’s family associated with the old-stock bourgeoisie, because of Lucina’s family connections, but they may have had a sense of social and economical inferiority within that group. When Dewey visited his boyhood friend John Buckham in 1921, Buckham’s daughter recalls that Dewey described Burlington as the “cold pinnacle of aristocracy.” Apparently Buckham felt injured by the remark, concluding that Dewey had not grown out of a feeling of social inferiority that stemmed from his father’s vocation as the proprietor of a small shop.\textsuperscript{17}

Though fifty years old when the Civil War began, Dewey’s father sold his store and enthusiastically enlisted as a quartermaster in the First Vermont Cavalry. Promoted to captain in 1862, throughout the remainder of the war Archibald’s regiment saw heavy action. By 1864 Dewey’s mother could no longer

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[17]{Lewis S. Feuer, “Prefatory Note,” to “A Vermont Boyhood” by John Wright Buckham, \textit{Vermont History} 30, no. 3 (July 1962): 202.}
\end{footnotes}
bear separation from her husband and moved the family to the regimental headquarters in northern Virginia, where the boys surely saw and heard the effects of the war, which apparently made a deep impression on John. According to Hook, a close friend of Dewey in later life, memories of the Civil War greatly contributed to his later views on the senselessness of violence in the accomplishment of social reform.\(^\text{18}\)

Dewey remembered his mother as a strict and pious woman. She took the boys to church regularly and, Dewey recalled, frequently asked them—sometimes publicly—whether they were “right with Jesus.” Dewey reminisced that his mother’s religious questioning produced “a sense of guilt” in her sons “and at the same time irritation because of the triviality of the occasions on which she questioned us.”\(^\text{19}\) To be sure, Lucina’s demanding piety was burdensome at times, but she was also known for her generous philanthropic work among the poor of Burlington, and at the local University of Vermont she acquired a reputation as a caring counselor of young students.\(^\text{20}\) And although Lucina’s family connections gave her sons opportunities to associate with the Burlington elite, her work among the indigent exposed them to the abject poverty of the lakeshore industrial area.

Rockefeller speculates that Dewey’s “lacerations” were exacerbated by a childhood sense of being abandoned by his father during the Civil War, claiming

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\(^{20}\) George Dykhuizen discovered that in a novel by Elvirton Wright, *Freshman and Senior* (Boston and Chicago: Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society, 1899), Lucina Dewey was depicted as “Mrs. Carver,” a “wise and understanding counselor of college youths” who was “as solicitous of their moral and spiritual good as of their academic welfare.” Dykhuizen, *The Life and Mind of John Dewey*, 7.
that "his father's absence may have left him angry, even if unconscious of the fact, and also unsure of his father's love." He also notes that Dewey was reprimanded in college for helping lock an instructor in a classroom and for frequently being late for required weekly military drills, and suggests that this "probably reveals some rebellious attitudes toward his father." Rockefeller utilizes this analysis of Dewey's psyche to bolster his argument that Dewey suffered profound existential and religious crises that stemmed, in part, from his insecurity about his relationship with his father, but there is precious little evidence about their relationship one way or the other. There are a few extant letters between Dewey and his father, but they are rather light-hearted and about mundane events, such as the weather and Dewey's living accommodations in Baltimore while he attended graduate school at Johns Hopkins. The only recorded disagreement Dewey had with his father occurred when he and Davis declared that they would vote for the democratic candidate for president, Grover Cleveland. To Archibald, who remained a committed Republican until his death in 1891, his sons' votes were a betrayal of the Union cause. Dewey's daughters give the impression that this argument occurred after Dewey's parents had gone to live with him and his wife Alice in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1890. Archibald died in 1891, so Dewey might have regretted that the disagreement occurred so soon before his father's death, but it provides little, if any, insight into a deep-

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seated, childhood resentment Dewey may have had toward his father, thus Rockefeller's speculation on this issue is unpersuasive.  

Having returned to Burlington in 1867, Archibald went back into business as the proprietor of a cigar and tobacco shop, and the family returned to the White Street Congregational Church. In contrast to Lucina's evangelical religion, the church's pastor, Lewis Orsmond Brastow, preached a liberal orthodoxy. Brastow studied systematic theology at Bangor Seminary under the direction of Samuel Harris, an influential Congregationalist theologian, who was known for his concept of progressive revelation which laid emphasis upon the historical "development of theology," and upon piety and religious experience over doctrinal orthodoxy. From Harris, Brastow received a conviction that religious experience and its transformative effects upon one's life was more important than intellectual articulation of faith. According to Brastow, Harris's was "preeminently a man-building theology, not a mere thought-directing theology." Harris's thought influenced many of the leaders of a late-nineteenth century liberal turn in Congregationalist theology known as Progressive Orthodoxy, or Andover Liberalism, for the seminary at which it was developed. Andover Liberalism ultimately evolved into the Social Gospel, which peaked in the first two decades of the twentieth century. More politically progressive than the theology of Brastow, the Social Gospel questioned the wisdom of laissez-faire
economics in the face of tremendous labor unrest, and called for active involvement of Christians in social reform. By the 1880s Dewey came to share that interest in social reform, but at this time he merely picked up Brastow’s emphases on piety rather than doctrine, on the historical development of thought, and on the practical problems individuals face in this life.

The Dewey boys were encouraged to read at home by parents who had acquired a considerable collection of books, so much so that Davis recalled that when he went to college he “chafed under the scrutiny and solicitude of the [University of Vermont] librarian, who seemed unnecessarily concerned about the quality of my reading.”25 Their love of romantic literature, especially Wordsworth and Whitman, may have afforded John and his brothers a deeper appreciation of the problems of the city of Burlington and the beauty of the surrounding countryside.26 The boys hiked in the Adirondacks; camped on Mt. Mansfield, the highest peak in the Green Mountains; and explored Lake Champlain and Lake George. Dewey often spoke of the beauty of the region in his letters.27 The Dewey brothers were usually accompanied by their cousin John Rich, whom the Deweys raised, and James and John Buckham whose father, Matthew Buckham, taught history, politics, and economics and was president of the University. John and his older brother Davis began attending the local public schools in the fall of 1867. By the time John finished high school in 1874, he could

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26 Much to his credit, Steven Rockefeller has done a great deal to demonstrate the importance of romanticism to Dewey’s intellectual development. Rockefeller, John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic Humanism, 29-75.
read Greek and Latin, was able to speak French with local French-Canadians, and had completed two years of French grammar and composition. After graduating from high school at the ages of sixteen and fifteen, Davis and John Dewey moved on to the University of Vermont where they gradually became aware of a wider world of American and European culture.

The Burlington Philosophy

At the University of Vermont, Dewey studied the curriculum developed by James Marsh. His first two years were given to Greek, Latin, ancient history, analytical geometry, and calculus. Contrary to the claims of some biographers, Dewey displayed an interest in philosophy, history, and political issues throughout his undergraduate years. The University’s library records reveal that in his first three years he read a translation of Johann Peter Eckerman’s *Conversations with Goethe;* Walter Bagehot’s *Physics and Politics* which sought to apply insights from Darwinian biology to political thought and institutions; Sir James MacKintosh’s *History of the Revolution in England in 1688,* Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America,* one of the most insightful studies of American political culture; and Richard Josiah Hinton’s *English Radical Leaders.* During his sophomore year Dewey wrote an essay on municipal reform and he gave a commencement speech on the “Limits of Political Economy.” Library records also demonstrate that Dewey was acquainted with the St. Louis Hegelians by 1875. The first journal he checked out of the library was the first volume of the JSP, and he later checked out volume twelve.  

undergraduate mentor, H. A. P. Torrey, was a distant relative of W. T. Harris and the two had a cordial relationship. 29

Nevertheless, Dewey experienced an intellectual awakening at the beginning of his junior year when he studied geology, zoology and physiology under Dr. Perkins, who structured his lectures on the theory of evolution. Dewey read *Elements of Physiology* by T. H. Huxley, one of Darwin’s earliest champions. He credited Huxley’s text as the primary impetus to his intellectual awakening, which brought a new “sense of interdependence and interrelated unity that gave form to intellectual stirrings that had been previously inchoate, and created a type or model of a view of things to which material in any field ought to conform.” 30 It is evident from the change in Dewey’s reading that the theory of evolution provoked thought in the young student. In the fall of his junior year, he turned to Matthew Arnold’s books as well as English reviews that were devoted to discussion of the issues of the age, most particularly the implications of science and evolution for traditional religion. He continued to read heavily during his senior year, concentrating on the novels of George Eliot, the social theory of Auguste Comte, and the writings of Herbert Spencer, whom he studied more than any other philosopher. 31 Dewey claimed he was not persuaded by Comte’s arguments for a new religion or his three stages of the evolution of society, but that Comte gave him an appreciation for “the disorganized character of Western modern culture, due to a disintegrative ‘individualism.’” Dewey was

29 Lewis S. Feuer, “Letters from the Past: Letters of H. A. P. Torrey to William T. Harris,” *Vermont History* 25, no. 3 (July 1957): 215-19. Though only three letters of their correspondence remain, and all of those were written in the late 1890s, they give evidence of a longer friendship.
30 Dewey, “From Absolutism to Experimentalism” (1930), LW 5: 147.
also impressed by Comte's proposal for a "synthesis of science that should be a regulative method of an organized social life." He was unpersuaded by Spencer's use of Darwin, but his study of the British philosopher prepared him for a critique of agnostic materialism which he would publish in the JSP. During these last two years at the University, Dewey was transformed into a serious student, graduating second in a class of eighteen and inducted into Phi Beta Kappa.

The University's "senior year course" in moral philosophy, required for all students, reinforced Dewey's new interests in speculative and social philosophy. The course was a group of classes taught by Torrey, heir to the Burlington philosophy of James Marsh, and Buckham. Buckham, who was known as a "fortress of conservatism," taught the seniors political economy, international law, and required that they read Francois Guizot's History of Civilization. In his own book, The Very Elect, Buckham displayed his elitism by denigrating the thought of the "common man," and like Dewey's pastor, Brastow, Buckham railed against the morally pernicious effects of unbridled individualism in the United States. Though Dewey's later emphasis on community was consistent with the criticisms of individualism he heard as a youth, Buckham's elitism never appealed to Dewey. Torrey covered the history of philosophy, psychology, ethics and philosophy of religion. He steadfastly

34 Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (1930), LW 5: 147.
required that the seniors read Coleridge’s *Aids to Reflection; the Remains of James Marsh*; Joseph Butler’s *Analogy of Religion*, which drew an analogy between God’s governance of the natural world by laws and the laws of the moral universe; Plato’s *Republic*; and the *Manual of Rhetoric* by the British empiricist, Alexander Bain. In *Metaphysics*, Torrey used *Elements of Intellectual Science* by the intuitionist, Noah Porter, and in *Fine Art* he used his uncle Joseph Torrey’s *Theory of Fine Art*.36

Though in later years Dewey remembered Torrey as a Scottish intuitionist, he was most sympathetic to the heavily Kantianized intuitionism of Sir William Hamilton. Torrey was an earnest student of German idealism, having worked through Kant’s three critiques in the German, but his philosophy was tailored primarily to a defense of a moderately liberal Congregational Christianity.37 He employed Hamiltonian epistemology to argue that science, including Darwinian biology, dealt with mere phenomena, and that the noumenal truths of morality and religion could be immediately apprehended through intuition.38 Like Kant and Hamilton, Torrey distinguished sharply between the natural and the supernatural, and man and nature. Like Marsh, Torrey was highly critical of Lockean epistemology because he held that its separation of faith and reason was subversive of religious orthodoxy, which correctly understood that faith and

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36 *Guizot, General History of Civilization in Europe, from the Fall of the Roman Empire to the French Revolution* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1867, 1877).

37 *Catalogue of the University of Vermont, 1878-79*, 18. It is not clear if Dewey was exposed to Bain’s *Senses and the Intellect* (1855) in which he articulated a pragmatic theory of action. Similar to the position Dewey would take in 1896 in “The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology” (EW 5: 96-109), Bain argued that stimulus and response are not discrete events, but are inseparably connected; thought and action are one.

38 *In Memoriam Henry A. P. Torrey, LL.D.: Marsh Professor of Intellectual and Moral Philosophy in the University of Vermont*, Address at the Annual Meeting of the Associate Alumni, 23 June 1903 (Burlington, VT: Published by the University, 1903), 8.
reason were complementary. True religion was philosophical; true philosophy was religious. The Burlington philosophy, as taught by Torrey, had an abiding effect on Dewey. When Herbert Schneider and friends presented him a copy of Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* at a birthday party late in life, Dewey recalled that the book "was our spiritual emancipation in Vermont." He added that "Coleridge's idea of the spirit came to us as a real relief, because we could be both liberal and pious; and this *Aids to Reflection* book, especially Marsh's edition, was my first Bible." When asked when he got over Coleridge, Dewey replied, "I never did. Coleridge represents pretty much my religious views still, but I quit talking about them because nobody else is interested in them." As noted in the previous chapter, in Burlington Dewey imbibed a fascination with German thought and aesthetics, a developmental theory of art and beauty, a trenchant critique of Lockean individualism, a deep appreciation of nature, and an insistence on the practicality of philosophy.

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41 Similarly, Feuer notes that John Wright Buckham, Dewey's boyhood friend, "was something of a nature-mystic." He wrote many essays on mountain climbing and acted as president of the John Muir Association from 1938 until his death in 1945. Feuer, "Prefatory Note," 202.
Graduating from the University of Vermont in 1879, Dewey spent an anxious summer looking for a teaching position. He was finally offered a job by a cousin who was principal of the high school in South Oil City, Pennsylvania. Dewey taught Latin, algebra and natural science there for two years. Sixty years later he recalled that “one evening while he sat reading” in Oil City he had his one mystical experience. It came by way of “an answer to that question which still worried him: whether he really meant business when he prayed.” Dewey reminisced, “It was not a very dramatic mystic experience. There was no vision, not even a definable emotion—just a supremely blissful feeling that [my] worries were over….I’ve never had any doubts since then, nor any beliefs.” This was a fairly typical religious experience for a person reared in the Burlington philosophy.\(^\text{42}\) For Dewey, it led to a union of pure and practical reason, his philosophical and moral beliefs. He compared the experience to the poetic pantheism of Wordsworth and Whitman, claiming that he was left with a feeling that “everything that’s here is here, and you can just lie back on it.”\(^\text{43}\)

In an effort to emphasize Dewey’s commitment to liberal Congregationalism, Bruce Kuklick characterizes this experience as Dewey’s “conversion.” While it is true that Dewey remained active in the Congregational Church until 1894, he interpreted the experience primarily as a conversion to a philosophical pantheism, which went beyond the pale of liberal Congregationalism and even the Burlington philosophy, and a loss of a sense of

\(^{42}\) Cf. H. A. P. Torrey’s religious experience, as described by his pastor, G. C. Atkins. According to Atkins, Torrey always remembered “the moment of his illumination.” Walking alone in the woods one spring day, “there came suddenly and definitely, a clear shining, in the light of which the things of the spirit came into vital and harmonious relation, and that light grew and did not pass.” *In Memoriam Henry A.P. Torrey, L.L.D.*, 25-26.
guilt, rather than a conversion to a particular set of Christian doctrines. From Dewey’s description we can conclude that, by 1881, he believed that “any genuinely sound religious experience...should adapt itself to whatever beliefs one [finds] oneself intellectually entitled to hold.” This mystical experience, as well as his budding interest in social issues and philosophy, is consistent with his later statement that “social interests and problems from an early period had...the intellectual appeal and provided the intellectual sustenance that many seem to have found primarily in religious questions.” As Neil Coughlan has said, Dewey was pious “not so much in the narrow sense of religious faith as in the broader meaning of faithfulness to an upbringing and a culture.” By 1890, he rejected the theological component of Burlington thought, but retained the “pragmatic perspective” that philosophy must be relevant to and tested by lived experience. Because Dewey felt no compulsion to play the part of Christian apologist he may have already been considering pursuing a Ph.D. in philosophy rather than the traditional Doctor of Divinity degree.

In Oil City Dewey studied philosophy on his own and in May 1881 he sent an essay and a deferential letter to W. T. Harris, beginning a friendship that would last for almost thirty years.

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Enclosed you will find a short article on the Metaphysical Assumptions of Materialism, which I should be glad if you could make use of, in your Review. If you cannot, if you will be so kind as to inform me, stamps will be sent for its return....An opinion as to whether you considered it to show ability enough of any kind to warrant my putting much of my time on that sort of subject would be thankfully received, and, as I am a young man in doubt as to how to employ my reading hours, might be of much advantage. I do not wish to ask too much of your time & attention however.

Very truly yours,
John Dewey

Dewey finally received an apparently positive response from Harris five months later. The essay was directed against the philosophical materialism Dewey had seen defended in British journals and in the writings of Spencer. He argued that materialism was logically untenable because one had to adopt a covertly antimaterialistic stance in order to assert it at all. Materialism, ostensibly a monism Dewey argued, requires one to posit the existence of material substance, which is known, and mental substance, which knows. Materialism thus smuggles in a non-materialistic reality and is actually a dualistic theory.

By the time the first article was published, Dewey had sent another one, “The Pantheism of Spinoza,” to Harris, acknowledging that his “duties as head of the Concord Summer School must...keep [him] very busy,” and offering to translate Rosenkranz’s introduction to “Kirchmann’s ed. of Hegel’s Encyclopädie,” which, he stated, he had “been reading recently,” but it never appeared in the JSP. The Spinoza article appeared in the JSP in 1882. Similar to the previous article, Dewey argued that Spinoza’s monistic pantheism was based

47 John Dewey to W. T. Harris, 17 May 1881.
48 John Dewey to W. T. Harris, 1 July 1882. See also, John Dewey to W. T. Harris, 22 October 1881. Rosenkranz wrote two introductions to Hegel’s *Encyklopädie der philosophischen*
on a concealed dualism that required him to posit the existence of finite being (particular objects) that could not be derived from "the perfect infinite and absolute being."\(^{49}\)

There has been some disagreement about Dewey’s philosophical commitment in these two essays. Dewey referred to the period in which they were written as his "theological and intuitional phase," and explained that the period had little, if any, "lasting influence upon my own development, except negatively."\(^{50}\) Some scholars have accepted Dewey’s claim that the articles displayed an allegiance to intuitionism. Others argue that Dewey was primarily Kantian in his first two publications.\(^{51}\) It is difficult to reach a definitive conclusion about Dewey’s philosophical allegiance from these articles because, all totaled, they comprised only thirteen pages in the JSP. Moreover, Dewey was not clear about whether his "theological and intuitional phase" was a Kantian or a Scottish intuitionism, or some combination thereof such as what he had seen in Torrey’s Hamiltonian intuitionism. In the latter article Dewey accused Spinoza of holding a "Dogmatic Philosophy" in the sense that Kant used that term. Spinoza’s absolute, Dewey argued, goes beyond our possible experience. The articles do demonstrate, however, that Dewey had already gained a thorough grounding in the texts and arguments of Hume, Berkeley, Spencer, Kant, and

\(^{49}\) Dewey, "The Pantheism of Spinoza" (1882), EW 1: 17. Dewey’s argument that Spinoza’s philosophy could not adequately account for the finite is a long-standing, if not traditional, critique. See Wiep van Bunge, "Spinoza in English, 1700-1900," Intellectual News nos. 6-7 (Winter 2000): 69.

\(^{50}\) Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (1930), 5: 149.

Spinoza. But as Dewey stated, the essays are "highly schematic and formal," in that they simply try to expose internal contradictions in materialism and Spinoza's monism. It is interesting to note, however, Dewey's early interest in the subject of philosophical dualism, a theme that animated his writings for the next seventy years.

Dewey remarked that W. T. Harris's response to his articles "was so encouraging that it was a distinct factor in deciding me to try philosophy as a professional career." He moved back to Burlington where he taught at Lake View Seminary during the 1881-82 term and spent his spare time studying classic philosophical texts and German with Torrey. In 1882, Torrey adopted two new textbooks for his metaphysics course, John Watson's Philosophy of Kant as Contained in Extracts from His Own Writings and G. S. Morris's commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. We can reliably assume that Dewey studied these texts, among others, with Torrey throughout that year. Dewey remembered Torrey as "constitutionally timid," but Dewey's friend John Buckham described Torrey as a prudent thinker who refused to jump to any "unjustified inference." Dewey noted that in a conversation he had with Torrey in the mid-1880s, his mentor had commented that "pantheism is the most satisfactory form of metaphysics intellectually, but it goes counter to religious faith." Dewey speculated that Torrey's "remark told of an inner conflict that prevented his


Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (1930), LW 5: 150.

Ibid., 150. Lake View Seminary was located just south of Burlington in the town of Charlotte.

native capacity from coming to full fruition.” Torrey was not as intellectually
timid as Dewey remembered; in his later years, Torrey came to prefer the
pessimistic philosophy of Schopenhauer.\textsuperscript{55}

There can be little doubt that Dewey had found a knowledgeable tutor in
Torrey, and although it may be true that his philosophy had not “satisf[ied] what
[Dewey] was dimly reaching for,” Torrey was an important influence in Dewey’s
philosophical development.\textsuperscript{56} In later years Torrey adopted Dewey’s neo-
Hegelian \textit{Psychology} as a textbook, but he was always critical of neo-Hegelianism,
because it did “not do justice to [free] will.” According to Torrey, just as scientific
materialism inevitably led to determinism by accepting the necessity of physical
causation, neo-Hegelianism erred by accepting the “necessity of thought.”\textsuperscript{57} In
1885 Torrey published a series of three articles on “The ‘Theodicy of Leibniz’”
which show that he surely exposed Dewey to the search for a logic of life.
Torrey’s primary criticism of Leibniz in these articles is that his thought is too
abstract to address the problems of everyday life, and that his treatment of evil as
a metaphysical issue evades the more difficult concerns of the victims of evil.
“Light comes more,” asserted Torrey, “from living than from thinking.”\textsuperscript{58}

Dewey had reservations about dualisms he encountered in Torrey’s
philosophy. He believed reason and intuition can and should work together to

\textsuperscript{55} Dewey, “From Absolutism to Experimentalism” (1930), LW 5: 148. John Wright
\textsuperscript{56} Dewey, “From Absolutism to Experimentalism” (1930), LW 5: 149. Jane Dewey, ed.,
Personalist} 1 (1920): 22-25; and Feuer, “H. A. P. Torrey and John Dewey,” \textit{American Quarterly} 10
(1958): 34-54.
\textsuperscript{57} \textit{In Memoriam Henry A. P. Torrey}, 13. Cf. Torrey, “Herbert Spencer, Facts and
confirm the validity of beliefs. Dewey sought a metaphysics that "would have the same properties as had the human organism in the picture of it derived from study of Huxley's treatment."\textsuperscript{59} Although he was dissatisfied with the Burlington philosophy, as articulated by Torrey, Dewey could not accept British materialistic agnosticism; he was not ready to reject the possibility of knowledge of the supernatural for almost ten more years, and he never rejected the ideal, at least as a potential to be realized. But historicist tendencies in the Burlington philosophy and emphasis on a pious life rather than Christian orthodoxy prepared Dewey for the German idealism he would embrace during his studies with Morris at Hopkins.

**Baltimore**

In "From Absolutism to Experimentalism," Dewey correctly noted that he took a significant risk by deciding to pursue philosophy as a career. His applications for a fellowship and a scholarship were denied; in order to finance his first year of study he borrowed five hundred dollars from an aunt.\textsuperscript{60} Moreover, Dewey's job prospects with a Ph.D. in philosophy would be dubious at best; the majority of college philosophy professors were still ministers with seminary degrees. At Hopkins, Dewey was trained for a different type of higher education, in which the disciplines were to be studied as ends in themselves rather than as means to buttress previously held beliefs. Hopkins opened in 1876 under the leadership of Daniel Coit Gilman who took the opportunity to create the first research university in the United States, dedicated to both advanced

\textsuperscript{58} Torrey, "The Theodicy of Leibniz," *Andover Review* 4 (October-December, 1885): 511.

\textsuperscript{59} Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (1930), LW 5: 148.
study and path-breaking research. The realization of Gilman's plans at Hopkins revolutionized higher education in America, leading to the research university system as it exists today. Hopkins was designed, after the German model, primarily as a graduate school with specialists, emphasizing the scientific disciplines, and dedicated to original research. According to C. S. Peirce, the new research university, of which Hopkins was the primary model in the United States, was an institution created primarily for study and research, not for instruction.\textsuperscript{61}

The Johns Hopkins faculty was distinguished. Dewey had chosen Hopkins in order to work primarily with Morris.\textsuperscript{62} In addition, he studied logic with Peirce, minored in history with Herbert Baxter Adams, and studied physiological psychology with Hall. Hall and Morris were both part-time lecturers at Hopkins and engaged, with Peirce, in a competitive struggle for the one full-time appointment President Gilman planned to make in philosophy. In January 1884, Dewey's second and final year, Gilman and the executive committee cancelled all part-time faculty positions, including that of Peirce and


\textsuperscript{61} When Peirce wrote the definition of “university” for the 1891 Century Dictionary, the editors objected to his claim that it was “an association of men for the purpose of study,” claiming that they believed the university was an institution for instruction. Peirce replied that a university had nothing to do with instruction. For Peirce, “the function of a university is the production of knowledge, and... teaching is only a necessary means to that end.” Quoted in Max H. Fisch and Jackson I. Cope, “Peirce at the Johns Hopkins University,” in Studies in the Philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce, eds. Philip H. Wiener and Frederic H. Young (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), 277-78.

\textsuperscript{62} John Shook notes that “Morris was one of only a handful of American academics who taught neo-Kantian and neo-Hegelian doctrines,” but doesn’t acknowledge the importance of extra-academic American Hegelianism. He is quite correct, however, to emphasize that Hopkins provided a unique academic experience for Dewey because he was able to study with an idealist, as well as someone who was trained in the new experimental psychology, G. Stanley Hall. Shook, Dewey's Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2000), 42.
Morris, and then renewed all of them but Peirce’s, apparently because of considerations based on Peirce’s personal life and the committee’s discomfort with his religious views. At the end of the spring semester, Morris lost out to Hall because Gilman viewed Hall’s psychology, unlike Morris’s idealism, as more consistent with the scientific emphasis of the university, a portent of the impending decline of idealism. Though Peirce had already formulated the basis for his pragmatic method, which Dewey later regarded as brilliant, he was not influenced by Peirce at this time because “by Logic, Mr. Peirce means only an account of the methods of the physical sciences, put in mathematical form as far as possible.” As far as Dewey was concerned, the course was “more of a scientific, than philosophical course.” But Dewey was clearly influenced by the emphasis on science at Hopkins, evidenced in the work of Adams, but especially in the work of Hall.

Adams had studied with Karl Knies and Roscher at the University of Heidelberg. Like his German mentors, he advocated the scientific study of history and maintained that the disciplines of history, economics and political science were inseparable. He envisioned his historical seminar as a “laboratory of scientific truth...where books are treated like mineralogical specimens, passed about from hand to hand, examined, and tested.” Adams also held the

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Teutonic-germ theory of American history. According to Adams, "the origin of the English Constitution...is found in the forests of Germany." "The German race," brought the ideas of freedom and democracy "to the shores of Britain" in the fifth and sixth centuries. After successfully exterminating the inferior Celtic Britons, the descendents of the Teutons carried the seed of liberal democracy to the fertile soil of New England in the seventeenth century where it blossomed into the New England town meeting.66

In a letter to W. T. Harris, Dewey described his minor with Adams as lacking in "the philosophic side" of the subject. Dewey wrote that "The philosophy of history and of social ethics in its widest sense is untouched, & as long as it remains so, they don't get more than half the good of their own courses it seems to me."67 Nevertheless, Dewey was impressed by the notion of scientific history. In 1938 he maintained that "the first task in historical inquiry, as in any inquiry, is that of controlled observations...the collection of data and their confirmation as authentic." According to Dewey, scientific methodology was the strength of "modern historiography." Historians had learned to treat ideas and meanings "as hypotheses" just like any other "physical inquiry that leads to a definite conclusion."68 But Dewey had no patience with theories of Teutonic or Anglo-Saxon superiority. During his "Hegelian" phase, Dewey claimed that the theory of evolution provided no justification for "bald Anglo-Saxon" talk "about

67 JD to Harris, 17 January 1884.
the goal of the process of evolution being a goal for man," because man is merely "one form through which the course of evolution passes." He was consistently critical of notions of Anglo-Saxon superiority throughout his life.69

Hall’s impact on Dewey was more profound than Adams’s. Dewey took all of Hall’s graduate courses and did laboratory research in psychology while at Hopkins.70 Hall’s lectures encouraged Dewey to study experimental psychology, and the publication of Dewey’s Psychology in 1887testifies to the depth of his knowledge in that field.71 Hall had worked with Trendelenburg, but was influenced primarily by the German philosopher’s respect for empirical study, particularly in the natural sciences and in psychology. Trendelenburg’s emphasis upon development and process led Hall into a temporary Hegelian period which confirmed his belief in the fundamental importance of historical process. His

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69 Dewey, "Ethics and Physical Science" (1887), EW 1: 220. Dewey spoke little of Anglo-Saxon, and even less of Teutonic peoples. In 1920, he commented that "an enthusiastic American teacher of the Chinese in Honolulu told [him] that when the Chinese acquired Anglo-Saxon initiative they would be the greatest people in the world." Dewey claimed he wondered "whether even the Anglo-Saxons would have developed or retained initiative if they had lived for centuries under conditions that gave them no room to stir about, no relief from the unremitting surveillance of their fellows?" As this passage indicates, Dewey always explained human development in terms of social and environmental factors. Racism required an essentialist definition of man that Dewey could not consistently entertain within his mature philosophy. See Dewey, "Racial Prejudice and Friction" (1922), LW 13: 242. For other passages in which he was critical of notions of Anglo-Saxon superiority and imperialism see "Education by Henry Adams" (1921), LW 13: 273; "Imperialism Is Easy" (1927), LW 3: 158; "William James’s Morals and Julien Benda’s" (1948), LW 15: 22. Dewey did at times claim that Anglo-Saxon peoples have been more practical than other peoples: "The reason the Anglo-Saxon civilization is superior is that we have learned to get methods and so can get particular results when we want them." In that essay, he went on to agree with "the Latin races" that "the Anglo-Saxon is...without the delicate susceptibility to attend to the needs of others...they set up their mark and go at it roughshod, regardless of the feelings of others." Dewey, "Educational Lectures before Brigham Young Academy" (1902), LW 17: 296, 343.

70 John Dewey to H.A.P. Torrey, 14 February 1883.

71 Dewey’s citations in Psychology demonstrate that he was thoroughly familiar with current scholarship in psychology, however, he was always interested in psychology strictly for the light it shed on philosophical issues. In a letter to Arthur Bentley, Dewey wrote "I do not pretend to be a psychologist anyway, and what I’ve written on that subject has been mostly for the sake of clearing up my own mind about something in either ethics or logic." Quoted in Sydney Ratner and Jules Altman, eds. John Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley: A Philosophical Correspondence, 1932-1951 (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1964), 53.
studies in Germany cut short by the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, Hall returned to the United States where he tried to form a relationship with W. T. Harris and the St. Louis Hegelians. Harris published portions of Hall’s translation of Rosenkranz’s commentary on Hegel in the JSP, in 1872, 1873, and 1874, but soon thereafter Hall began to move away from Idealism in favor of the evolutionary and positivist philosophies of Spencer, Comte, and Comte’s American disciple, David Goodman Croly. Hall gradually became hostile to Hegelianism and abandoned his belief in a supernatural realm. Dorothy Ross reports that in 1894, Hall went so far as to tell Josiah Royce at a professional meeting that his Hegelianism was intellectual masturbation. Nevertheless, as late as 1884 Hall was willing to work with Harris on the national Committee on Pedagogics. But his study of Spencer’s Principles of Psychology (1870) and Wilhelm Wundt’s Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie (1874) in the mid-1870s encouraged Hall to look for physiological explanations of the development of human consciousness as a natural product of evolution.  

In 1876 Hall went to Harvard to pursue further graduate study in the new experimental psychology with assistant professor of physiology, William James. From James, Hall learned to view thought as functional and the mind as dynamic. At James’s urging Hall returned to Germany in 1878. During this

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72 See G. Stanley Hall to Harris, 7 October 1871, Harris Papers, MHS; Hall to Harris, 13 October 1871, Harris Papers, MHS. Hall translated a section of Karl Rosenkranz, Hegel als Deutscher Nationalphilosoph (Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1870). His translations appeared in the JSP as “Hegel as the National Philosopher of Germany.” Dorothy Ross suggests that Hall may have distanced himself from the St. Louis Hegelians after this time because he was intimidated by the prospect of trying to convince them of his expertise in Hegel studies. Ross, G. Stanley Hall: The Psychologist as Prophet (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1972), 38-41, 45-9, 56-7, 254, 129, 59. In 1880 Hall wrote to William James that Hegelianism was “unsurpassed for helping men easily and without agony or crisis over any part of the long way from Rome to reason, but to rest in it as a finality is arrested development, and to go back to it seems to me
second sojourn he studied with Hermann von Helmholtz and Wundt. Helmholtz convinced Hall that psychology should be seen as a branch of physiology rather than philosophy because human behavior would eventually be explained solely by reference to physical-chemical processes. Hall also absorbed the ideals and methods of scientific research which pervaded German universities. By the time Dewey arrived at Hopkins, Hall was widely recognized as a leading expert in educational and child psychology.

Morris alternated between teaching at the University of Michigan in the spring and at Hopkins during the fall. During his first semester at Hopkins, Dewey took three of Morris's courses—History of Philosophy in Great Britain, Philosophy of History, and Science of Knowledge Seminary—and he was certainly the primary influence on Dewey at this time, and for several years after, as they both taught philosophy at the University of Michigan. Morris had accepted idealism after a brief flirtation with British empiricism, even embracing materialism for a short while. By the mid-1870s Morris was an active member of the American Hegelian school of thought. He knew W. T. Harris well, the two corresponded from 1874 until Morris's death in 1889, and he lectured on Kant at the Concord Summer School in 1881. Harris published several of Morris's original contributions to philosophy in the JSP, printed reviews of his books, and in 1877 reported on his courses of lectures at Hopkins. In 1881 Morris became the general editor of the new S. C. Griggs "German Philosophical Classics" series which published eight volumes—two by Morris, one by Dewey and one by

Harris—"devoted to the critical exposition of some one masterpiece belonging to
the history of German philosophy."  

As he studied with Trendelenburg, Morris began to develop his own
version of Aristotelianized idealism, but it is crucial to point out that Morris was
neither a disciple of Trendelenburg nor of Hegel. According to Dewey,
Trendelenburg was greatly influenced by German idealism, especially "the
ideas...of the correlation of thought and being, the idea of man as a self-realizing
personality, [and] the notion of organized society as the objective reality of
man..." Morris also accepted these idealist doctrines. But as we noted in the
previous chapter, Trendelenburg was very critical of Hegel, especially the
"dialectic of pure thought." In the same vein, Dewey noted that Morris "used
sometimes in later years to point out pages in his copy of Hegel which were
marked 'nonsense', etc., remarks made while he was a student in Germany." But
Morris, Dewey explained, found "in Hegel (in his own words) 'the most
profound and comprehensive of modern thinkers.'"  

R. M. Wenley, Morris's first biographer, depicted Morris as opposed to the
application of science to philosophical issues, but in fact he was convinced by
Trendelenburg that philosophical inquiry must be informed by the findings of

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74 Advertisement in the JSP 15 (1881): 323. Ten volumes were projected, eight were
published: George Sylvester Morris, Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (1882); John Watson, Schelling's
Transcendental Idealism: A Critical Exposition (1882); Charles Everett, Fichte's Science of Knowledge: A
Critical Exposition (1884); John Kedney, Hegel's Aesthetics. A Critical Exposition (1885); Noah Porter,
Kant's Ethics: A Critical Exposition (1886); George Sylvester Morris, Hegel's Philosophy of the State
and of History: An Exposition (1887); John Dewey, Leibniz's New Essays Concerning the Human
Understanding: A Critical Exposition. (1888); W. T. Harris, Hegel's Logic: A Book on the Categories of
the Mind: A Critical Exposition (1890). Dewey took over the editorship when Morris died
unexpectedly in 1889.

75 Dewey, "The Late Professor Morris" (1889), EW 3: 7.
science. In a letter to Wenley, Dewey commented that Morris's "objective and ethical idealism" united Aristotle, Fichte and Hegel. "From Hegel," Dewey wrote, "Morris derived his method," but the "purely technical aspects" of the dialectic did not interest him. Rather, Morris was attracted to Hegel's emphasis upon "the organic relationship of subject and object, intelligence and the world...the supreme instance of the union of opposites in a superior synthesis."

From Fichte, Dewey suggested, Morris derived a conviction that man's search for truth was a moral struggle for self-realization. From Aristotle's realism, he learned to scorn "the problem of the existence of the external and physical world," believing that "the philosophical problem concerned its nature, not its existence." Rather than viewing "Kant as the source of the idealistic faith," Dewey explained, Morris "tended to treat him rather as a phenomenalist, an agnostic, and found the root of his unconquered subjectivism in his original 'mechanical' separation of subject and object." From all three philosophers Morris absorbed the conviction that reality was teleological in character.

Dewey readily embraced Morris's Hegelianism. Hegel's vision of the universe as an organic whole collapsed the dualisms Dewey was struggling with, allowing him to avoid the dichotomy between the natural and the supernatural in Torrey's philosophy, and to counter British empiricism's agnosticism about

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77 Wenley, Life and Work of George Sylvester Morris, 316-17, 318.
the ideal and infinite. Yet Dewey could not embrace Trendelenburg’s naturalistic elimination of the dualism between mind and world at this time. More so than Trendelenburg, Morris and Dewey sought to maintain an image of a reality with a universal, spiritual purpose, rather than a “mere mechanical aggregate” of particular purposes.78 Both men continued to maintain that everything that happened in the world was part of a developmental process. Morris illustrated the process by claiming, like Hegel, that the history of philosophy was not a succession of isolated systems of thought, but a continuum of the absolute’s self-realization in which progress was made as more inclusive insights were articulated and proven. The emergence of science was an important demonstration of the absolute’s development toward full self-consciousness.79

In a letter to Torrey, written a month after the Fall semester began, Dewey stated that Morris “is a pronounced idealist—and we have already heard of the ‘universal self.’” Dewey elaborated on Morris’s philosophy as he understood it so far: Morris argued that philosophy must choose between “two starting points.” The first “regards subject & object as in mechanical relation, relations in and of space & time, & the process of knowledge is simply impact of the object upon the subject with resulting sensations and impressions.” Though this view may seem to account for knowledge, it cannot account for being, “since nothing exists for the subject except these impressions or states, nothing can be known of real being, and the result is scepticism, or subj. idealism, or agnosticism.” The

79 Jones, George Sylvester Morris, 249-70.
other starting point "takes the facts & endeavors to explain them—that is to show what is necessarily involved in knowledge, and results in the conclusion that subj. & object are in organic relations; neither having reality apart from the other." As explained by Dewey, Morris's approach to the problems of epistemology was the same as Hegel's, who, in the introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, denied that they were genuine problems. According to Hegel, the conundrums of epistemology were created by the mistaken assumption "that there is a boundary between cognition and the Absolute that completely separates them." Hegel undertook "an exposition of how knowledge makes its appearance" rather than an examination of whether or not knowledge is possible.⁸⁰

Morris's influence on Dewey is evident in a paper Dewey read to the University Metaphysical Club entitled "Knowledge and the Relativity of Feeling." The paper, inspired by Morris's course in British philosophy, was subsequently published in the January 1883 issue of the JSP. Dewey explained to W. T. Harris that in this paper he "attempted to apply to one of the phases of Sensationalism the same kind of argument which [he] used regarding Materialism."⁸¹ Specifically, Dewey criticized contemporary theories of knowledge which hold that all knowledge is relative, by focusing on the premise that feelings are relative. Dewey used the word "feelings" to denote all of the contents of consciousness, including sensations and thoughts. According to the theory of the relativity of knowledge, Dewey explained, external objects cause feelings, and feelings express the way sentient beings are affected by objects.

⁸⁰ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §§73, 74.
Since feelings are the exclusive contents of consciousness, knowledge can only be derived from feelings, and feelings are relative to the subject. Because feelings are relative, all knowledge is relative. "Relative," Dewey explained, means conditioned, subjective, and phenomenal. That is to say, feelings are relative because they depend on the current state of the feeling subject in addition to the object of which they are an effect. Thus feelings can only provide information about phenomenal reality, reality as it is experienced rather than as it is in itself.\footnote{John Dewey to W. T. Harris, 29 December 1882.}

Dewey noted that the theory of the relativity of feeling was held by positivists, who believed in historical relativism; Hamilton and his followers; and associationalists like Hume, but that the theory of evolution had given it new force. Evolution, an established scientific theory, entailed the emergent theory of mind.\footnote{Dewey, "Knowledge and the Relativity of Feeling," (1883), EW 1:21.} Consciousness emerged "from the lowest form of life, or from matter," and thus is not handed down to humanity from on high, but is "conditioned by the state and quality of the organism....[Consciousness] is therefore relative to the subject."\footnote{See Dewey's 1925 discussion of "what has come to be called the 'emergent' theory of mind" in \textit{Experience and Nature}, LW 1: 207f.} Existence, as it is in itself, is unknowable because our apprehension of it is conditioned by our current state of evolutionary development. In this way the theory of evolution bolstered historical relativism by lending it the authority of science.

The crux of Dewey's argument is that the theory of the relativity of feeling fails because, although it purports to be a theory about human psychology, it is also an ontological theory that assumes that being is independent of thought. But

\footnote{Dewey, "Knowledge and the Relativity of Feeling" (1883), EW 1:20.}
if feeling and knowledge are relative, then those who believe in the relativity of feeling are barred from ontology. According to Dewey, it is logically “suicidal” to assert that feelings, and hence all knowledge claims, are relative, and the universal claim that thought and being are ontologically distinct or that all knowledge comes from sensations.\textsuperscript{85} Dewey argued that we can only know if feelings are relative if we have knowledge of something that is not relative, an absolute. He quoted Spencer who admitted that the theory depends on the notion of an absolute which is, according to the theory, unknowable. Dewey agreed with empiricists that feelings are relative, but maintained that we can only know this if there is something beyond feeling in thought. Consciousness must somehow transcend feeling to an absolute.\textsuperscript{86} One reason this essay is useful is that it provides our first clue about what Dewey meant by the absolute, a key term in his early thought; it is that which is not relative, not conditioned by our feelings or our perceptions.

Not only did Dewey claim that the theory of the relativity of feeling requires an absolute object, but “that this object must be...specifically related to the content of consciousness,” and we must know something about what that absolute object is.\textsuperscript{87} Though relative, feeling must transcend itself to an absolute, otherwise we would not be able to know that it is relative. Feeling is within consciousness, and consciousness cannot get outside of itself to contact an absolute any more than “a man can stand on his own shoulders, or outstrip his

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 23.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., 22-25.
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., 27.
shadow."\textsuperscript{88} Feeling is able to contact an absolute because the absolute is within consciousness. From this argument Dewey concluded that the theory of the relativity of feeling "is compatible only with a theory which admits the constitutive power of Thought, as itself ultimate Being, determining objects."\textsuperscript{89} Consciousness, according to Dewey, experiences both feelings and objective reality, compares them, and judges feelings to be relative. Thought is grounded in the absolute, a self-conscious, constitutive, ultimate Being. Feelings are relative to the absolute, but all relations are internal to the absolute, thus it is not relative to anything else. As Dewey explained,

And...since this self-consciousness is the ground and source of relations, it cannot be subject to them. It is itself the true Absolute, then. This does not mean that it is the Unrelated, but that it is not conditioned by those conditions which determine its objects.\textsuperscript{90}

It is revealing to note that in this essay Dewey articulated a classic idealist argument against empiricism. The critical idealist assumption in Dewey's argument is that we can only account for knowledge if being has something in common with thought. In his previous essay, Dewey noted that Spinoza had attempted "to show the unity between the Absolute and the seeming relative by the hypothesis of the Absolute alone," but had failed to derive the existence of finite things.\textsuperscript{91} Spinoza's "identity" philosophy had affirmed the unity of reality, but at the expense of the diversity we encounter in everyday experience.\textsuperscript{92} In "Knowledge and the Relativity of Feeling," Dewey assumed finite things and

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., 26.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid., 33.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid., 33.
\textsuperscript{91} Dewey, "The Pantheism of Spinoza," EW 1: 10.
\textsuperscript{92} Dewey to W. T. Harris, 17 January 1884. In this letter Dewey indicated that any system of philosophy that collapsed all of reality into Spirit, the Absolute, was to be disparaged as an "identity system."
feelings exist within the realm of absolute consciousness, thus they are related to one another because they are internal relations of absolute consciousness itself. The absolute is the union of thought and being. If thought and being have nothing in common, Dewey and other idealists have claimed, then there is no way to explain the existence of a world apart from thought. According to Berkeley, Locke had erred by positing the existence of material substance as the source of our ideas about the material world while claiming that it was impossible to know what it was because it was an “outer” reality removed from the “inner” reality of consciousness. Hegel voiced the same critique of Kant’s postulation of the noumenal realm.\textsuperscript{93} And just two years prior to Dewey’s presentation of “Knowledge and the Relativity of Feeling,” Morris employed the same argument in \textit{British Thought and Thinkers}.

For Morris, empiricists from Locke through Spencer were all ontological agnostics because they believed that sense data originates in an unknowable realm, and that we can only know phenomena as modified by our perceptual apparatus. Morris rejected Berkeley’s answer to Locke, however. Berkeley had “penetrate[d] the clouds which bounded Locke’s mental horizon,” and transformed them into “celestial forms of light” by denying the reality of matter and affirming a theological monism.\textsuperscript{94} Like Spinoza, Berkeley had denied the reality of finite things. Morris argued that immaterial thought and material being can only come into relation through some middle or common term which accounts for the reality and uniqueness of both.

\textsuperscript{93} Hegel, \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit}, §54.
Knowledge as the union of thought and being, can be possible only in virtue of something which belongs equally to these two, something in which each resembles the other. And since thought is essentially active, this element common to thought and being must be some form of activity.\textsuperscript{95}

Morris preferred Hegel’s objective idealism which affirmed that material objects exist, but are related to thought within a larger whole. Moreover, Morris agreed with Hegel’s conviction that the need for a factor common to both thought and being means material objects are not “petrified” as they are in British thought.\textsuperscript{96} The primary error of British philosophy, declared Morris, carried into German thought by Kant but corrected by the post-Kantian idealists, was the conviction that thought and being are ontologically distinct, one living and one inert. Morris consistently maintained throughout his philosophical career that acceptance of this dualism led to “an inextricable maze of contradictions.”\textsuperscript{97}

Dewey’s ready conversion to Morris’s idealism, coupled with the fact that he was the only student majoring in the history of philosophy, established him as Morris’s prize pupil. Before he left for Michigan that December, Morris managed to get Dewey appointed to teach the undergraduate course in the history of philosophy in the following spring semester. During the spring semester Dewey presented two papers to the Metaphysical Club. The first was “Hegel and the Theory of Categories,” but it is lost and there is no evidence from Dewey’s letters about its content. The second paper, prepared primarily for presentation to the


\textsuperscript{96} \textit{Ibid.}, 318.
committee administering graduate fellowships for the academic year 1883-84, was a Hegelian criticism of Kant titled, "Kant and Philosphic Method." The latter paper won Dewey the fellowship for which he applied and was published a year later in the JSP.

In "Kant and Philosphic Method," Dewey acknowledged that Kant's method was a revolutionary turning point in the history of philosophy, and argued that the revolution Kant began was completed by Hegel. Kant had combined the philosophical methods of rationalists like Descartes, "the method of 'intellectualism,'" and of British empiricism. The rationalists analyzed concepts according to the laws of formal logic—non-contradiction, excluded middle, and the law of identity. They sought to discover truth by analyzing problems "down to those simple elements which cannot be thought away, and reach a judgment whose predicate may be clearly and distinctly seen to be identical with its subject." Hume showed Kant, however, that formal logic could not explain causation, "how one thing should arise out of another, when it is not connected with it." Dewey described the analytic method of the rationalists as "the method for pure thought," and agreed that "it does not give any means for passing from thought to existence." "Reality," Dewey affirmed, "is added to our notions from without, not evolved from within."98

Dewey argued that Kant correctly supplemented the method of rationalism with the empiricists' conviction that experience "adds reality or existence to our thoughts." Dewey described the method of empiricism as

98 Dewey, "Kant and Philosphic Method" (1884), EW 1: 35.
"Analysis of perceptions with agreement as criterion." Rather than conceptions, empiricism begins with analysis of perceptions and examines their agreement with reality. But empiricists were immobilized, Dewey claimed, by the indirect theory of perception which entailed that we never experience reality, but only our perceptions of reality. Consequently, the empiricists could not explain how we get beyond our perceptions to external reality, not could they adequately define agreement. How does the mind connect perceptions with external reality, how does it associate simple ideas such as "solidity" and "shape" into complex ideas like "chair," and how does it examine the adequacy of these connections? How does the mind synthesize simple ideas into mental representations of the complex things of experience?

Kant’s great insight, Dewey asserted, was that "knowledge is synthesis, and the explanation of knowledge or truth must be found in the explanation of synthesis." Kant proposed that "when applied to a material given it," thought becomes synthetic. Thought connects the rhapsody of particulars we encounter in our experience through its conceptual, categorical apparatus. Kant’s project then, was to show that the categories used by the mind to synthesize the particulars of experience were not merely subjective, but objective. Kant did this by arguing that the categories make experience and its objects possible. To Hume’s question of how we can experience causation, Kant answered that experience is impossible without synthetic notions such as causation.

In his examination of the system of categories, Kant argued that they are "functions of a higher unity which is subject to none of them," Kant’s "synthetic

99 Ibid., 35.
unity of Apperception or...self-consciousness.” We know the categories are true, or objectively valid, and that there is a unity of apperception, because experience would not be possible otherwise. Moreover, we judge whether or not particular experiences are true, or objective, by reference to the categories. Hence Kant’s explanation of the categories and experience was circular because, “the relation of categories to experience is the relation of members of an organism to a whole.” The categories and experience are inseparably related. After Kant’s discovery, philosophic “Method will consist in making out a complete table of these categories in all their mutual relations...”

For Dewey, Hegel correctly understood that Kant erred by assuming that the categories constitute experience “out of a foreign material to which they bear a purely external relation.” Although the categories make our experience possible, we have no compelling reason to believe that they bear a necessary connection to objective reality, the noumenal world. “It is, Hegel says, as if one ascribed correct insight to a person, and then added that he could see only into the untruth, not the truth.” Moreover, Hegel demonstrated that Kant led us to believe that we could know the categories and how they are organically related to self-consciousness, but in fact we cannot examine the transcendental unity of apperception as it is because it is in the noumenal realm, necessarily modified by our conceptual apparatus. “Hence, it appears that our picture of a method was

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100 Ibid., 37.
101 Ibid., 38. Shook claims that Dewey asserted “a rudimentary statement of a coherence theory of truth,” in his characterization of Kant’s categories as circular. I believe it is misleading to claim Dewey espoused a coherence theory of truth because that theory may be understood as holding that our beliefs are true as long as they logically cohere with one another. In the following chapter, I shall argue that in his 1887 Psychology, Dewey, like Hegel, had more than logical coherence in mind; both philosophers believed that an indispensable criterion of truth is a certain existential, as well as logical, coherence.
doubly false,” Dewey argued, because our conceptual apparatus makes the noumenal realm, the realm of absolute truth, unavailable, and because the self which we seek to understand is a noumenal reality.  

For Dewey, and Hegel, Kant had retained a crucial error of modern philosophy by assuming that thought operates “upon matter foreign to it.” Dewey maintained that “to Reason itself, nothing is given in the sense of being foreign to it.” The self and the things it experiences, Dewey continued, are both “constituted by the categories” within the “synthetic unity of apperception or self-consciousness” which “is the real subject, and the so-called subject and object are but the forms in which it expresses its own activity.”

Dewey concluded the essay with a brief account of Hegel’s dialectic, “the completed Method of Philosophy.” According to Dewey’s Hegelian theory of mind, “the relation of subject and object is...but the first form in which Reason manifests that it is both synthetic and analytic; that it separates itself from itself, that it may thereby reach higher unity with itself.”  

In the process of alienation and return, experience begins with analysis, during which, reason differentiates or denies itself. That is to say, reason discovers internal contradictions, instabilities, within its current stage of development. Reason then seeks synthesis, apprehension of the other, the external object to be known, and brings the other into itself. All knowledge then is growth, the subject attaining higher unity by sublation of the other. And in this essay Dewey agreed with one of

103 Ibid., 39.
104 Ibid., 41.
105 Ibid., 42, 39, 44.
106 Ibid., 40.
Hegel's most controversial claims, that in the dialectic, "each lower category is not destroyed, but retained—but retained at its proper value." At this point in his philosophical development Dewey believed, contra Trendelenburg and the personal idealists, that Hegel's dialectic maintained unity in diversity; it maintained the identity and value of the particulars of experience while, at the same time, synthesizing them into higher unities.

Though his dissertation is lost, we know that Dewey chose to develop the previous paper on Kant.\textsuperscript{107} He explained to W. T. Harris that he planned to analyze Kant's psychology,

\ldots that is, his psychology of spirit (so far as he has any) or the subjective side of his theory of knowledge, in which besides giving a general acc't. of his theory of Sense, Imagination, etc., I hope to be able to point out that he had the conception of Reason or Spirit as the center and organic unity of the entire sphere of man's experience, and that in so far as he is true to this conception that he is the true founder of modern philosophic method, but that in so far as he was false to it he fell into his own defects, contradictions, etc.\textsuperscript{108}

We can assume from this statement and from "Kant and Philosophic Method" that Dewey argued that Kant's defects were corrected by Hegel's vision of subject and object existing as moments within the dialectical development of organic unity. It is also noteworthy that, very early, Dewey expressed an interest in Hegel's philosophy of spirit, whereas most nineteenth-century Hegelians, especially the British neo-Hegelians who we shall discuss later, focused almost exclusively on Hegel's logic and were inclined to view Hegel as a grand metaphysician deducing the categories of reality rather than of experience. In the

\textsuperscript{107} "Now that I am writing I may mention the fact that the statement (in one of the general Reports if I mistake not) that my thesis was published in Journal Spec. Phil is an error. The article published there was in somewhat the same line & was presented to obtain the
following chapter we shall see that Dewey’s regard for Hegel’s philosophy of
spirit led him to study the *Phenomenology of Spirit* for himself, and thus become
highly critical of the neo-Hegelian’s willingness to posit a transcendent reality.  109

Though Hall certainly peaked Dewey’s interest in psychology, the
psychological positions he sought to articulate were more indebted to Morris
than to Hall. When he first began to study the new psychology with Hall, Dewey
wrote to H. A. P. Torrey: “I don’t see any very close connection between it & Phil.
but I suppose it will furnish grist for the mill, if nothing else.” The further he
proceeded into his studies with Hall, however, the more excited he became about
the new psychology and its implications for philosophy. 110

In November Dewey described to Torrey a paper on psychology which he
presented to the Metaphysical Club. The paper was about “the relations of
conscious and unconscious activities and the very great importance of the latter.”
Dewey vaguely explained that he had come to believe that “All our psychical

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fellowship, but the doctorate thesis is quite another matter & has never been published. ‘The
Psychology of Kant’ was its title.” John Dewey to T. R. Ball, 28 May 1888.
109 John Dewey to W. T. Harris, 17 January 1884.
108 The British neo-Hegelians were very influenced by James Hutchison Stirling, who
instigated the movement toward Hegel in British thought with his book *The Secret of Hegel*. But
Stirling tended to ignore the *Phenomenology* entirely, and later British neo-Hegelians followed his
lead on this point, viewing *The Science of Logic*, rather than the *Phenomenology*, as the beginning
point of Hegel’s system. See J. B. Baillie, *Introduction to The Phenomenology of Mind*, by G. W. F.
Hegelians studied the *Phenomenology*, there is no evidence that Brokmeyer and Harris were
significantly influenced by it, focusing on the *Logic* instead, though there is strong evidence that
Harris was also influenced by *The Philosophical Propaedeutic*, approximately two-thirds of which he
translated in the JSP, and some evidence that he was influenced by the *Philosophy of History*,
much of which he also translated. As we saw in the previous chapter, only Snider explicitly drew
upon the *Phenomenology* in his writings, and only he came to believe, like Dewey, that philosophy
must become psychology. On the St. Louis Hegelian’s study of the *Phenomenology* see John
Wright Buckham and George Stratton, “A Biographical Sketch” in *George Holmes Howison: A
Selection of His Writings with a Biographical Sketch* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1934),
49-50.
110 John Dewey to H. A. P. Torrey, 4 February 1883. White, Dykhuizen, and Coughlan
believe Dewey was torn between an allegiance to the physiological psychology of Hall and the
idealism of Morris, but there is little reason to believe Dewey considered these viewpoints
activity...is based on activities which do not as such come into
consciousness...and that our ethical nature is conditioned similarly."

Interestingly, Dewey claimed that he was "surprised to see how [he] was lead to
conclusions essentially identical with those of 'transcendentalism.'" His
conclusions were that "all 'states' of consciousness" are dependent upon

a permanent identical self-consciousness, which as such doesn't exist in
time, but which by its constant activities...is continually differentiating
itself into 'states' or successive consciousnesses; and that on the other hand
these successive states are the realization of this self consciousness so that
it really has no existence except in and through them (emphasis in the
original).

Moreover, Dewey asserted, "any state of consciousness contains in itself both
subject and object." Consciousness "is all there is, and there is nothing beyond it
or behind it." Dewey told Torrey that he intended to develop the paper into his
Ph.D. thesis. This letter supports the conclusion that Dewey's dissertation
argued that Hegel completed Kant's method by emphasizing reason or spirit as
the consciousness in which subject and object exist. This is also our first evidence
that Dewey accepted the neo-Hegelians' transcendent absolute, a position he
held until 1891.

In early March 1884, Dewey presented a paper entitled "The New
Psychology" to the Metaphysical Club. An eloquent appraisal of the new
developments in psychology, the essay was printed later that year in the Andover
Review. The paper began with praise for the new psychology's willingness to
spurn the "unity and simplicity" of the old, introspective psychology, and its
embrace of the complexity of reality. Dewey particularly attacked the British

empiricists for dissecting experience and oversimplifying mental life. The empiricists analyzed thought abstractly, dividing the flux of experience into isolated, atomic sensations, ideas, or autonomous faculties. These earlier psychologists reflected “the Zeitgeist of their age, the age of the eighteenth-century and the Aufklärung, which found nothing difficult, which hated mystery and complexity, which believed with all its heart in principles, the simpler and more abstract the better, and which had the passion of completion.”\textsuperscript{112}

But optimism is the keynote of the essay as Dewey outlined the characteristics of the new psychology. The “New Psychology,” Dewey maintained, represented a shift away from abstract, clear principles toward “organized, systematic, tireless study into the secrets of nature, which, counting nothing common or unclean, thought no drudgery beneath it, or rather thought nothing drudgery....”\textsuperscript{113} The most important factor in the development of the new psychology, he suggested, was the growth of physiology and physiological psychology which used the new method of experimentation to supplement and correct the old method of introspection. Another important influence, as he saw it, was that of biology and its twin explanatory conceptions of the organism and its environment. For Dewey, these concepts complemented the philosophical developments of Hegel and made it impossible to think of experience or the mind as “an individual, isolated thing developing in a vacuum.”\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{111} John Dewey to H. A. P. Torrey, 17 November 1883.
\textsuperscript{112} Dewey, “The New Psychology” (1884), EW 1: 50.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., 51.
Once again, Dewey employed the concept of organism to defend idealism and attack mechanistic empiricism, but now he also used it to emphasize the importance of the social environment. The new psychology, Dewey maintained, acquired added scope and vitality from the growth of the social and historical sciences. Dynamic, vital, and realistic in its approach, the new psychology, declared Dewey, abandoned all preconceived abstract ideas, placed the organism in its environment, and threw itself upon experience, "believing that the mother which [had] born it would not betray it."115 His commitment to organicism ultimately led Dewey to conclude that all psychology is social psychology. The conclusion of this essay combined Dewey’s idealism with his excitement about the new psychology by claiming that the functionalism of the new psychology is "intensely ethical" in its tendencies, viewing life as an organism in which immanent ideas or purposes realize themselves and make possible for the first time an adequate account of man’s religious nature and experience.

Neil Coughlan has argued that some of “The New Psychology” appears to have been inspired by the Andover Liberal theologian Newman Smyth. Bruce Kuklick seized Coughlan’s lead, arguing that this similarity, coupled with evidence drawn from Dewey’s next four publications, demonstrated that, during these years, Dewey sought to provide a philosophical foundation for liberal theology. But Coughlan offers no evidence that Dewey read Smyth’s work and Rockefeller is correct to view Morris and Hall as the most likely sources for the

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ideas Dewey expressed in this essay. Westbrook also states that he is unpersuaded by Coughlan's argument for Smyth's "direct influence" on Dewey. 116 The similarities between Smyth and Dewey's writings were most likely a result of their working in a similar intellectual milieu. Smyth and Dewey's Burlington pastor, Brastow, were both influenced by Samuel Harris's emphasis on religious experience over correct doctrine and the Andover Liberals were well-versed in nineteenth-century German thought, both idealism and the new experimental psychology of Wundt and Helmholtz. Even Denton Snider sought to merge the new psychology with Hegelian idealism, yet there is no evidence that Dewey was familiar with Snider's work at this time. Dewey, Snider and Smyth were all engaged in what many thought to be the most important philosophical task of the time, interpreting the findings of experimental psychology within a philosophical framework that would demonstrate their deeper significance. 117

The papers Dewey published at Hopkins made his early project clear. Like Snider and others, he planned to combine idealism and the new psychology in an organic view of man and his environment which would make sensationalism and formalism obsolete and would retain a place for the spiritual, or moral, side of human experience. The Burlington philosophy, with its developmental, Schellingian aesthetics and opposition to British empiricism, had predisposed Dewey to post-Kantian idealism, which he readily embraced as a graduate student at Johns Hopkins. Moreover, Dewey's liberal religious beliefs, with

emphasis on behavior rather than correct doctrine, made it easy for him to entertain a philosophy, such as Hegel’s, that was closely associated with heterodox religion. Dewey’s fascination with Comte’s analysis of modernity, and his early critique of dualisms, reveals the problem that animated all of his philosophical work. Though Kuklick and Rockefeller see Dewey as an essentially religious thinker, his primary motivation was the healing of philosophical dichotomies and man’s alienation from nature and from his fellowman. At Hopkins, however, Dewey took an interest in Hegel’s philosophy of spirit and thus viewed Hegel’s thought as a study of human experience rather than the categories of reality itself. In the following chapter we shall see that, although Dewey had some initial allegiance to British neo-Hegelianism, he quickly broke with that tradition and came to read and appropriate Hegel more as a phenomenologist than a metaphysician. This philosophical move allowed Dewey to successfully combine his idealism with the new psychology.

CHAPTER THREE
DEWEY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, 1884-1894

Three months after he presented “The New Psychology” to the Metaphysical Club, Dewey received his doctorate from Hopkins in the Spring of 1884. A few months prior to Dewey’s graduation, G. S. Morris was appointed full-time lecturer in ethics at the University of Michigan. Soon thereafter George Holmes Howison, the former St. Louis Hegelian, left Ann Arbor to build the philosophy department at the University of California. Morris took the opportunity to recommend his former graduate student for the open position. Two months after Dewey completed his graduate studies at the age of twenty-four, James B. Angell, the president of the University of Michigan and a close family friend from Burlington, appointed him instructor of philosophy.¹

During his ten years in Ann Arbor, Dewey’s thought was in gradual but constant transition. In “From Absolutism to Experimentalism,” he remarked that during the first fifteen years after he left graduate school he “drifted away from Hegelianism,” and explained that “the word ‘drifting’ expresses the slow and, for a long time, imperceptible character of the movement...”² Dewey never attempted to specify the degree to which his drift was from Hegel or from Hegelianism, that is to say, what currently went under the name of Hegelianism, primarily in Britain and the United States. Dewey was well versed in the writings of American Hegelians and the British neo-Hegelians—Thomas Hill Green,

¹ R. M. Wenley, The Life and Work of George Sylvester Morris (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1917), 146; Dewey to James B. Angell, 19 July 1884; and Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), 3. Angell had been president of the University of Vermont, but had come to Ann Arbor as president twelve years before he hired Dewey.
William Wallace, Andrew Seth, Edward and John Caird, Bernard Bosanquet, F. H. Bradley, and John Watson. Dewey’s disagreements with his contemporary Hegelians can be documented in his publications, but he devoted little attention to exegesis of Hegel’s, or any other philosopher’s, texts. As a result, many scholars have assumed that his criticisms of Hegelianism reveal his positions on Hegel. This chapter shall present the drift as a move away from what then passed for Hegelianism, reserving the question of Dewey’s relationship to Hegel for subsequent chapters.

John Shook has recently argued that this transition in Dewey’s thought should be viewed as his effort to formulate a consistent idealism rather than a rejection of an ill-considered, youthful fascination with Hegel.¹ This chapter sustains Shook’s thesis that by 1891 Dewey had severed his ties with the neo-Hegelians when he rejected their transcendent absolute, but that alone does not constitute a rejection of Hegel. We shall add to Shook’s view, however, by showing, in this chapter and the following one, that Dewey began to develop a humanistic/historicist reading of Hegel and continued to draw upon key Hegelian insights. This chapter shall also argue that Dewey’s effort to articulate a consistent idealism was integrally linked to his developing conception of the role of the philosopher. In a letter written to his friend James Rowland Angell in 1893, Dewey wrote, “metaphysics has had its day, and if the truths which Hegel saw cannot be stated as direct, practical truths, they are not true.”² Dewey was

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⁴ John Dewey to James Rowland Angell, 10 May 1893. James R. Angell was the son of James B. Angell, the president of the University of Michigan. James R. Angell studied at the
convinced that philosophers should address "the problems of men," and live a life of social involvement. Finally, this chapter shall note that as Dewey focused more on social and political philosophy, he also became less involved in the organized church. Neil Coughlin correctly states that Dewey "was becoming self-consciously, even aggressively, a secular thinker."

Though we shall continue to examine Dewey's writings and those to which he responded, in order to understand developments in his ethical thought we shall take seriously his statement that "Upon the whole, the forces that have influenced me have come from persons and from situations more than from books..." Scholars often note the importance of Dewey's relationship with his new wife, Alice Chipman, and a friendship with a visionary newspaper man, Franklin Ford, but have underestimated the influence of the most charismatic person Dewey knew during these years, Thomas Davidson. This chapter seeks to correct that imbalance by examining the influence of Davidson and his friends in the Ethical Culture movement on Dewey's ethics. Scholars have also emphasized the important influence of William James's *Principles of Psychology*, published in 1890, and the writings of T. H. Green on Dewey's thought. Though

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University of Michigan as an undergraduate student and joined Dewey as a colleague at the University of Chicago in 1894. At the time of this letter, Angell was in Germany where he pursued graduate studies at the Universities of Halle and Berlin. Dykhuizen, *The Life and Mind of John Dewey*, 77.

5 "Philosophy recovers itself when it ceases to be a device for dealing with the problems of philosophers and becomes a method, cultivated by philosophers, for dealing with the problems of men." Dewey, "The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy," (1917) MW 10: 46.


7 Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (1930), LW:5: 155.

Dewey spoke highly of Green, we shall see that he was also critical of his metaphysics, and several scholars have cast significant doubt on the influence of William James. 9

We shall begin by examining Dewey’s drift away from institutional religion, emphasizing how it relates to developments in his psychology and his continuing interest in philosophical method. The second part of the chapter examines how Alice Chipman, Ford and Davidson stimulated his interest in social philosophy and social justice, and how Davidson in particular provided Dewey with a concrete model of a certain type of philosophical life. Our emphasis upon the importance of these people in Dewey’s life will provide an important platform from which to understand a transition in his ethics away from transcendent ethical demands and goals.

Religion, Psychology and Philosophical Method

We can get a general sense of the contours of the transition that was occurring in Dewey’s thought simply by looking at what and where he published during these years. Dewey immediately began his career-long prodigious output, publishing during the next ten years forty-six articles, numerous book reviews, one edited volume, and four monographs; thus from 1884 on we can only discuss a small sample of his writings. After “The New

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Psychology,” he published three more articles in the Andover Review. Kuklick has argued that Dewey published these articles in the Andover Review because he sought to lend philosophical expression to Andover Liberalism, so much so that Andover Liberalism “permanently left its imprint on the structure of [Dewey’s] thought.”10 But aside from one article published in Bibliotheca Sacra, these articles are the only ones Dewey published in theological journals and, in correspondence with Joseph Ratner in 1946, Dewey stated that he did not spend much time reading the Andover Review and that he “never had much interest in theology as such.”11 After 1889, except for a few book reviews and a commencement address, Dewey quit publishing in theological journals altogether and began to publish most of his articles in journals associated with the Ethical Culture movement: the Ethical Record, the International Journal of Ethics, the Open Court, and the Monist. Dewey’s writings focused almost exclusively on ethics and education; his course offerings at Michigan also reflected this change.12 Of his four monographs, one was on psychology (1887), one was a study of the life and thought of Leibniz for Morris’s Grigg’s Philosophical Classics Series (1888), and two were on ethics (1891 and 1894).13 He continued to pursue his quest for individual and social unity, but increasingly he did so beyond the parameters of organized religion. By 1889 his sights were locked in on psychology, ethics rather than religion, and the philosophy of

11 John Dewey to Joseph Ratner, 2 October 1946.
12 Willinda Savage, “The Evolution of John Dewey’s Philosophy of Experimentalism as Developed at the University of Michigan,” 46-54.
13 Dewey had apparently mentioned a plan to write an undergraduate psychology text book to G. Stanley Hall in 1883. See Dorothy Ross, G. Stanley Hall: The Psychologist as Prophet (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1972), 146.
education. Moreover, his writings on ethics tended to emphasize a very practical, albeit philosophically sophisticated, approach to the subject, with a particular emphasis on democratic culture, and education as an instrument of social reconstruction.

When Dewey first arrived in Ann Arbor, however, he was still a liberal Congregationalist. He quickly transferred his church membership to a local Congregationalist church at which he began teaching Sunday School. Dewey’s first book, *Selections of the Writings of George MacDonald; or Helps for Weary Souls* (1885), was a compilation of selections from the writings of a religious author. The selections constantly referred to a supernatural, omnipotent, omnipresent God, and Dewey’s writings of this time indicate that he still believed in such a God. Dewey’s 1887 *Psychology* demonstrated that he was well-versed in the work of Wundt and other experimental psychologists, but he also frequently spoke of the divinity of the human soul. And in 1886 his essay, “Soul and Body,” examined ways to study the soul scientifically. Dewey wrote that physiological psychology could not explain behavior mechanistically because the experiments of researchers like Wundt had shown that nervous activity involves “purposive adaptation to the stimulus.” The discovery of purposive adaptation, even in simple organisms like frogs, indicated that physiological psychology had to account for behavior as teleological, as psychical. Physiology, Dewey claimed, had demonstrated that the “the psychical is immanent in the physical,” or more precisely, the body was “the organ of the soul.”

His first semester at the University of Michigan Dewey also argued, in “The Obligation to Knowledge of

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God," that all people are morally required to seek knowledge of God. In Dewey's words, "to fail to meet this obligation is not to err intellectually, but to sin morally."^{15}

But Dewey's psychological and religious thought developed along a path which began in his earliest essays. He had consistently criticized the British empiricists and Kant for attempting to explain experience by introducing elements that went beyond possible experience. This led to agnosticism because, as Dewey explained before, it assumes that thought and being are foreign to one another and thus we can never really know the source of our experience. In the same way, in his psychology Dewey initially appealed to the notion of a transcendent, "perfect Will or Personality," analogous to the "Absolute Spirit" in the thought of Morris and the British neo-Hegelians, to explain our particular, individual experience, but he gradually abandoned this transcendent personality because it went beyond possible experience.^{16} Just like Locke's material and mental substances or Kant's thing-in-itself, Dewey believed that appeals to that which was unknowable explained nothing. Explanation required us to relate the unexplained to something we did understand. By 1891, Dewey had transformed the perfect Personality into a social, non-transcendent process.^{17}

We can also see the continuing influence of a pietistic faith, such as that found in post-Kantian idealism and in the Burlington philosophy, in Dewey's psychology and religious thought. As he would in his mature thought, in 1886

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^{15} Dewey, "The Obligation to Knowledge of God," (1884), EW 1: 61.
^{16} Dewey, Psychology (1887), EW 2: 361. At the height of his neo-Hegelian phase Dewey spoke of the absolute self-consciousness, but never the absolute spirit or self. However, the "perfect Will or Personality" he spoke of in his 1887 Psychology was clearly analogous to the neo-Hegelians' absolute spirit.
^{17} John Shook, Dewey's Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality, 143-55.
Dewey claimed that knowledge cannot be understood as apart from will. Belief only becomes knowledge when "the commands which it lays upon the will have been executed, and...knowledge cannot arise except as our feelings and desires are involved that enable us to grasp the Biblical statements as sober facts, hard as they seem."\(^{18}\) Knowing and its verification, asserted Dewey, is inseparably connected with action, with doing. In other religious writings Dewey warned against the extremes of religious fanaticism and apathy, and emphasized that religiosity was primarily a matter of behavior rather than doctrine. One passage is particularly revealing as it brings to mind Dewey's description of his mother's queries about her sons' rightness with God:

> Religious feeling is unhealthy when it is watched and analyzed to see if it exists, if it is right, if it is growing. It is as fatal to be forever observing our religious moods and experiences, as it is to pull up a seed from the ground to see if it is growing.\(^ {19}\)

Rather than constant self-examination, Dewey assured his reader, healthy religion comes from focusing our attention less upon ourselves, and more on God. True religion, according to Dewey, requires the cultivation of "humility in the presence of the perfect and matchless character of Christ."\(^ {20}\)

As early as 1887, Dewey criticized Christian agnosticism for "divid[ing] the kingdom of reality into halves, and proclaim[ing] one supernatural and unknowable, the other natural and the realm of knowledge." In so doing Christians made the same error as, and ceded ground to, "physical philosophers" like Herbert Spencer who sought to reduce man to "earthly clay," and ethics to

\(^{18}\) Dewey, "The Obligation to Knowledge of God" (1884), EW 1: 61.
\(^{19}\) Dewey, "The Place of Religious Emotion" (1886), EW 1: 91.
\(^{20}\) Ibid., 92.
natural science. In "Christianity and Democracy," published in 1892, Dewey proclaimed that true religion is not based on mysteries, it "must reveal," and "Revelation undertakes...not only to state that the truth of things is such and such, it undertakes to give the individual organs for the truth, organs by which he can get hold of, can see and feel, the truth." When theologians depict religious truth as mysterious they fall into Dewey's dreaded agnosticism, because they attempt to treat supernatural facts in isolation from natural facts. Supernatural/natural dualism violated Dewey's Hegelian organicism and holism which entailed that all truths are interrelated in a larger whole and that the truth is the whole.

Like the perfect Personality, Dewey brought the Christian God down to earth, claiming, in "Christianity and Democracy," that "The kingdom of God, as Christ said, is within us, or among us"; religious truth "is, and can be, only in intelligence." In this essay Dewey portrayed Christianity as an inclusive social consciousness, with no special truths of its own, and special doctrines, such as the notion of sin, permanently dropped out of his thought. The only important Christian doctrine, asserted Dewey, was that "God is truth; that as truth He is love and reveals Himself fully to man..." Here Dewey demonstrated his sympathy with German higher criticism, claiming that God's truth is in man and not in historical events like the resurrection nor in special theories. More and more, Dewey viewed Christianity as requiring only that people live lives of social sympathy and social action. He asserted that "It is man's social organization, the state in which he is expressing himself, which always has and

\footnote{Dewey, "Ethics and Physical Science" (1887), EW 1: 206, 211, 205.}
always must set the form and sound the key-note to the understanding of
Christianity.” The only tests of Christian truth, according to Dewey, are “the tests
of fact.” And consistent with the doctrine of progressive revelation he had heard
Brastow preach in Burlington, Dewey asserted that Christianity’s “attempt to fix
religious truth once for all, to hold it within certain rigid limits, to say this and
just this is Christianity, is self-contradictory.” 23 The revelation of Christian truth,
Dewey claimed, was ongoing, and revelation was consistent with reason. In 1894,
Dewey proclaimed that science now provides “the actual incarnation of truth in
human experience and the necessity of giving heed to it.” 24 Dewey encouraged
his reader to develop faith “in the light of the most searching methods and
known facts,” and that method was exemplified in science. Dewey referred to the
kingdom of God, but he no longer thought in terms of a supernatural God. The
“Kingdom of God on earth” was simply free, democratic society. 25 Steven
Rockefeller accurately concludes that by the late 1880s Dewey had rejected
original sin, the absolute transcendence of God, adopted a neo-Hegelian
panentheism, and channeled his quest for unity with God “into an active social
and ethical life.” 26

Developments in Dewey’s psychology paralleled changes in his religious
thought. As he converted the perfect Personality into a social reality, his
psychological writings focused increasingly upon practical subjects such as

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23 Ibid., 7, 5.
25 Steven Rockefeller has shown that Dewey’s emphasis on religion keeping pace with
scientific truth parallels themes in Hall’s writings on religion, which were inspired by
Feuerbach’s Essence of Christianity. Rockefeller, John Dewey: Religious Faith and Democratic
education. Most of the arguments and claims Dewey made in his earliest educational writings could have been written by W. T. Harris, Susan Blow or Anna Brackett. In 1890, Dewey wrote that college education was not about learning facts, but about character formation. Though he did not use the term, Dewey's conception of education was entirely consistent with Hegel's notion of Bildung. The college student, declared Dewey, "should have ingrained within him the subordination of all learning, of all the sciences and all the arts, to social relationships and sympathies." Free interaction and inquiry among students, both men and women, would "develop an ethical atmosphere, and this will secure, as far as it goes, a real intellectual training." Education, for Dewey, was the development of concrete morality, Hegel's notion of Sittlichkeit.27

Many have noted that in his psychological writings Dewey sought to give his idealistic metaphysics credibility by founding it on experimental psychology.28 It is true that Dewey wanted, like Trendelenburg and Morris, to ground his philosophy on science, but this observation should be supplemented with Dewey's claim that "as my study and thinking progressed, I became more and more troubled by the intellectual scandal that seemed to me involved in the current (and traditional) dualism in logical standpoint and method between something called 'science' on the one hand and something called 'morals' on the other."29 Dewey was equally concerned with eliminating what he viewed as a

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26 Ibid., 166. Panentheism, as opposed to pantheism, is the view that God is one with the universe (the same substance), but that he also goes beyond, or transcends, the universe.
28 See for example, Coughlan, The Young John Dewey, 57; and Welchman, Dewey's Ethical Thought, 5-8, 14-17.
29 Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (1930), LW 5: 157.
methodological dualism in neo-Hegelianism in the same way that he sought to eliminate the distinction between natural and supernatural truth in his religious thought.

Dewey’s thoughts on philosophical method are most clearly expressed at this time in three articles he published in *Mind*, “The Psychological Standpoint,” “Psychology as Philosophical Method,” and “Illusory Psychology.” In these articles we see Dewey, early in his career, trying to combine the best insights of British empiricism with the best insights of neo-Hegelianism. This effort pleased neither empiricists nor neo-Hegelians, thus Dewey had struck out on his own, formulating a *via media* between the two dominant philosophical options of his time. We shall briefly discuss these articles in the order in which they were published.

In chapter two we saw that Dewey first used the phrase, “the psychological standpoint” in a letter to Torrey in 1883.\(^\text{30}\) Whereas Hegelians used consciousness as the starting point of philosophy, the British empiricists began with the “psychological standpoint,” individual experience. In his brief letter to Torrey, Dewey implied that if the psychological standpoint was used consistently one would be led to idealism. As we proceed we shall see that this is because Dewey viewed idealism not so much as a metaphysical doctrine, but as a commitment to philosophizing only about what appeared to consciousness; for this reason, he increasingly labored to excise metaphysical assumptions he discovered in neo-Hegelian thought. Relative to the neo-Hegelians, throughout

the 1880s and 1890s, Dewey would move in the direction of phenomenology. The neo-Hegelians, especially Green, had argued that the psychological standpoint was the core difference between British empiricism and idealism. The neo-Hegelians argued that the psychological standpoint prevented British empiricism from addressing the most philosophical of issues, those that dealt with universals; British empiricism, they argued, could not go from individual experience to the universal. To some extent Dewey agreed with the neo-Hegelians, but where they saw only difference, he saw an opportunity for rapprochement. If one replaces the neo-Hegelians’ word “consciousness” with “experience,” it is easier to see how Dewey thought empiricism and idealism could be reconciled.

In “The Psychological Standpoint” Dewey stridently argued that the psychological standpoint was in fact “what both sides have in common.” He defined the psychological standpoint as the view that “the nature of all objects of philosophical inquiry is to be fixed by finding out what experience says about them.” Dewey claimed that empiricists should not be criticized for beginning with the psychological standpoint, but rather for not being true to the standpoint. Empiricists always appealed to unknowable “things-in-themselves” (Locke’s unknowable substances, Hume’s sensations, etc.) in order to account for the origins of experience, thus abandoning the psychological standpoint and

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31 Though Dewey praised Green for clarifying the difference between British empiricism and idealism, he disagreed with Green’s most fundamental point which is that the psychological standpoint is the core difference. Dewey, “The Psychological Standpoint” (1886), EW 1: 122-23. On this point I agree with Shook who claims that “Dewey fastened on what he viewed as Hegel’s unstinting allegiance to the true meaning of the ‘psychological standpoint’: that for philosophy, experience is the only Absolute.” Shook, Dewey’s Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality, 21.
becoming "ontologists' of the most pronounced character." This error, Dewey explained, was recapitulated throughout the empiricist tradition, because empiricists made two ontological assumptions that are not supplied by the psychological standpoint; they assumed there was an ontological distinction between thought and being, and that experience is individual. If empiricists would drop these empirically unjustifiable ontological assumptions, they would be studying what the neo-Hegelians called consciousness.

Dewey approved of the psychological standpoint as the starting point of philosophy and explained what it meant for philosophical method: "nothing shall be admitted into philosophy which does not show itself in experience, and its nature, that is, its place in experience shall be fixed by an account of the process of knowledge—by Psychology." Dewey also agreed with empiricists that knowledge is derived from sensations, but questioned their assumption that sensations exist "prior to or apart from knowledge," because that would make sensations unknowable. Even Hume, who acknowledged that Locke's substances were unknowable, violated the psychological standpoint by assuming that sensations exist prior to experience. The basis of Dewey's argument is that philosophical notions like sensations are the results of our analysis of experience, but we have no justification for reading the results of our analysis into experience as though they were there all along. For Dewey, many philosophical puzzles have been created because philosophers fallaciously assumed that entities they created for analytical purposes actually exist. Dewey questioned "the correctness of the procedure which, discovering a certain element in knowledge to be

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32 Dewey, "The Psychological Standpoint" (1886), EW 1: 123, 125, 127.
necessary for knowledge, therefore concludes that this element has an existence prior to or apart from knowledge. "34 If these elements can be used to explain knowledge, then they must be known. The elements of experience are not discrete, independently existing objects, they are functions within "an organic whole." Throughout his career, Dewey continued to criticize empiricists in just this way; he always appealed to what he believed was a more thoroughgoing and unwavering analysis of experience; this reveals that he never thought of idealism as antithetical to empiricism. For Dewey, idealism took experience more seriously than empiricism. Further, the psychological standpoint remained an integral part of Dewey's thought, though by 1905 it was transformed into the "postulate of immediate empiricism."35

As Shook points out, in "The Psychological Stadpoint" Dewey had worked out what James called the "psychologist's fallacy" four years prior to James. In his Principles of Psychology, published in 1890, James defined the fallacy as "the [psychologist's] confusion of his own standpoint with that of the mental fact about which he is making his report."36 Though Dewey adopted James's appellation for this error, it is a mistake to conclude, as some have, that it provides evidence that Dewey was influenced by James to accept the view that sensations could not be prior to, or independent from, knowledge. Some have argued that before he was influenced by James's Psychology, Dewey was a neo-

33 Ibid., 124.
34 Ibid., 125.
35 Dewey, "The Postulate of Immediate Empiricism" (1905), MW 3: 158.
Kantian who held that sensations must be synthesized by the mind prior to knowledge, yet as we have seen Dewey never accepted this view.\textsuperscript{37}

As though his argument to this point was not controversial enough, in "The Psychological Standpoint," Dewey also argued that if empiricists remained true to the psychological standpoint they would discover that the only way to account for the "becoming," or development, of individual consciousness "is by the postulate of a universal consciousness." Experience, or consciousness, examined without ontological assumptions, revealed itself as an organic unity of object and subject, and of individual and universal consciousness. On this point, however, Dewey's reasoning is sketchy. He seems to claim that because all psychological description is description of what appears within consciousness, without the assumption that it is individual consciousness, then these descriptions must hold true for consciousness itself, or consciousness in general. For example, when a psychologist describes the origins of an infant's experience he is describing a known baby, a baby "which exists for consciousness," not "a baby thing-in-itself." Moreover, argued Dewey, because individual consciousness can speculate about its own origin, as it does in the theory of evolution for example, it shows that it can transcend itself, and individual consciousness can only transcend itself if it participates in a universal consciousness which is atemporal and unchanging.\textsuperscript{38} But here, Dewey himself introduced an unacknowledged metaphysical assumption. If, as he maintained, we can examine consciousness itself, this does not necessarily prove that there is

a transcendent consciousness. The examination of consciousness with no
metaphysical assumptions whatsoever does not entail the metaphysical doctrine
that all individual consciousnesses participate in a transcendent consciousness. If
Dewey had consistently substituted the word "experience" for "consciousness,"
he might have been less tempted to reify what he was examining. Ultimately,
Dewey seemed to realize that the Hegelian talk of consciousness was prone to
this error, but at this time he continued to use it.

In the following article, "Psychology as Philosphic Method," Dewey
argued that since, according to Hegelianism, philosophy deals with absolute self-
consciousness and its contents, the method of philosophy should be psychology.
Since psychology was the study of finite self-consciousness, its results could be
generalized to give knowledge of the absolute self-consciousness. Dewey was
not advocating that philosophers abandon their work and become psychologists,
rather he was claiming that they should understand that they are already doing
psychology because all analysis of reality is analysis of reality as it is discovered
in consciousness. Once more, Dewey took a position that ran counter to that of
leading British neo-Hegelians, specifically Green and Edward Caird, who
maintained a sharp distinction between psychology and philosophy. Neo-
Hegelians viewed philosophy as the science of absolute self-consciousness which
uses the method of logic; psychology, they claimed, studied phenomenal
manifestations of the absolute self-consciousness and therefore, required no
special methods other than simple empirical ones.39 Because of his adamant
opposition to dualisms, Dewey maintained that the absolute self-consciousness

and its phenomenal manifestations are the same reality viewed from different angles; a single method, that of experimental psychology was all that was needed. If, as Dewey maintained in the previous article, psychologists must study consciousness without ontological commitments about whether it is individual or universal, it cannot be said that their investigations are limited to individual consciousness. Psychology, Dewey declared, is “the ultimate science of reality, because it declares what experience in its totality is; it fixes the worth and meaning of its various elements by showing their development and place within this whole. It is in short, philosophic method.”

If, as idealists had claimed, we only know the absolute self-consciousness as it reveals or manifests itself in individual self-consciousness, then psychology, the study of consciousness, was the only possible philosophic method. It is important to note that Dewey accused Green of being neo-Kantian because he elevated the absolute self into an unknowable thing-in-itself. This indicates that Dewey believed a consistent Hegelian would not posit anything beyond consciousness. Green had surrendered to the temptation to posit something beyond experience to explain the causes of our experience but, as we saw in our

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40 Dewey, “Psychology as Philosphic Method” (1886), E1: 144. See Willinda Savage’s discussion of the ways in which Dewey addressed the issue of the relationship of psychology to philosophy in the courses he offered at the University of Michigan. Savage, “The Evolution of John Dewey’s Philosophy of Experimentalism as Developed at the University of Michigan,” 46-54.
41 Many scholars would agree with Dewey’s assessment of Green as more Kantian than Hegelian. See John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth, 1966), 55-56; Rudolf Metz, A Hundred Years of British Philosophy (New York: Macmillan, 1950), 272-73; Geoffrey Thomas, The Moral Philosophy of T. H. Green (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 40-41. Dewey continued this critique of the neo-Hegelians in logical writings of this time as well. See Dewey, “The Present Position of Logical Theory” (1891), E3: 125-141. Shook is correct to note that Dewey was, in some ways, moving in the direction of Caird’s idealism because Caird also criticized Green for making the absolute transcendent. Yet Shook also points out that Dewey
discussion of "The Psychological Standpoint," Dewey did not always resist this temptation himself. In "Psychology as Philosopheric Method," Dewey stated, rather awkwardly, that idealism entailed that "Philosophy can treat of absolute self-consciousness only in so far as it has become in a being like man, for otherwise it is not material for philosophy at all." But again Dewey seems to fall into the error of making his own unjustified metaphysical assumption by claiming that idealism must avoid "the error of regarding this realization in man as a time-conditioned product, which it is not."\(^{42}\) Time is not outside of consciousness, "it is a form within it, one of the functions by which it organically constitutes its own experience." Here Dewey sided against most British neo-Hegelians, as well as the St. Louis Hegelians, by arguing that it made no sense to talk about the absolute self-consciousness realizing itself in history because the category of time existed within the absolute self-consciousness. At this point in his development, Dewey, who would ultimately become the consummate historicist, believed in an ahistorical reality; the absolute self-consciousness could only be atemporal.\(^{43}\) Dewey's claim entailed a rejection of a key point of Caird's and Green's metaphysics because he insisted that the individual self cannot be distinguished from the absolute self without abandoning the psychological standpoint, but he had posited an atemporal reality beyond the flux of history.


\(^{43}\) See Welchman's discussion of Dewey's view of the temporality of the absolute. Welchman, Dewey's Ethical Thought, 53-54. On Dewey's historicism see Morton White, Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970). By historicism, White means simply that Dewey and his peers (in addition to Dewey, White discusses Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Thorstein Veblen, James Harvey Robinson and Charles Beard) believed that knowledge was gained by the study of how a thing behaves through time, and that they therefore came to believe that all known, or experienced, reality is temporal (20-21).
Dewey also criticized the Hegelians’ emphasis on logic because we, as individuals, are temporal beings, who experience the absolute self-consciousness temporally, but logic is atemporal and thus cannot by itself be the science of the absolute self-consciousness. Like Trendelenburg, Dewey argued that “Logic cannot reach, however much it may point to, an actual individual.” Dewey cautioned his fellow idealists that “If we start from reason alone we shall never reach fact. If we start with fact, we shall find it revealing itself as reason.” One fruitful way to view this article is as Dewey’s effort to save idealism from the Trendelenburgian critique. If idealism must begin with pure, a priori thought, Dewey in effect argued, then Trendelenburg is right to criticize it for its inability to address the particulars of lived experience. If, however, idealism begins with pure thought as it is discovered through the psychological study of consciousness, it is grounded in lived experience; pure thought is, in effect, a posteriori. Pure thought is simply thought without metaphysical assumptions. Dewey clearly preferred the latter option, and this indicates that, unlike the British neo-Hegelians and W. T. Harris, Dewey increasingly saw Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, rather than the *Science of Logic*, as the basis of Hegel’s philosophy. Harris and the neo-Hegelians tended to ignore the *Phenomenology*, developing an ultra-logical view of Hegel in which his system was thought to be

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45 I have specified Harris rather than lump the St. Louis Hegelians as a whole into this group because there is reason to believe that Denton Snider moved in the same direction as Dewey on this issue of Hegel interpretation. See James Wayne Dye, “Denton J. Snider’s Interpretation of Hegel,” *The Modern Schoolman* 46 (January 1970): 153-167. Though Dye does not make this point, it seems apparent from his examination of Snider’s psychological writings, particularly in his claim that philosophy should become psychology. In later years, Josiah Royce also emphasized the *Phenomenology*. Royce, *Lectures on Modern Idealism*, ed. Jacob Loewenberg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1919), 136-140.
a deduction of reality. Dewey’s shift allowed him to side-step Trendelenburg’s critique of Hegel and provides an important clue to how Dewey read Hegel.

Though “The Psychological Standpoint” and “Psychology as Philosphic Method” were the lead articles in two issues of Mind, they seem to have had little impact on British or American philosophy. An empiricist, Shadworth Hodgson, published a reply in which he explained that he was “at a loss to see either how Mr. Dewey justifies on experiential grounds the existence of an universal consciousness, or in what he imagines the relation between the individual consciousness and the universal one to consist.” Hodgson concluded that psychology, as Dewey proposed it should be understood, “retains validity neither as philosophy nor yet as scientific psychology. By one stroke it substitutes psychology for philosophy and makes its psychology illusory.”\(^6\) In a private letter to Hodgson, William James acknowledged that he had read Hodgson’s criticism of “poor Dewey, which I approve in the main.”\(^7\) Though Dewey published a reply to Hodgson in 1887, he made no effort to answer Hodgson’s primary challenge which was to demonstrate that he could prove the existence of a universal self from experience alone with no metaphysical presuppositions. He merely claimed that his point was that British empiricism had implicitly assumed the existence of a universal consciousness and that this postulate should be made explicit and examined. Though one might argue that the empiricists had illegitimately assumed certain universals, it was another thing altogether to demonstrate that they had assumed the existence of a

universal self. On that point, the burden of proof remained on Dewey. His response to Hodgson did score some points, however, when he noted that Hodgson’s talk of the “stream of consciousness” always assumed that experience shows the stream to be individual without responding to Dewey’s challenge to empiricists to demonstrate that experience alone provides that ontological assumption. It is worth mentioning this point because it is an example of the difficulty Dewey would always have of getting philosophers to examine their Cartesian commitment to experience as individual, and also because it shows that Dewey was familiar with the concept of consciousness as a stream before James wrote about it in 1890.48

Dewey attempted to articulate his new, psychological approach to Hegelian philosophy in his 1887 textbook, Psychology. The book used the latest findings in psychology to examine human development, to defend a Hegelian ethic of self-realization, and hence to demonstrate that human personality is perfected through identification with “the perfect Personality or Will.” Although Dewey’s book ended with the perfect Personality, in the preface he explained that he sought to avoid metaphysics, which “is out of place in a psychology.” Dewey’s stated purpose was to introduce students to scientific psychology and “develop the philosophic spirit” by raising psychological questions in a way “which is philosophic.”49 Because Dewey posited a transcendent self, however, it is accurate to view this book as Dewey’s most neo-Hegelian, rather than

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Hegelian. This point should become clear as we proceed to discuss the criticisms of neo-Hegelianism that Dewey published after this book. For now, however, we shall discuss the Psychology to lay the groundwork for our examination of what Dewey later rejected and retained from his earliest Hegelianism.

Dewey's Hegelian theory of the self is essential to the entire book. The self, or consciousness, is not a metaphysical substance, rather it is a self-determining teleological activity. "Self is, as we have so often seen, activity. It is not something which acts; it is activity." In an essay published the same years as the Psychology, Dewey claimed that "if we could strip any psychical existence of all its qualities except bare existence, there would be nothing left, not even existence, for our intelligence." We know the self by its qualities or relations, or perhaps stated more plainly, by its effects in the world. For Dewey, the essence of the self is will and the goal of the will is perfection, which is to be understood as self-realization or self-actualization. Will is both subjective and objective because it is the objective manifestation of the subjective self. As Dewey explained, "This real self, which the will by its very nature, as self-objectifying, holds before itself, is originally a bare form, an empty ideal without content." Throughout life, the will seeks to give this empty form positive content, which is the actualization or realization of the self's potential. Dewey also referred to this as the "process of idealization." The discoveries of physiological psychology, claimed Dewey, reveal how the actual self realizes itself in the ideal self.

\[50\] Ibid., 216.
\[51\] Dewey, "Knowledge as Idealization" (1887), EW 1: 178.
\[52\] Dewey, Psychology (1887), EW 2: 319.
\[53\] Dewey, "Knowledge as Idealization" (1887), EW 1: 192.
The *Psychology* explained the process of idealization, unification of the ideal and the actual, through a study of the development of human consciousness. Dewey organized the book according to a threefold scheme—knowledge, feeling, and will—which, he argued, corresponds to the elements of every state of consciousness. It must be understood, however, that for Dewey neither intellect, feeling, or volition have real existence; they are analytical scaffolding used to understand aspects of the whole, which is the act. They are *functions* within action. Every act of consciousness involves awareness of, and some information about, an object, a feeling of the quality or value that this awareness has for the self, and every act of consciousness is the expression of purposeful activity. All acts of consciousness can be distinguished into subjective and objective elements, which correspond to feeling and knowledge, to the individual and the universal. The will, the principle of organic unity of these seemingly disparate elements, realizes itself by relating subject and object. These dualisms arise in consciousness, but they are not ontological distinctions, rather they are psychological divisions to be overcome through self-realization, an awareness of the original unity of the subjective and the objective.

In experience or consciousness, taken in its purest form, there is no distinction between self and world, self and "not-self." The individual self formulates the distinction between itself and the world through "an active process of experimentation, directed by the will." In Dewey's words,

If, for example, I wish to decide whether a spot of red which I seem to see on the wall is really there, or is only an organic affection, I move my head and eyes. If the "spot" then changes with change of muscular sensation, we say that it is "in one's eyes." If it remains permanent, and is dissociated from the muscular sensation, it is referred to the object. Were there no will to originate these movements, there is no reason to believe
that we should ever come to distinguish sensations as objective or referred to things, or as subjective, referred to the organism.\textsuperscript{54}

This demonstrates that even in his most neo-Hegelian book, Dewey emphasized experimentation and overt action. Already, experience was the interchange between, or intersection of, the subjective and the objective, rather than an affair which occurs exclusively in a subjective, mental realm. In knowledge, the subject seeks to relate itself to the objective world in an effort to reproduce that world within itself. Moreover, for Dewey, experience would always be dialectical in nature. Both sensations and the self are changed in the process of experience.

...perception or knowledge of particular things is not a passive operation of impression, but involves the active integration of various experiences....consider the process of scientific observation. The mind does not wait for sensations to be forced upon it, but goes out in search of them, supplying by experiment all possible conditions in order to get new sensations and to modify the old by them. Secondly, such processes as imagination and thinking are not mechanically working upon percepts, but are their transformation and enrichment in accordance with the same law of a demand for the unified maximum of meaning. Thinking transforms perception by bringing out elements latent in it, thereby completing it.

Additionally, "The self, in its specific character...is changed by every experience through which it passes."\textsuperscript{55} Further, when Dewey spoke of the transformation of experience by "bringing out elements latent within it," he described Hegel's conception of dialectical logic. For Hegel, logic begins by examining the purest thought, being, and discovering what is latent within it, progressively moving to

\textsuperscript{54} Dewey, \textit{Psychology} (1887), EW 2: 151.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 138-39, bxxvi.
the concrete. The dialectical process is simply the articulation of what is contained within the starting point.\textsuperscript{56}

Feeling, Dewey explained, "signifies not a special class of psychical facts...but one side of all mental phenomena" (emphasis in the original). Feeling is "coextensive with mental life." On this theory of feeling, objectivity is not the subjugation of one's feelings in the acts of perception and knowledge, rather "all knowledge occurs in the medium of feeling." Feeling drives us toward the enlargement of our experience; it impels will, overt action, which is designed to achieve this goal. In perception and knowledge we choose, according to feelings, to focus our attention upon certain things because we seek self-realization through the attainment of truth. Moreover,

The very fact...that we regard this knowledge as our knowledge, that we refer it to ourselves as subjects, shows that it is also feeling. There is no consciousness which exists as wholly objectified, that is, without connection with some individual. There is, in other words, no consciousness which is not feeling.\textsuperscript{57}

Again, we find in Dewey's most neo-Hegelian phase, a theme which is found throughout his mature thought: all perception and knowledge involves feeling.

In the final section of the book, Dewey explained that will interrelates knowledge and feeling, the objective and subjective, as it develops the power of self-determination in moral and religious experience, culminating in self-realization, or perfection of the will and identification with the "perfect Will or Personality." By making the will central to all mental life, Dewey avoided the

\textsuperscript{56} As Hegel explained in the \textit{Science of Logic}, "the advance is a retreat into the ground, to what is primary and true, on which depends and, in fact, from which originates, that with which the beginning is made" (emphasis in the original). Hegel, \textit{Hegel's Science of Logic}, trans. A. V. Miller (Atlantic Heights, NJ: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1969), 71.

\textsuperscript{57} Dewey, \textit{Psychology} (1887), EW 2: 215.
separation of intellectual and practical activities, theory and practice, which was prominent throughout the history of philosophy, especially in Kant’s distinction between pure and practical reason. Instead, Dewey emphasized that there was a voluntaristic, and thus teleological, element in all mental action. The goal, or end sought, in experience, Dewey maintained, is "the self; all other ends are means."\(^{58}\) Though Dewey did not invoke the German term, Hegel’s notion of Bildung looms large in his discussion of the goal of all mental activity as the organic growth of the self, of experience. Much like Hegel, he invoked the metaphor of a growing organism:

As the tree is not merely passively affected by the elements of its environment—the substances of the earth, the surrounding moisture and gases—as it does not receive and keep them unaltered in itself, but reacts upon them and works them over into its living tissue...and thus grows, so the mind deals with its experiences. And as the substances thus organized into the living structure of the tree then act in the reception and elaboration of new material, thus insuring constant growth, so the factors taken into the mind constitute the ways by which the mind grows in apperceiving power.

There is one important difference between the tree and the mind, Dewey explained. “The mind...is conscious of, and can direct...[its] processes...”\(^{59}\)

Through its “tendency to connect[,] the mind realizes for itself the maximum of significance; it gets the fullest possible experience.” The mind has an “instinct for a full unity” which “often leads it astray, but...is the secret also of all its successes.” Dewey maintained that “The discovery of laws, the classification of facts, the formation of a unified mental world, are all outgrowths of the mind’s hunger for the fullest experience possible...” Ultimately, the self

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\(^{58}\) Ibid., 361, 320.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., 132-33. Good examples of Hegel’s use of organic metaphors can be found in the Phenomenology of Spirit, particularly at §§2, 12, 51.
seeks "moral volition, or the control of the will for itself as the absolute obligatory end. It alone is absolute end. Every other group [of ends] is also means." The self-realized will realizes the ideals of "absolute truth, absolute beauty, and absolute goodness." Upon self-realization, the will makes these ideals "a fact of recognized validity in life." The will gives content to, and thus makes definite, the forms of absolute truth, beauty and goodness.

Throughout the book Dewey demonstrated a remarkable familiarity with the latest results of experimental psychology, in several languages, but he did not convince empiricists that he could prove the existence of the absolute self-consciousness on the basis of empirical evidence alone. He claimed that "Every concrete act of knowledge involves an intuition of God; for it involves a unity of the real and the ideal, of the objective and the subjective." Dewey suggested that this claim followed from the idealist doctrine of internal relations, but not from evidence discovered in experimental psychology. Dewey defined the doctrine of internal relations in the following passage:

Science is the attempt to reduce the world to a unity, by seeing all the factors of the world as members of one common system...expressed in the form of laws....These laws must not remain isolated, but must be referred, as far as possible, to some more comprehensive law, and thus connected with each other as factors of one whole. The highest form of knowledge previously studied—reasoning—develops, as we saw, what had been implied in all previous knowledge—namely, the dependence of every fact of knowledge upon its relations to other facts. This presupposition of all knowing whatever, that all facts are related to each other as members of one system, science more consciously develops, explicitly setting forth the relations.

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60 Dewey, Psychology (1887), EW 2: 85, 320, 358.
61 Ibid., 212.
62 Ibid., 202. Here, I believe, Westbrook misunderstands the logic of internal relations when he claims that it is the theory that "all the relations of a particular thing were 'internal' to it, that is, they were all essential characteristics of that thing." It would be more accurate to state merely that the logic of internal relations entails that all relations are internal to a larger whole. The notion that all relations are essential because they are internal to a larger whole, can be
Dewey admitted, however, that even the doctrine of internal relations did not fully prove the existence of a universal self. Despite his constant attacks upon all forms of agnosticism, he claimed that "There cannot be knowledge that the true reality for the individual self is the universal self, for knowledge has not in the individual compassed the universal." Knowledge of the universal self was based on "will or faith" which transcends knowledge, but is "implied in all knowledge." As Dewey had stated in *Psychology as Philosphic Method*, logic may assert the logical necessity of the universal self, but "it cannot give it as reality."

The *Psychology* also yields a summary of the processes of gaining knowledge and of self-realization that will facilitate later discussion of the process of inquiry that was so central to Dewey's mature thought. First, objects or events enter "into our intellectual life as significant" when they are "connected in an orderly way with the rest of our experience." By contrast, "The meaningless is that which is out of harmony, which has no connection with other elements."

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viewed as a theory about explanation, rather than a theory about the thing-in-itself. For example, if we move a book from a table to a chair, it becomes the-book-on-the-chair rather than the book-on-the-table. Nothing about the book's metaphysical structure has changed, but we now think of the book differently. The book's location may well be essential to our understanding of it at any particular point in time (if its location happens to be relevant). Though neo-Hegelians used the doctrine of internal relations to prove the existence of the absolute because they believed that all relations were metaphysically essential, I believe Dewey ultimately came to see it merely as theory about explanation, hence he did not have to reject the logic of relations in order to reject neo-Hegelianism. At this time, however, Dewey does seem to assume, with the neo-Hegelians, that the logic of internal relations implies (but does not prove, hence his reliance on faith) the necessity of a transcendent mind in which all relations exist. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*, 18. On page 29 and following Westbrook implies that Dewey's ultimate rejection of neo-Hegelianism was the result of a rejection of the logic of relations rather than a reconception of it as I believe. Throughout his entire corpus, Dewey emphasized "the dependence of every fact of knowledge upon its relations to other facts."

As we seek greater meaning in our experience, we try to relate meaningless facts or events to meaningful ones. In so doing we create new experiences:

The new experience will harmonize with some past experiences, and be incongruous with others. There will be on one hand a feeling of fitness, of satisfaction, which will lead the mind to be content with the connection, and on the other hand a feeling of unrest which will lead the mind to investigate the relations of the two.\(^\text{65}\)

In a statement consistent with his later instrumentalism, Dewey explained that "Our past experiences decide along what lines the present activities of intelligence shall be directed." We learn through past experience ways to interpret what is presented in experience. "The artist interprets his new experiences in harmony with his aesthetic tastes; in the same object, the scientific man finds illustration of some law; while the moralist finds that with which to teach a lesson." The process of education consists in forming "apperceptive organs" that effectively help us process new experiences as they occur.

If I interpret a shadowy form, seen in dim moonlight, as a tree, and the judgment is true, it is so because all other judgments which I can make about it will be in harmony with this one. Truth, in short, from a psychological standpoint, is agreement of relations; falsity, disagreement of relations. It follows from what has just been said that the mind always tests the truth of any supposed fact by comparing it to the acquired system of truth.\(^\text{66}\)

Though this notion of a truth might be characterized as a coherence theory, it is actually more than that because Dewey was talking about more than logical coherence. For Dewey, coherence has existential implications because it provides


\(^{66}\) Ibid., 112, 190-91.
satisfaction and incoherence produces unrest. We seek more than mere logical coherence; we seek experiential coherence.\textsuperscript{67}

Moreover, this process begins only when we are presented with specific problems, or are in pursuit of specific goals. In his discussion of attention, Dewey explained that it uses meanings to select materials from experience in order to pursue the self's interests, to solve problems, to expand meaning, and that attention deals only with specific, concrete problems. "The point to be borne in mind is that attention always selects with reference to some end which the mind has in view, some difficulty to be cleared up, some problem to be solved, some idea to be gained, or plan to be formed." When disharmonics or problems arise in experience the mind formulates a specific, concrete "end in view"—a term critical to Dewey's later thought—and the process of idealization begins. We immediately set to work, through overt actions and experiments, trying to bring harmony back to our experience. In so doing the self grows and achieves more meaningful experience. In his later theory of inquiry, the importance of doubt as the instigator of the process of inquiry would become prominent. In the *Psychology* Dewey said little about doubt; however, he made it clear that he

\textsuperscript{67} On this point I disagree with Jennifer Welchman who claims that as late as 1894 Dewey held a correspondence theory of truth. To me it is not clear that Dewey ever held such a theory. According to Welchman, in 1891, [Dewey] had not come round to Peirce’s view of truth as that to which all men are fated to agree," but I doubt that Dewey ever accepted Peirce's theory of truth, especially the notion that truth is asymptotic. Welchman, *Dewey's Ethical Thought*, 73, see also 115. Further, I believe it is crucial to understand that, for Dewey, truth was more than logical coherence. In a time when Anglo-American philosophy is still dominated by linguistic analysis, it is easy to overlook this experiential element in Dewey's, and as we shall see, Hegel's theories of truth.
already believed doubt only arises in response to real contradictions in our beliefs, thus universal doubt, global skepticism, is not possible.68

In conclusion we must note that in Dewey’s Psychology we find a number of themes which are important throughout the development of his thought. The self is act, rather than a metaphysical substance. Feeling is essential to every act of consciousness. We are motivated to act by feeling, and feeling directs our attention; it guides the ways in which we act. Because “the unity of the self is the will,” in his psychology Dewey emphasized overt action.69 We develop and are known by our actions. He described experience as a process of the interchange between the subjective and the objective, rather than a purely subjective, internal process. And for Dewey, experience would always be dialectical in nature because its two terms, the subjective and the objective, are always changed in and by the process. Finally, all action is goal-directed, and the goal is harmony within oneself and with the universal; thus all action is essentially moral action. This point refutes the charge that Dewey’s instrumentalism is a celebration of amoral, bureaucratic efficiency. The charge completely misunders:ands Dewey’s theory of action according to which “amoral action” is an oxymoron. Finally, the theory of truth Dewey articulated, with the existential implications we noted, is quite similar to his later view that truth is that which resolves a felt difficulty, a problematic situation.

Dewey’s Psychology reveals that many of the most important themes in his mature thought can be presented in neo-Hegelian garb. Furthermore, it is critical

69 Dewey, Psychology (1887), EW 2: 357.
to see that the neo-Hegelian concept contemporary Deweyans would find most objectionable in the *Psychology*, "the perfect Personality or Will," is utterly inessential to the theories presented in the book. It is arrived at by faith at the end of the book, and one could just as easily choose not to believe in it, as Dewey soon would. Dewey ended the book by arguing that the moral will cannot "entirely overcome that dualism between the actual and the ideal selves."

Though the moral will can be good in particular cases, and repeated good actions form good character, "this character never gets so formed that it can...eliminate the conflict of good and bad desires." Rather, "It is religious will which performs the act of identification once and for all." If we jettison the notion that this harmony should ultimately be achieved once and for all, fully embracing a model of human development as a never ending project, as Dewey soon did, there is no need to posit absolute ideals. As Dewey abandoned absolute ideals, he also began to substitute "organism" for "the individual self," "environment" for "the universal," "inquiry" for the "process of idealization," and he more consistently substituted "experience" for "consciousness." This should raise doubts either about the extent to which Dewey was Hegelian in 1887, or about the extent to which he was not Hegelian in his mature thought. In chapter five we shall argue that the latter is the less plausible of the two theses.

Andrew Reck examined Dewey's revisions to the third edition of the *Psychology*, published in 1891, one year after the publication of James's *Principles of Psychology*, in order to determine the ways and extent to which Dewey was

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70 Ibid., 357.
71 Ibid., 360.
influenced by James’s Psychology. In his “Note to the Third Edition,” Dewey acknowledged that he was indebted to the work of James Ward, William James and John Watson. Reck concluded that Dewey was influenced by James to develop a functionalist account of conception, but Shook has argued, and we have seen, that in the first edition Dewey viewed “all aspects of mental activity as functionally distinct modes of thought.” Dewey was influenced by James’s Principles of Psychology, but not in as substantive a way as Reck supposed. James showed Dewey ways to articulate functionalist psychology with biological metaphors, freeing him from Hegelian terminology.

In “The Development of American Pragmatism,” published in 1925, Dewey credited James’s Principles of Psychology with two important contributions to the pragmatic movement. First, James “denie[d] that sensations, images and ideas are discrete and...replace[d] them by a continuous stream which he call[ed] ‘the stream of consciousness.’” Dewey always rejected British empiricism’s description of mental activity as the association of discrete atoms, sensations and ideas, and in the first edition of the Psychology he described mental activity as a “continuous substratum of sensation out of which...apparently distinct sensations...[are] differentiated.” At most then, James may have encouraged Dewey to continue in this direction, and it was surely important to Dewey that an American philosopher whom he greatly respected was working along similar lines. Second, Dewey noted that James contributed an interpretation of human

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74 Shook, Dewey’s Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality, 103. Westbrook also claims that “James’s book did not...offer Dewey much functional psychology that he did not already have...” Westbrook, John Dewey and American Democracy, 66.
psychology based upon Darwinian biology. Because James’s Darwinian interpretation depicted all mental phenomena as functions within the human organisms’ efforts to accomplish specific goals, it reinforced Dewey’s emphasis upon the teleological nature of psychological phenomena, including conceptions. James also contributed the theory that perceptions and conceptions are “biological sports, spontaneous variations which are maintained because of their applicability to concrete experiences after once having been created.” Conceptions, James argued, arise randomly, but are retained if and when they prove to have practical value. As Dewey stated, James articulated the view that the fundamental categories have been cumulatively extended and reinforced because of their value when applied to concrete instances and things of experience. It is therefore not the origin of a concept, it is its application which becomes the criterion of its value; and here we have the whole of pragmatism in embryo.\footnote{Dewey, *Psychology* (1887), EW 2: 35.}

Shook acutely argues that James encouraged Dewey to draw more heavily upon Darwinian biology, but he did not provoke Dewey to dramatically alter his psychological theories.\footnote{Dewey, “The Development of American Pragmatism” (1925), LW 2: 15-16.}

In other venues Dewey noted shortcomings in James’s *Psychology*. In “From Absolutism to Experimentalism,” Dewey spoke of “two unreconciled strains in the *Psychology.*” James adopted “the subjective tenor of prior psychological tradition,” which posited “a realm of consciousness set off by itself.” Dewey was most impressed by the other, objective, strain in the *Psychology*, which had “its roots in a return to the earlier biological conception of

\footnote{Shook, *Dewey’s Empirical Theory of Knowledge and Reality*, 102-06.}
the psyche, but a return possessed of a new force and value due to the immense progress made by biology since the time of Aristotle.”

Dewey’s reminiscence about what was most important to him in James’s *Principles of Psychology* is borne out in a letter he wrote to James shortly after the work was published in which he commented on a passage in the first volume. In the passage James described the stream of thought as one of “Sciousness pure and simple” rather than “con-sciousness.” In the stream, James contended, there is no distinction between “me” and “not-me” (this is remarkably similar to Fichte’s concepts of the “I” and the “not-I” with which Dewey was surely familiar). Rather, we makes these distinctions in a hypothetical way; “the Thinker...[is] given to us rather as a logical postulate than as that direct inner perception of spiritual activity which we naturally believe ourselves to have.” Matter is postulated “as something behind physical phenomena.”

Not surprisingly, Dewey wrote to James that “I cannot suppress my own secret longing that you had at least worked out the suggestion you throw out on Page 304 of vol I. If I understand at all what Hegel is driving at that is a much better statement of the real core of Hegel than what you criticize later on as Hegelianism.”

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79 James, *The Principles of Psychology*, 1: 304. James’s talk of “sciousness” was an effort to emphasize that thought and reality are not two ontologically distinct realms, but rather functional distinctions we make within experience.

80 Dewey to William James, 6 May 1891. Reck argues that James’s *Principles of Psychology* was based upon an idealist metaphysics. Reck, “Idealist Metaphysics in William James’s *Principles of Psychology* (1887),” *Idealistic Studies* 9 (1979): 214-21. It is because of Dewey’s ability to resist the temptation, that James fell prey to, to posit a substantial consciousness, ontologically distinct from the world, that Morton White claimed Dewey came to “out-James James,” but this letter reveals that Dewey believed he found this conception of the self in Hegel, hence the claim in my Introduction that Dewey had gone beyond James because he “out-Hegeled the Hegelians.”
viewed Hegel as a functionalist, and had a greater allegiance to Hegel at this time than to the neo-Hegelians. Dewey wrote:

Take out your "postulated" 'matter' and 'thinker,' let 'matter' (i.e. the physical world) be the organization of the content of sciousness up to a certain point, & the thinker be a still further unified organization [not a unify-ing organ as per Green] and that is good enough Hegel for me....I surrender Green to your tender mercies, but the unity of Hegel's self (& what Caird is driving at) is not a unity in the stream as such, but of the function of this stream, the unity of the world (content) which it bears or reports—It may seem strange to call this unity Self, but while Kant undoubtedly tried to make an agent out of this (and Green follows him) [sic] But Hegel's agent (or Self) is simply the universe doing business on its own account....But Hegel seems to me intensely modern in his spirit, whatever his garb, and I don't like to see him dressed up as Scholasticus Redivivus—although of course his friends, the professed Hegelians, are mainly responsible for that.  

Dewey also seems to have found in James's Principles of Psychology clearer ways to state ideas he found in Hegel. In the same letter to James, Dewey wrote:

Would it horrify you, if I stated that your theory of emotions (where you seem to me to have completely made out your case) is good Hegelianism? Although, of course, Hegel gets at it in a very different way. But according to Hegel a man can't feel his own feelings unless they go around, as it were, through his body.

And in "The Theory of Emotion," published in 1894 and 1895, Dewey stated in a footnote that,

In my Psychology, e.g., p. 19 and pp. 246-49 [EW 2: 21-22, 215-217], it is laid down, quite schematically, that feeling is the internalizing of activity or will. There is nothing novel in the doctrine; in a way it goes back to Plato and Aristotle. But what first fixed my especial attention, I believe, upon James's doctrine of emotion was that it furnishes this old idealistic

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81 Dewey to William James, 6 May 1891 (emphasis in the original). Cf. Dewey's claim, made in 1892, that experience is naturally a whole, but that it gets divided into self and not-self when conflicts arise within it. "This contradiction in the activity of the organism breaks up the existing vague unity of consciousness and sets the various factors over against each other....At the same time, since the unity satisfies, while the divided activity does not, there arises a contrast between the unity or whole as 'ideal' and the separate factors as 'actual.' The unity, the complete activity is now identified with the Self. The distinguished elements or conditions, set over against one another and against the whole, are identified as the Not-self." Dewey, "Syllabus: Introduction to Philosophy," (1892), LW: 17: 155.
82 Dewey to William James, 6 May 1891.
conception of feeling, hitherto blank and unmediated, with a medium of translation into the terms of concrete phenomena. I mention this bit of personal history simply as an offset to those writers who have found Mr. James's conception so tainted with materialism. On the historical side, it may be worth noting that a crude anticipation of James's theory is found in Hegel's *Philosophie des Geistes*, §401.83

It appears that Dewey believed he found in James's work, a more precise and concrete way to articulate Hegel's theory of feeling and emotion.

Dewey's *Psychology* received many negative reviews. His former mentor, G. Stanley Hall, sarcastically wrote that the book "unfolds with the most charming and unreserved frankness and enthusiasm, the scheme of absolute idealism in a simple yet comprehensive way, well calculated to impress beginners in philosophy." The book was filled with facts, but "the facts are never allowed to speak out plainly for themselves or left to silence, but are always 'read into' the system which is far more important than they." According to Hall, "that the absolute idealism of Hegel could be so cleverly adapted to be 'read into' such a range of facts, new and old, is indeed a surprise as great as when geology and zoology are ingeniously subjected to the rubrics of the six days of creation." The book would be disappointing to mature minds looking for an accurate account of the latest results of psychological research, but popular with adolescents "inclined to immerse themselves in an ideal view of the world."84 James read Dewey's *Psychology* the year it was published and wrote to George Croom Robertson that he was "quite 'enthused' at the first glance, hoping for something really fresh" but "sorely disappointed" because "It's no use trying to mediate

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between the bare miraculous self and the concrete particulars of individual mental lives.\textsuperscript{85} Even Torrey, who was generally sympathetic to the book, admitted that it was as much metaphysics as psychology.\textsuperscript{86} Nevertheless, Dewey's \textit{Psychology} was remarkably successful going through three editions and remaining in print until 1946.\textsuperscript{87}

Though Dewey was increasingly critical of the neo-Hegelians, his continuing allegiance to Hegel is also revealed in his logical writings during this time. In "The Present Position of Logical Theory," Dewey claimed, contrary to popular opinion, that "it is Kant who does violence to science, while Hegel (I speak of his essential method and not of any particular result) is the quintessence of the scientific spirit." Dewey acknowledged that the secret of Hegel was lost in the "dialectical fireworks" of the "Hegelian régime." But he explained his claim about Hegel's scientific spirit in reasoning that bears directly on the Trendelenburg debate. Kant, Dewey maintained, began with the "scholastic conception of thought," the notion that "thought in itself exists apart from fact and occupies itself with fact given to it from without." Dewey referred to this view as scholastic because it depicts thought as something transcendent that must be imposed upon reality; it makes the mind "an external, supernatural Unreality." But one of the most important advances of science, Dewey believed, was the rejection of transcendent realities. In Hegel, on the other hand, "there is

\textsuperscript{85} Quoted in Perry, \textit{Thought and Character of William James}, 2: 516. James expressed similar sentiments to his close friend Thomas Davidson, writing, "Have you read Dewey's book? A great disappointment to me; for I thought, on first turning over the leaves, that here was something altogether fresh and original" (emphasis in the original). William James to Thomas Davidson, 12 January 1887. Cf. William James to G. Stanley Hall, 30 January 1887.


\textsuperscript{87} The last printing was probably in 1930, but the book remained on the American Book Company's textbook list until 1946. Jo Ann Boydston, "A Note on the Text," EW 2: lii.
no such conception of thought...as is found in Kant.\textsuperscript{88} Note that Dewey implied here that, for Hegel, the absolute was not transcendent as it was for the neo-Hegelians. For Kant, thought could become objective when it synthesizes a given sense manifold, but for Hegel thought is objective because it is never apart from an external world. And unlike Green who mistakenly made a Kantian move by assuming that relations exist apart from the world, Hegel saw both relations and the world as existing within experience. In the following passage Dewey stated a position that bears directly on Trendelenburg’s critique of Hegel:

‘Refutations’ of Hegel...which attempt to show that ‘thought’ in itself is empty, that it waits for content from experience...are...simply meaningless. Hegel begins where these arguers leave off. Accepting all that they can say, he goes one step further and denies that there is any such ‘thought’ at all anywhere in existence.\textsuperscript{89}

For Dewey, the Trendelenburgian critique of Hegel missed the point. Of course the dialectic of pure thought receives content from experience. For Hegel, thought, just like the world, is a component of experience. To undermine Hegel’s dialectic, Dewey maintained, one would have to demonstrate that he was wrong to assert that the truth is the whole. To clarify this, Dewey explained that for Kant the principle of causation is \textit{a priori} because without it science would not be possible, and because thought is separate from the world it must, through its synthetic ability, inject the principle into experience. For Hegel, however, causation, like all other relations, is in experience. It is not imposed upon experience as thought processes sensation, rather the principle of causation is one fact among all connected facts. Dewey defended Hegel from the charge of subjective idealism with the same argument, arguing that the charge stemmed \textsuperscript{88}

from philosophers’ mistaken assumption that when Hegel spoke of “objective thought and its relations,” he held “the ordinary conception of thought (that is, of thought as a purely separate, and subjective faculty),” and was “trying to prove that this apart faculty has some mysterious power of evolving truth.” But when Hegel described thought as objective, Dewey maintained, he meant that it has the same metaphysical status as the material world we experience.

Dewey reiterated these themes in “Is Logic a Dualistic Science?,” in which he criticized “the Newer Logic,” particularly the work of John Venn. Dewey asserted that “there is but one world, the world of knowledge, not two, an inner and outer, a world of observation and a world of conception.” Moreover, like Hegel, Dewey claimed that “this one world is everywhere logical.” This controversial claim becomes more clear in the companion piece to this article, “The Logic of Verification.”

Because of his resolute rejection of dualisms Dewey never embraced the correspondence theory of truth, the view that a true idea is one that corresponds to an external state of affairs, or in language he frequently used, that corresponds to fact. His rejection of the traditional theory of truth made it incumbent upon Dewey to elaborate a theory of verification, or of truth, that was consistent with his rejection of dualistic metaphysics. Dewey believed that there is “a single realm of knowledge, logical throughout” because he rejected the notion of “ready-made” perceptions, claiming that “logical processes enter into the

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89 Ibid., 137.
90 Ibid., 140.
92 It is not clear that Dewey was a monist at this time because, beyond rejecting dualistic metaphysics, he avoided asserting a metaphysical theory, preferring instead to deal only with what is experienced.
structure of perceptions as well as of ideas.” According to this view of the operation of the mind and its relationship to the world, ideas cannot be verified by comparison with pure, unadulterated perceptions or facts. Dewey acknowledged that “It seems upon this theory that the only criterion of truth is the consistency of ideas with themselves,” however, that is inadequate because “everyone knows that ideas may be self-consistent, and yet untrue.”

In order to articulate his theory of truth, Dewey explained his conceptions of fact and idea. He argued that we only form ideas, as something distinct from facts, when we encounter a problem that sets us in search of truth. Thus idea and fact are functions, or instruments, within the logical process, rather than manifestations of two distinct metaphysical realms. Ideas are hypotheses, or theories, we formulate when we discover contradictions within our beliefs, when we recognize that some of our ideas cannot be projected as undisputed facts. A fact is simply an idea which is not contradicted, is consistent with our current set of ideas, and “which allows the mind free play and economical movement.” Ideas are facts “about which difficulties are felt, which opposes a barrier to the mind’s movement....The process of transforming the hypothesis, or idea entertained tentatively, into a fact, or idea held definitely, is verification.”

According to Dewey, apparent facts, ideas, are in flux as we subject them to modification, testing and verification, but real facts are also enlarged, altered and made significant by hypotheses. Dewey illustrated this claim through a discussion of the hypothesis of evolution. The theory of evolution is proven or

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94 Ibid., 86.
disproven by facts, but if facts prove the theory they are enlarged, given new significance.

Suppose there is some animal of which absolutely no new observation has been made since the formation of the theory of evolution; our knowledge of that animal, the facts of the animal, have been, none the less, transformed, even revolutionized.95

The idea, the theory, is tentative, in need of proof, and should be modified to fit the facts. Facts, however, are “not rigid, but are elastic to the touch of the theory.” Verification is not a matter of adjusting “mere mental states” to rigid facts, but is a process of “mutual adjustment, or organic interaction.”96

Dewey outlined his theory of verification in the following passage:

The mind attacks the mass of facts which it suspects not to be facts piecemeal. It picks out some one aspect or relation of these “facts,” isolates it (technically the process of abstraction), and of this isolated relation it forms a hypothesis, which it then sets over against the facts from which this relation has been isolated. The isolated relation constitutes, technically, the universal; the background of mass of facts is the particular. The verification is the bringing together of this universal and particular: if the universal confronted with the particulars succeeds in filling out its own abstract or empty character by absorbing the particulars into itself as its own details, it is verified. And there is no other test of a theory than this, its ability to work, to organize “facts” into itself as specifications of its own nature.97

In this passage, Dewey articulated a rudimentary pragmatic theory of inquiry and of truth, as well as the beginnings of his instrumental logic, in a defense of Hegelian logic as he understood it. Hegel’s dialectic, and Dewey’s inquiry, begins when we discover a problem, a contradiction. In Hegel’s terminology, we begin at the level of Verstand, analysis of the problem into its constituent parts so that we can precisely locate the difficulty. The difficulty is some problematic

95 Ibid., 87.
relation, a universal; it is a universal because it is abstracted from the particulars of the problematic situation. We then view the problematic relation as an apparent, tentative fact. We move to the level of *Verstehen*, at which we apprehend the whole, as we formulate an hypothesis. If our hypothesis works, it verifies, makes concrete the abstract, universal idea by modifying it, or our perception of it, so that we see how to fit it into the mass of concrete, particular facts from which it was abstracted. In so doing, we fit the tentative fact to real facts, and at the same time, we transform those real facts by fitting them into the theory that is the hypothesis. "This continued process of breaking up and recombination by which knowledge detects, condemns, and transforms itself is verification."\(^{98}\) Moreover, Dewey believed this description of verification was also a description of scientific method.

One might object that Dewey’s later pragmatic theory of inquiry dealt with actual, particular problems that arise in everyday experience, while Hegel’s dialectic was driven by logical contradictions that arise within the realm of pure thought. That objection, however, assumes the dualism Dewey claimed Hegel rejected, making Hegel a subjective idealist. Dewey rejected that reading of Hegel and in chapter five we shall examine a recent body of Hegel scholarship that does the same.

One last argument before we move on to our examination of the influence of individuals on Dewey. In his analysis of Dewey’s "On Some Current Conceptions of the Term ‘Self’" (1890), Frank Ryan correctly claims that Dewey’s drift away from idealism was not a repudiation but "a rational reconstruction of

\(^{97}\) Dewey, "The Logic of Verification" (1890), EW 3: 87-88.
idealism.” However, because Ryan does not distinguish sharply between Hegel and British neo-Hegelianism, his analysis leaves unclear the question of whether, in this particular article, Dewey believed he was taking neo-Hegelianism in a more Hegelian direction or that he was taking Hegel in a Kantian direction as Ryan maintains. This is a crucial point because Ryan claims that Dewey believed Hegelians had incorrectly identified the sensible with the intellectual; however, Dewey believed the neo-Hegelians were guilty of that error but that Hegel was not. “On Some Current Conceptions of the Term ‘Self’” was Dewey’s criticism of Andrew Seth’s Hegelianism and Personality, in which Seth broke with absolute idealism and became a personal idealist; thus Dewey’s article was not a critique of Hegelianism per se.

Ryan also assumes that Dewey criticized Hegel’s Logic for emphasizing only one element of Kant’s project in the Critique of Pure Reason. Dewey did acknowledge that the two books had different purposes, Kant’s being “the examination of knowledge” and Hegel’s being the “examination of thought.” Ryan concludes from this that Dewey believed Hegel “advances a logicism which ultimately attempts to reduce experience to thought.” If this were true then Dewey would have taken a position consistent with Trendelenburg’s critique of Hegel, but we know from “The Present Position of Logical Theory” that Dewey rejected the notion that Hegel was ultimately a subjective idealist. As we examine contemporary readings of Hegel in chapter five it shall become clear that Ryan misses the point that Hegel did not intend the Logic as an examination of all that can be experienced, but as only an examination of what can be thought

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98 Ibid., 89.
rationally. Moreover, Dewey articulated this view of Hegel’s *Logic* in the piece Ryan examines when he asserted that Hegel’s logic “asks what are the forms or principles by which we must think the world; or from the other side, what the world must be to thought.” Ryan argues that because he wanted a theory of the self that accounts for all of experience, not just thought, Dewey resorted to a Kantian correction of Hegel’s theory of the self, and that because this theory depicted the self as “a real activity,” it formed the basis of Dewey’s functional theory of the self. Ryan is correct to claim that Dewey arrived at the functional self through idealism rather than through the influence of James’s *Psychology*, but Dewey’s June 1891 letter to James, discussed above, shows that Dewey believed Hegel held a functionalist theory of the self and believed that Kant, Green, and other neo-Hegelians mistakenly reified the self into a substantial agent. For Dewey, this is because Kantians (including the neo-Hegelians under this rubric) accepted the Cartesian dualism that Hegel had successfully overcome.

**Persons and Situations**

Except for one year at the University of Minnesota (1888-1889), Dewey remained at Michigan until 1894. Upon Morris’s untimely death in 1889, Dewey returned to the University of Michigan as head of the philosophy department. Dewey’s eulogy for Morris reveals a great deal about why Morris had a more profound influence on him than Torrey, and provides another illustration of why

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101 Ryan’s interpretation of this article also makes it difficult, if not impossible, to understand Dewey’s 1905 complaint about the “purely Anglo-American habit” of “interpreting Hegel as a Neo-Kantian, a Kantian enlarged and purified.” Dewey, “Beliefs and Existences” (read as an A.P.A. Presidential address in 1905 with the title “Beliefs and Realities,” and published in 1906 in the *Philosophical Review*), EW 3: 97. As was noted above, Dewey criticized neo-Hegelians
Dewey disliked philosophical dualisms. In the eulogy Dewey paid Morris his highest compliment. In contrast to Torrey, who Dewey claimed had an "inner conflict," Morris's "religious faith and...philosophic knowledge...were one—vitality and indistinguishably one." Dewey continued,

In this union...his intellectual and moral nature had its roots—a union which made him so complete a man and his life so integral. He was preeminently a man in whom those internal divisions, which eat into the heart of so much of contemporary spiritual life, and which rob the intellect of its faith in truth, and the will of its belief in the value of life, had been overcome. In the philosophical and religious conviction of the unity of man's spirit with the divine he had that rest which is energy. The wholeness of intelligence and will was the source of power, the inspiring power of his life.\textsuperscript{102}

Once more, we can see from Dewey's description of Morris that his opposition to dualisms was much more than a formal, logical concern. He deeply believed that all humans long for unity, within themselves and with their society, and that this unity was best understood as organic. "The other personal quality which gave color to Professor Morris's thought," Dewey claimed,

was his profound feeling of the organic relationships of life—of the family and the state. At one with himself, having no conflicts of his own nature to absorb him, he found the substance of his being in his vital connections with others; in the home, in his friendships, in the political organization of society, in his church relations. It was his thorough realization in himself of the meaning of these relationships that gave substance and body to his theory of the organic unity of man with nature and with God.\textsuperscript{103}

By the time of Morris's death, other people had become important to Dewey's intellectual development; perhaps most important was his wife Alice. Dewey and Alice met in 1884, married two years later, and during his tenure at Michigan the couple had three children. Alice Chipman was raised in Fenton,

\textsuperscript{102} Dewey, "The Late Professor Morris" (1889), EW 3: 9.
Michigan by her maternal grandparents, Frederick and Evalina Riggs. Frederick Riggs was an adopted member of the Chippewa tribe and an advocate of Indian rights. Riggs encouraged his granddaughter to be critical of her society and cultivate an independent, self-reliant character.\footnote{Ibid., 10.} According to their daughters, one of Alice’s primary influences on Dewey was her “critical attitude to social conditions and injustices.” An active feminist, Alice was “undoubtedly largely responsible for the early widening of Dewey’s philosophic interests from the commentative...to the field of contemporary life.”\footnote{Judy Suratt, “Alice Chipman Dewey,” Notable American Women: A Biographical Dictionary, ed. Edward T. James (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 1: 466-67.} These claims are corroborated by Willinda Savage’s interviews of people who knew the Dewey’s during these years and correspondence between Dewey and Alice.\footnote{Jane Dewey, “Biography of John Dewey,” 21.}

Dewey was also influenced by Alice’s religious views. Their daughters wrote that Alice had a “deeply religious nature” although, like her grandfather, she “never accepted any church dogma.”\footnote{Savage, “The Evolution of John Dewey’s Philosophy of Experimentalism as Developed at the University of Michigan,” 13-16, 32-45, 164; and Dewey to Alice Chipman, 29 March 1886.} Dewey’s interest in institutional religion steadily declined after their marriage, and in 1893 he declared that “the function of the church was to universalize itself, and thus pass out of existence.”\footnote{Jane Dewey, “Biography of John Dewey,” 21.} The Deweys did not join a church when they moved to Chicago in 1894, and refused to send their children to Sunday school. This refusal angered Dewey’s mother who was still living with them, but Dewey and Alice stood firm,\footnote{John Dewey, “The Relation of Philosophy to Theology” (1893), EW 4: 367.}
telling his mother that Dewey attended more than enough Sunday school in his youth to suffice for his entire family.\footnote{109}

In 1888 Franklin Ford, a former editor of \textit{Bradstreet's}, a commercial newspaper in New York in the early 1880's, approached Dewey about joining him in a newspaper enterprise that would revolutionize the industry. Disgusted by the extent to which the newspaper business was controlled by moneyed interests, Ford proposed a newspaper, \textit{Thought News}, that would solve the nation's ills by disseminating information to the public. The newspaper would be a journal "which shall report thought rather than dress it up in the garments of the past." An informed public was the answer to the nation's social problems. Once communication was enhanced, good government and relief from economic problems was inevitable. The utopian dreams of the proposed \textit{Thought News} experiment caused Dewey no small amount of discomfort when the venture was announced to the public and he began to doubt the wisdom of the idea. The paper never appeared, and in later years Dewey would only say that Ford "turned out to be a scoundrel," but the encounter nourished his desire to make his philosophy practical, if not outright political.\footnote{110}

In June of 1891, Dewey wrote to James that Ford had been important to his ethical thought. In the letter Dewey explained that Ford had come to believe that "the social structure," especially economic class interests, "prevented freedom of inquiry," and "he identified the question of inquiry with, in philosophical terms, the question of the relation of intelligence to the objective world." In the preface
to his *Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics*, Dewey acknowledged that Ford encouraged him to emphasize "the social bearings of science and art." In the letter, he told James that his experience with Ford had revealed "the true or practical bearing of idealism—that philosophy has been the assertion of this unity of intelligence & the external world in idea or subjectively, while if true in idea it must finally secure the conditions of its objective expression."\textsuperscript{111}

Morton White claims that this letter, in conjunction with Dewey’s *Outlines*, contains the first evidence of Dewey’s movement away from idealism, despite Dewey’s assertion that Ford had advanced his understanding of idealism. White draws this conclusion by explaining that Dewey’s “admission that intelligence and the world are unified only in idea” reveals that he was beginning to doubt the idealist notion that the real is rational; however, White does not consider the possibility that, rather than rejecting that idealist doctrine, Dewey was beginning to understand it differently. Hegel’s claim is more accurately rendered “What is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational.”\textsuperscript{112} In the following chapter we shall see that Dewey came to understand this Hegelian doctrine, not as an admonition to passively accept the actual, the status quo, because it is rational, but as a critique of ethical theories that provide only abstract rules, empty ideals, as guides to action. Truly rational moral principles have actual effects in the world. So White is correct to argue that Ford had motivated Dewey to reconsider the relationship of intelligence to the world, but this consideration led him to


\textsuperscript{111} Dewey to William James, 3 June 1891; and Dewey, *Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics* (1891), EW 3: 239.
conclude that if, as Hegel maintained, mind is not removed from the world, then intelligence is necessarily involved acting in the world. Another way to put this is that when Dewey and Hegel rejected Cartesian dualism, as Thomas Bender remarked of Dewey, they “forced philosophy into the world.”\footnote{Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen Wood, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 20. Cf. Hegel’s claim in the *Science of Logic* that “what is actual can act.” Hegel, *Hegel’s Science of Logic*, 546.} Dewey’s rejection of the neo-Hegelian, transcendental absolute, in favor of Hegel’s immanent absolute, led him to a new conception of the role of the public intellectual. Dewey also asserted, in the letter, that technology, specifically the telegraph and the printing press, had made the time ripe for a tremendous impending movement “when the intellectual forces which have been gathering since the Renascence & Reformation shall demand complete free movement.”\footnote{Bender, *New York Intelect: A History of Intellectual Life in New York City. From 1750 to the Beginnings of Our Own Time* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 311.} Here it seems Dewey was anticipating a world-historical transformation, much like the St. Louis Hegelians’ interpretation of the Civil War, and again it is difficult to understand how White could view the letter as evidence of Dewey’s impending rejection of idealism.

According to Robert Westbrook, “Alice’s direct, intimate urging of Dewey to bring his idealism down to earth was joined by the less direct influence of T. H. Green…”\footnote{Dewey to William James, 3 June 1891.} In 1886, Dewey expressed a “deep, almost reverential gratitude” toward Green.\footnote{Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy*, 36.} Green taught that absolute idealism was chiefly a philosophy of citizenship and urged his students to make philosophy practical. R. G. Collingwood asserted that Green’s pupils at Oxford “carried...the conviction that
philosophy...was an important thing, and that their vocation was to put it into practice...."117 Westbrook is right to emphasize that Hegelianism was associated with progressive reform in England, and in the United States, but he may have overemphasized the influence of Green on Dewey. Westbrook claims that Green’s writings taught Dewey to be critical of laissez-faire social thought, but as we have seen Dewey had gotten that theme from the Burlington philosophy. Westbrook also claims that Green’s influence on Dewey’s social thought at this time “was testimony less to [Dewey’s] cosmopolitanism than to his relative isolation, in the provinces of southern Michigan, from the social and ideological ferment of his own society,” but in fact Dewey was involved with a variety of scholars through his friendship with Thomas Davidson.118

Dewey met Davidson in 1889, a critical year in his intellectual development. Through Davidson, Dewey befriended leaders of the Ethical Culture Society, Fabian socialists, as well as other leading American and European intellectuals, many of whom were moving away from American Transcendentalism or German idealism toward personal idealism or toward what was then called a “dynamic” or biological orientation in philosophy. Most importantly, Dewey witnessed Davidson’s striking example of the philosophical life.

Davidson was born in poverty in Scotland, but he managed to win a scholarship to Aberdeen University, from which he graduated with honors in

117 Collingwood as quoted in John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy, 56.
118 Westbrook, John Dewey and American Democracy, 37.
1860.\textsuperscript{119} He traveled to Boston in 1867, where he attended meetings of the Radical Club organized by Bronson Alcott at Emerson’s home in Concord, and where he was influenced by the German higher criticism of the Bible.\textsuperscript{120} Upon Emerson’s recommendation, in 1868 W. T. Harris hired Davidson to teach Latin and Greek in the St. Louis public schools. In St. Louis, Davidson rejected Emerson’s model of “The American Scholar,” who could only help the world by withdrawing from its corrupting influence, in favor of the St. Louis Hegelians’ model of the philosopher as one was strenuously engaged in social action.\textsuperscript{121} Though an active member of the St. Louis Philosophical Society, Davidson never embraced Hegelianism because he was convinced that it absorbed the individual into the absolute and was therefore unsuitable as a basis of ethical and practical action.\textsuperscript{122} Davidson was also more critical of formal education than the Hegelians, claiming

\textsuperscript{119} Davidson wrote a brief “Autobiographical Sketch” which was published in the \textit{Journal of the History of Ideas} 8 (1957), 531-36. This is supplemented by Albert Latarer’s “Introduction to Davidson’s ‘Autobiographical Sketch,’” \textit{Journal of the History of Ideas} 8 (1957), 529-31. There are many other short biographical sketches of Davidson. See Cohen, \textit{Dreamer’s Journey} (Boston: Beacon Press, 1949); William Knight, ed. \textit{Memorials of Thomas Davidson: The Wandering Scholar} (Boston and London: Ginn and Co., 1907); Leonora Cohen Rosenfield, \textit{Portrait of a Philosopher: Morris R. Cohen in Life and Letters} (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1948); and William James, “A Knight-Erartant of the Intellectual Life” in \textit{Memories and Studies} (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1911). I am also deeply indebted to Margaret Myers Byrne, Michael DeArney and Jonathan Hooker for details about Thomas Davidson I have learned through correspondence and conversations with each of them. Margaret Byrne allowed me to read her unpublished manuscript, “Great Scot: The Life and Philosophical Communities of Thomas Davidson,” and Jonathan Hooker gave me an extensive tour of Glenmore as it stands today and allowed me to peruse the remains of Davidson’s library in his cabin at Glenmore.


\textsuperscript{121} See Wilfred McClay’s discussion of Emerson in \textit{The Masterless: Self and Society in Modern America} (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 51-56.

that it “stops with knowing and does not go on to living and doing,” but he was vitally concerned with the problem of education in a democracy and embraced the Hegelian notion of education as self-cultivation.\textsuperscript{123}

From 1878 to 1883 Davidson lived in Italy where he studied the writings of the Italian philosopher-priest Antonio Rosmini-Serbati and, for eighteen months, lived at the Rosminian monastery where he wrote \textit{The Philosophical System Of Antonio Rosmini-Serbati}.\textsuperscript{124} He was particularly influenced by Rosmini’s doctrine that “the soul has a faculty [Rosmini’s “intuition”] which sees God, and that this faculty requires for its cultivation, so that it may live the New Life, a society of the nature of the church.” And we can live it “only by establishing noble and wise social relations.”\textsuperscript{125} Davidson’s philosophy developed into a version of personal idealism. Deeply influenced by the pluralism of Aristotle and Leibniz, Davidson believed Hegelian idealism must be corrected with a pluralistic metaphysics in which each person was taken as a fundamental metaphysical reality, and God was portrayed as the sum total of persons.

Davidson argued that reality is composed of an infinite number of spiritual substances, monads, but these monads could only develop in societies. Reality, he claimed, is a \textit{Göttergemeinschaft}, a society of gods.\textsuperscript{126} Davidson’s God


\textsuperscript{124} Rosmini, \textit{The Philosophical System Of Antonio Rosmini-Serbati}. William James reviewed the book for the \textit{Nation} 35 (1882).

\textsuperscript{125} Davidson, “Autobiographical Sketch,” 536, 534.

\textsuperscript{126} Thomas Davidson, “Noism,” \textit{The Index} (29 April 1886), 525. “Noism” is derived from \textit{Nous}, and is used by Davidson as a synonym for Apeirotheism. For Davison’s views on pantheism see his discussion of the pitfalls of Buddhism in his letter to Havelock Ellis, 20 October, 1883. Davidson, “Letters to Havelock Ellis,” in \textit{Memorials of Thomas Davidson}, Knight, ed., 41.
was a potential, collective reality. 127 "God is the goal," he declared, "not the starting point of creation." "The gospel of the future," Davidson proclaimed, would be realized only upon the actualization of each individual's potential. 128 Davidson also espoused a moral perfectionism which called for the release of each individual's potential divinity through self-cultivation. He was convinced that this release would lead to the only true reform of human society; it was to this task that Davidson devoted the latter part of his life as he wrote about "American Democracy as a Religion" and worked for the participation of working class people in the moral and spiritual riches of the human race. 129

In 1883 Davidson founded "The Fellowship of the New Life" in London. The organization included among its members Havelock Ellis, Ramsay McDonald, Sydney and Beatrice Webb, H. G. Wells, and George Bernard Shaw. 130 The group pursued moral improvement through disciplined, communal, ethical life, and sought to bring culture to the laboring classes through public lectures, and reading and art groups. Soon, politically-minded members of the Fellowship criticized Davidson's principle of "the subordination of material things to spiritual" and formed the Fabian Society. 131

130 Wyndham R. Dunstan, "Recollections of Wyndham R. Dunstan," in Memorials of Thomas Davidson, 120.
131 Davidson, "Development of the Society," in Memorials of Thomas Davidson, Knight, ed., 27.
In 1887 Davidson went to New York to establish a branch of the Fellowship. That summer he lectured at Alcott’s Concord Summer School of philosophy, and soon established his own school in Farmington, Connecticut which met three summers (1888-1890). Dewey lectured at Farmington in 1889 and 1890. The 1890 session presented a typical program: Among other participants were Percival Chubb, the founder of the St. Louis chapter of the Society for Ethical Culture; Davidson; Dewey; and Stephen Weston, editor of the International Journal of Ethics, spoke on “The Philosophy of T. H. Green.” Dewey, along with W. T. Harris, also contributed to a series of lectures on “The Relations of Church and State.” Davidson spoke on “The Greek Moralists,” and Chubb, Weston, and W. M. Salter, a founder of the Society for Ethical Culture, spoke on “Primary Concepts of Economic Science.” At the end of the 1890 session, Davidson moved his summer school to Mt. Hurricane in the Adirondacks and renamed it “The Glenmore Summer School for the Culture Sciences.” William James and Felix Adler, Columbia philosophy professor and another founder of the Society for Ethical Culture, both already owned property nearby and participated in the school. Prestonia Mann, a Fabian Socialist who had met Davidson in New York City, soon established “Summer Brook Farm” on Mt. Hurricane, and Dewey bought land across Gulf Brook from Glenmore where he

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133 Knight, “The Summer Schools at Farmington and Glenmore,” in Memorials of Thomas Davidson, Knight, ed., 56-57.

134 For a detailed description of the location of Glenmore and the program for 1891 see J. Clark Murray, “A Summer School of Philosophy,” The Scottish Review 19 (January and April, 1892), 98-113.
built a small cottage. A standing joke was that Davidson and Dewey were separated by not only a physical, but a pedagogical, gulf. Dewey objected to Davidson's rigid schedule for meals and study, as well as his efforts to guide and discipline the youth at Glenmore. The list of distinguished lecturers and students at Glenmore is too long to recount, but they included Davidson, Dewey, William James, Josiah Royce, and W. T. Harris.

During the winters of the 1890s, Davidson worked with young Jewish immigrants at the Educational Alliance, a settlement house on the Lower East Side of New York City. He frequently brought some of those students, including Morris R. Cohen, who would become an important American philosopher in his own right, to Glenmore during the summers to expose them to the best minds in the country. In 1898 Davidson organized the Breadwinners' College on the Lower East Side to raise laborers to a higher level of intellectual and spiritual power by exposing them to the best culture of the ages.

Davidson died in 1900 and, according to Elizabeth Flower and Murray Murphey, Glenmore's lasting importance was the professional exchanges it


137 Kurt Leiderer, Yankee Teacher: The Life of William Torrey Harris (New York: Philosophical Library, 1946), 498. John Dewey to Thomas Davidson, 8 March 1892.

138 Cohen, A Dreamer's Journey, 118-22. After Davidson's death in 1900, the Breadwinner's College faithfully continued his original vision for eighteen years as the Davidson School under Cohen's direction.
promoted between Dewey, James, Royce, Cohen, and others. Herbert Schneider conjectured “that the Davidson summer schools were much more important than the Concord summer schools in giving American idealism a so-called ‘dynamic’ (biological) orientation,” and as we have already noted, Dewey was influenced by James’s biological emphasis during this time.\footnote{Elizabeth Flower and Murray G. Murphey, A History of Philosophy in America (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1977), 2: 486. Quoted in Joe R. Burnett to Herbert Schneider, 10 June 1971 (Center for Dewey Studies file, ‘Glenmore School for the Cultural Sciences,’ 1892’). By the time of his death, Davidson knew thirteen languages, had published eight books (two more appeared posthumously) and at least three dozen scholarly articles. DeArmey, “Thomas Davidson’s Apeirotheism and Its Influence on William James and John Dewey,” Journal of the History of Ideas 48 (Oct.-Dec. 1987): 707, n.78; and Robert Calhoun, “An Introduction to the Philosophy of Thomas Davidson, with Illustrative Documents” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1923), 265-67.} There can be no doubt that important friendships were formed, and engaging intellectual exchanges took place, but as James noted, “the value of Thomas Davidson...lay in the example he set to us all, of how—even in the midst of this intensely worldly social system of ours, in which every interest is organized collectively and commercially—a single man may still be a knight-errant of the intellectual life...”\footnote{James, “Professor William James’s Reminiscences,” in Memorials of Thomas Davidson, (118. Stories of Davidson’s criticism of ivory tower intellectuals are legion. William James recounted an amusing anecdote about Davidson denouncing him one evening for the “musty and moldy and generally ignoble academicism of my character....Never before or since, I fancy, has the air of the Adirondack wilderness vibrated more repugnantly to a vocabel than it did that night to the word ‘academicism.’” James, “Professor William James’s Reminiscences,” in Memorials of Thomas Davidson, Knight, ed., 112. A few years after Davidson’s death, James published his infamous essay “The Ph.D. Octopus,” in which he spoke of the artificiality of the} Ford had stimulated Dewey’s reconception of idealism, but Davidson provided him with a concrete model of how to be both a serious scholar and a practical, public intellectual. It is perhaps no accident that soon after he met Davidson, Dewey began giving lectures at Jane Addams’s Hull House, and perhaps the influence of both Davidson and W. T. Harris, whom he now knew in person, influenced Dewey’s decision to become directly involved in the problems of public
education and educational theory, even establishing the University Elementary School at the University of Chicago in 1895. ¹⁴¹

Dewey was just beginning to turn his attention to moral and political thought when he became involved with Davidson’s summer schools and the influence of Davidson and the Ethical Culture movement can be seen in its development. As early as 1888, in response to Henry Maine’s criticism of democracy as an inherently unstable form of government, Dewey articulated themes that were constants in his mature political thought. He critiqued Maine’s reliance on atomistic individualism as an “exploded theory of society,” and claimed that the newer organic theory of society was well supported by biology and anthropology. ¹⁴² He argued that democracy was the highest form of government because, at its best, it required the participation of every citizen; every part of the organism was utilized. Political instability, Dewey reasoned,


¹⁴¹ Dewey actually became involved with Hull House before he moved to Chicago in 1894 and was on the first board of directors. Denton Snider worked at Hull House for a few months in 1893, and he described a meeting in January, 1889 at the home of Mary Wilmuth in Chicago at which Jane Addams described her plan for Hull House and apparently asked for advice. Snider explained that Thomas Davidson was present at the meeting, and when asked for his opinion, he “belittled the co-operative life of such a Settlement as clanish...and declared the entire scheme ‘unnatural.’” Of course, this meeting occurred within a few years after the failure of Davidson’s community in London. This may explain his critical attitude toward Jane Addams’s proposal. Snider, The St. Louis Movement in Philosophy, Literature, Education, Psychology, with Chapters of Autobiography (St. Louis: Sigma Publishing Company, 1920), 499. Jane Addams also mentioned the encounter with Davidson, writing that the meeting “was attended by that renowned scholar, Thomas Davidson, and by a young Englishman who was a member of the then new Fabian society [most likely Percival Chubb] and to whom a peculiar glamour was attached because he had scoured knives all summer in a camp of high-minded philosophers in the Adirondacks. Our new little plan met with criticism, not to say disapproval, from Mr. Davidson, who, as nearly as I can remember called it “one of those unnatural attempts to understand life through cooperative living.” Addams went on to explain that “fifteen years later Professor Davidson handsomely acknowledged that the advantages of a group far outweighed the weaknesses he had earlier pointed out. He was at that later moment sharing with a group of young men, on the East Side of New York, his ripest conclusions in philosophy and was much touched by their intelligent interest and absorbed devotion.” Of course it could not have been a full fifteen years later because Davidson died eleven years after the meeting in Chicago. Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull-House with Autobiographical Notes (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1920), 89-90.
came not from the inclusion of all citizens in the political process, as Maine contended, but from exclusion of some. Excluded individuals do not embody their society's values, and "Having no share in society, society has none in them. Such is the origin of that body of irreconcilables which Maine...attributes to democracy."\(^{143}\)

Not only was democracy the most stable form of government, more importantly, Dewey agreed with Davidson that it was a religious ideal. Democracy was "such a development of man’s nature as brings him into complete harmony with the universe of spiritual relations."\(^{144}\) Democracy was the perfection of both the individual and social organism because it facilitated the full and harmonious development of each individual in the society. Furthermore, unlike other, more elitist forms of political organization, democracy allowed each citizen to discover his ideal for himself. Self-realization, Dewey maintained, requires the freely-willed actions of every member of society. Men could not be forced to be good or free.

Soon after he met Davidson, the humanistic influence of the Ethical Culture movement also began to surface in Dewey's ethical thought in his rejection of a transcendent, absolute self-consciousness. Yet there are key elements of Hegelianism that never disappeared from Dewey's philosophy. In the *Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics*, Dewey continued to defend an ethic of self-realization, but he based the theory on appeals to experience, never mentioning the absolute self-consciousness. Self-realization came to mean the

\(^{142}\) Dewey, "Christianity and Democracy" (1892), EW 4: 9.
ability to act freely, through interaction with others, rather than the manifestation of an ideal self as a metaphysical entity.¹⁴⁵ Dewey never embraced Davidson’s moral perfectionism, but like Davidson and Adler, in his quest for a logic of life Dewey criticized neo-Hegelian moral theory for making moral ideals unattainable.¹⁴⁶

In 1892 Dewey criticized Green’s moral theory for two very pragmatic reasons. First, Green erected a sharp dualism between the ends that would satisfy the finite, individual self, and those that would satisfy the infinite, universal self. The ideal self was the goal of the moral life, but it was ultimately unattainable for the particular self. Dewey argued that Green left individuals striving for ideals they could never realize, making “the moral life...a self-contradiction.” Poignantly, Dewey declared that “no thorough-going theory of total depravity ever made righteousness more impossible to the natural man than Green makes it to a human being by the very constitution of his being.” Second, Dewey argued that ethical theories based upon standards of moral perfection were impractical because they remain “the bare thought of an ideal of perfection, having nothing in common with the special set of conditions or with the special desire of the moment.”¹⁴⁷ As we shall see in chapter five, here Dewey is simply stating Hegel’s critique of Kant’s categorical imperative. As Hegel claimed of Kant’s moral theory, Dewey’s primary point was that the unattainable standard of Green’s theory led to a paralysis of action.

Dewey still identified the moral ideal as a “unified self,” but by the early 1890s that self was no longer metaphysically separated from particular individuals. In “Self-Realization as the Moral Ideal,” he claimed that Green had hypostasized the realized, partial self and the ideal, unified self into separate entities, when in fact these were simply two functional stages of moral insight. The first was a relatively narrow, limited conception of the self; the second was a “more adequate comprehension and treatment” of the self aiming at “the highest and fullest activity possible.” Throughout the remainder of his career, Dewey would find the source of philosophical conundrums in philosophers’ proclivity to hypostasize functions into metaphysical realities. Dewey proposed that the self be “conceived as a working practical self, carrying within the rhythm of its own process both ‘realized’ and ‘ideal’ self.” He implied that this conception was incompatible with Green’s “Neo-Fichtean” ethics, but not with Hegelianism properly understood. In order to understand the claim that Green’s theory was neo-Fichtean, we should note that Schelling and Hegel both criticized Fichte for making the moral ideal unrealizable. We shall have occasion to examine their critique of Fichte further in the following chapter. For now, we will focus on the way Dewey’s notion of self-realization was changing. In this essay, self realization did not mean “to fill up some presupposed ideal self,” but “to act at the height of action, to realize its full meaning.”

In *Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics*, Dewey also battled with F. H. Bradley who, in his *Ethical Studies*, had eliminated Green’s dualism between the individual and ideal selves by making the ideal one’s actual self with all its latent

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potentialities and capacities. Though Dewey also sought to eliminate this dualism, he could not abide Bradley’s view that the individual may not find adequate means for his self-realization. In his metaphysics, Bradley had written that “Goodness...must imply an attempt to reach perfection, and it is the nature of the finite to seek for that which nothing finite can satisfy....Goodness, or the attainment of such an impossible end, is still self-contradictory.” For Bradley, all individuals seek the good, but again it is unattainable. From this paradox Bradley drew the conclusion that there could be no science of morals. Morality required an act of faith; in spite of an inherently contradictory moral world, we had to trust that our good deeds would be rewarded. By arguing that psychology was philosophic method, Dewey had committed himself to the view that all philosophy, including ethics, could and should be scientific.

Dewey sought to explain his conception of the science of morals in “Moral Theory and Practice,” published in 1891 in the Society for Ethical Culture’s International Journal of Ethics in response to four articles published in the journal of 1890 in its first issue. Adler and Salter, founders of the Society and Dewey’s colleagues at Farmington and Glenmore, published two of the articles, and British neo-Hegelians Bernard Bosanquet and Henry Sidgwick, who were involved in similar organizations, authored the other two. Dewey’s primary concern was to counter the belief that “moral theory is something other than, or something beyond, an analysis of conduct,” or the notion that “there is no

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intrinsic connection between theory and practice.” Dewey argued that moral theory is the same as moral insight, and that moral insight “consists simply in the every-day workings of the same ordinary intelligence that measures dry-goods, drives nails, sells wheat, and invents the telephone.”\textsuperscript{151} Dewey continued to use this reasoning throughout the development of his moral thought. Morality, he argued, could be approached scientifically because science was simply practical reason at its best. It is crucial to understand that Dewey was not reducing ethics to science, but utilizing an expansive definition of science as intelligent inquiry into all kinds of practical problems.

Moral theory, claimed Dewey, is the “construction of the act in thought” and “conduct is the executed insight.” All conduct is based upon ideas or theories. Dewey argued that when a child learns to walk, through observation, reflection, and trial and error, the child develops a “theory” of walking. The theory becomes second nature as the child masters the skills involved in walking but, responding specifically to Adler, Dewey claimed that the practice of walking continues to depend upon theory in adult life, and “the observation of some patient suffering with complete cutaneous anaesthesia will serve to test the hypothesis.”\textsuperscript{152} Certainly moral action requires more theory than walking, but Dewey’s central point was that both require the same intelligence. Theories about simpler and more complex actions are different in the “degree of analysis,” but they are not different in kind. Moral theories have often seemed inapplicable, however, because they are very general and “Conduct is absolutely individualized.” Dewey equated moral action with “intelligent practice,” a move

\textsuperscript{151} Dewey, “Moral Theory and Practice” (1891), EW 3: 94-95.
that is central to his mature ethical theory, indeed to all of his mature thought which extols the virtues of the “method of intelligence” in all human practices.\textsuperscript{153}

Moral theory provides formal moral rules, such as “I ought not to lie.” These rules do not tell us exactly what to do in every situation, but are tools or instruments we use to resolve moral dilemmas as they arise. For Dewey then, moral rules are never mechanical; they have to be applied skillfully just as the farmer learns, through practice, how to apply theories about animal husbandry. Without skillful, intelligent application in specific situations, a moral rule tends to become “a cramped and cramping petrification,” or “a merely speculative abstraction.” Theories of ethics should provide a rationale for moral rules, and thus keep them “from fossilizing,” but they must also be applied intelligently or they “slip away into sickly sentimentalism, or harden into rude militarism.”

Ultimately, moral rules that are proven through application “filter into the average consciousness, and their truth becomes... a part of the ordinary insight into life.”\textsuperscript{154} In other words, the truly moral individual is able to give content to abstract moral rules if, like the farmer who understands animal husbandry, he has been trained in a practice, a way of life. To restate this in Hegelian language, for Dewey, individuals can apply moral rules to concrete situations only if they have been enculturated in a \textit{Sittlichkeit}.

Dewey ended the essay with a discussion of the relationship between “the ought” and “the is.” Many philosophers, such as Hume, had argued that an ought can never be derived from an is. Knowing all the facts about a situation,

\textsuperscript{152} Ibid., 96.
\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., 97, 98.
\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., 100, 102, 102-103.
the argument goes, never, in and of itself, tells us what we ought to do. Dewey adds to this insight that “the ‘ought’ is never its own justification.”\textsuperscript{155} What we ought to do always depends on the facts of the situation, and although we can distinguish between what is and what ought to be, this does not justify an assumption that the two are metaphysically distinct. Hume’s insight about facts alone not telling us what we ought to do, for Dewey, only shows that “the is” and “the ought” cannot be rigidly separated. Again drawing upon Hegel’s notion of \emph{Sittlichkeit}, Dewey argued that “the ought” is found in the concrete “is.” This does not mean that one must conform to what is, however. In the \textit{Outline of a Critical Theory of Ethics}, Dewey argued that the dialectical relationship between self and society does not require conformity to society as it is. Social reform comes from bringing “the ought” implicit in “the is” to full, consistent realization. As Dewey explained,

\begin{quote}
Reflective conscience must be \textit{based} on the moral consciousness expressed in existing institutions, manners, and beliefs. Otherwise it is empty and arbitrary. But the existing moral status is never wholly self-consistent. It realizes ideals in one relation which it does not in another; it gives rights to aristocrats which it denies to low-born; to men, which it refuses to women; it exempts the rich from obligations which it imposes on the poor. Its institutions embody a common good which turns out to be good only to a privileged few, and thus existing in self-contradiction.\textsuperscript{156}
\end{quote}

To elaborate on the relationship of theory to practice, Dewey described “a scene of ceaseless movement,” with “needs, relations, institutions ever moving on.” An intelligent being appears on the scene, discovers “that its law is his law, because he is only as a member sharing in its needs, constituted by its relations and formed by its institutions.” We know how to give content to abstract moral

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., 105.
rules only if we have been socialized through our relations with others and the institutions of our society. Understanding this scene, Dewey claimed, is to know one’s self because we are part and parcel of the scene. The moral agent “puts forth his grasp, his Begriff, and arrests the movement.” We take a snapshot of the scene, “a cross-section,” in order to understand what is. This cross-section is taken by what Hegel called Verstand. As the scene continues on, we observe its direction in order to grasp what “ought to be.” In order to observe the direction of the flow, we have to see it within a larger whole; for Hegel, we must rise to the level of Vernunft. Dewey explained that,

This, then, is the relation of moral theory and practice. Theory is the cross-section of the given state of action in order to know the conduct that should be; practice is the realization of the idea thus gained: it is theory in action.\(^{157}\)

Other Hegelian themes are apparent in Dewey’s Outline of a Critical Theory of Ethics. Dewey also continued to depict society as a moral organism, and like W. T. Harris and Denton Snider, he spoke of individual freedom as the positive, or actual, freedom to make the best of oneself, and not merely the negative, or formal, freedom from external restraint. Freedom is the ability to form ideals or conceptions of ends. Self realization can only occur in the context of a well-ordered society, one that allows individual freedom and equality for all. Positive freedom also goes beyond negative freedom in that it requires not only that the individual choose ends for himself but also that he choose correctly. “Only that end which executed really effects greater energy and comprehensiveness of

character makes for actual freedom. In a word, only the good man, the man who is truly realizing his individuality, is free, in the positive sense of that word.”¹⁵⁸

In the *Outlines*, Dewey also borrowed a comparative technique from Hegel that he would continue to use throughout his career, “comparing opposite one-sided views with the aim of discovering a theory apparently more adequate…”¹⁵⁹ Like Hegel, Dewey found value in each theory he discussed, but found each one lacking in some important way. Dewey also continued to believe that social institutions are the outward, objective manifestation of our moral theories and beliefs. He agreed with Bradley, and others, that our social institutions are often morally contradictory, and thus create moral ambiguity and contradictory moral demands upon us. Rather than conclude, like Bradley, that the moral world is inherently contradictory, however, Dewey concluded that the contradictions in our social institutions are manifestations of contradictions in our moral theories. Dewey's faith in the science of morality entailed the conviction that the moral world, just like the physical world, is not inherently contradictory. Whether or not the world is inherently rational is not a matter to be resolved by the special sciences, such as the science of morality; it is a matter for metaphysics. All the special sciences are based upon faith that the world they seek to describe is rational. Such a postulate, Dewey claimed, was the basis for any special science, and thus was essential to a science of morality.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 240.
¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 323. On this point, Dewey's theory compares well to Hegel's view of science. In his *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel argued that modern science is based on specific presuppositions about nature. Rather than discuss the details of the presuppositions Hegel delineated, we can simply say that the crucial point is that he believed our knowledge of nature cannot be based solely on experience; we must first have a perception of nature as a whole in order to proceed. See Terry Pinkard, *Hegel: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 564.
Also like Hegel, Dewey criticized both consequentialist theories like Utilitarianism, and deontological theories like that of Kant. After examining both types of theories, Dewey concluded, that “The end of action, or the good, is the realized will, the developed or satisfied self.” Satisfaction comes neither from avoiding pain and seeking pleasure “through the satisfaction of desires just as they happen to arise,” as hedonistic theories like Utilitarianism assume, nor from “obedience to law simply because it is law,” as Kant assumed. Dewey sought to combine the insights of the two approaches to ethical theory, by arguing that self-satisfaction is found “in satisfaction of desires according to law.” He disagreed with Kant by claiming that “This law…is not something external to the desires, but is their own law.” In acting on our desires, Dewey believed, we discover and come to understand rules and principles which apply to specific kinds of moral situations; thus rather than being imposed upon desires, laws arise from acting on them.

By 1893, Dewey had rejected self-realization completely, replacing it with the notion of “self-expression,” but we shall discuss this shift in the following chapter. During his tenure at Michigan, Dewey had begun the process of naturalizing both his religion and his idealism. He replaced both the transcendent God of Christianity and the absolute self-consciousness with the individual’s social environment. Dewey began to articulate a functionalist psychology, but not because of James’s influence. Rather he found functionalism in Hegel, and ways to express it with biological metaphors in James’s Principles of Psychology. Although these developments may have required Dewey to criticize
late nineteenth-century neo-Hegelianism, they did not require him to reject Hegel. In fact, Dewey articulated many key elements of his mature thought in Hegelian dress, including the notions that the self is action rather than substance, feeling is essential to all cognition, and experience is dialectical. Dewey’s primary objection to nineteenth-century neo-Hegelianisms was that they did not take experience seriously enough, but he made the same objection to British empiricism. Because of the influence of Alice, Ford, Davidson and the Ethical Culture movement, Dewey sought to transform his idealism into a philosophy of social and political action, and from Davidson, he received a clear example of a philosophical life that included active involvement in the continual reconstruction of the social organism. In his political and moral theory, Dewey defended a Hegelian theory of positive freedom, and argued, like Hegel, that abstract moral rules can only be given content by agents who have been socialized in a specific society. In the following chapter we shall see that Dewey continued to develop his philosophy, ultimately into instrumentalism, along the trajectory he staked out in these early years. Finally, publicly acknowledging the transition occurring in his thought, in 1894, Dewey referred to his philosophy as “experimental idealism,” emphasizing with that appellation that we come to know by actively constructing the object of knowledge, and that this construction does not occur in a private mental realm; it involves overt action,

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experimentation. In the following chapter we shall find out where Dewey discovered this conception of idealism.

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CHAPTER FOUR
DEWEY’S TRANSITIONAL YEARS,
1894-1904

Dewey claimed he shifted from absolutism to experimentalism during the period of 1894 to 1904. There is a complex debate about the exact timing of this shift, and Dewey never analyzed it himself. Some have argued, on the evidence of his criticisms of T. H. Green, that Dewey rejected idealism as early as 1891, but we have already seen that he mounted a Hegelian critique of Green.\(^1\) Morton White, as we have previously noted, claims that Dewey first began to show signs of moving away from idealism in 1891 in his *Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics* and his letter to James about the influence of Franklin Ford, but we rejected that view as well. Because he does not clearly define neo-Hegelianism, Morton White misinterprets Dewey’s abandonment of a transcendent absolute, claiming that in 1894 Dewey’s term “experimental idealism” shows that he was in a transitional phase in which he was trying to unite his idealism with his functionalism.\(^2\) This transitional phase, White contends, lasted until 1903 when Dewey and his colleagues published the *Studies in Logical Theory*.\(^3\) Robert Westbrook argues that Dewey broke with idealism late in the 1890s, but agrees that is was not announced by him until the publication of the *Studies*.\(^4\)

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Regardless of these disagreements, until recently the view that Dewey broke decisively from idealist ranks no later than the publication of the *Studies* in 1903 has been accepted unanimously. John Shook has tried to shift the debate, however, by maintaining that we need to ask a different question: Rather than ask when did Dewey abandon idealism, ""The better question is when did Dewey abandon the absolutism of his idealism, develop a functionalist psychology, and establish an instrumentalist version of pragmatism?""\(^5\) Shook, of course, concludes that Dewey never really abandoned idealism, but simply modified it. In answer to Shook's question, we would argue that it would be more precise to ask not when Dewey abandoned the absolutism of his idealism, but when he abandoned the neo-Hegelian transcendent absolute, and reaffirm that it disappeared from Dewey's thought by 1891. By then he sought a philosophy which addressed the problems of lived experience, having concluded that transcendent truth was inherently unavailing and even dangerous because it aimed at the impossible, thereby fostering a sense of moral hopelessness. The development of Dewey's functionalist psychology was an integral part of his rejection of transcendent metaphysics. Increasingly, Dewey eliminated metaphysics by explaining elements of experience as functions within a process rather than as substantial entities. As he explained to James, Dewey believed he found this functionalism in Hegel.\(^6\) Dewey also began to develop his instrumentalist logic in essays published in 1890 and 1891, but he did so in the context of a defense of Hegelian logic; this is particularly apparent in ""The


\(^6\) Dewey to William James, 6 May 1891.
Present Position of Logical Theory” (1891), in which Dewey argued that Hegel’s logic was more consistent with the scientific spirit than Kant’s. In general, the previous chapter agrees with Shook’s analysis of when these developments occurred, but this chapter complements it by demonstrating how Dewey could derive these radically secular, humanistic doctrines from the philosophy of the grand metaphysician himself.

University of Chicago

Dewey continued to attend meetings at Glenmore throughout the 1890s, and continued to associate with leaders of the Ethical Culture movement. But in 1894 he moved his family to Chicago as he accepted the offer of William Rainey Harper, president of the newly founded University of Chicago, to become Chairman of the Department of Philosophy. Dewey was attracted by the opportunity to build the new department, to focus on research, and by Harper’s agreement to include psychology and pedagogy in the department. Dewey’s desire to combine these disciplines within one department reveals a great deal about the sort of philosophy he wanted to develop. As Dewey’s mature thought took shape, it was increasingly evident that he envisioned philosophy as a study of how humans grow intellectually, morally and spiritually. Consequently, the development of philosophy required research into psychology and education and, for the first time, Dewey would work alongside of experimental psychologists and be actively involved in the study of elementary education.

About eighteen months after arriving in Chicago, Dewey helped found the University Elementary School within the University’s newly established

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Department of Pedagogy, both of which were run under his guidance and inspiration. His wife Alice served as principal of the elementary school from 1901 to 1904. The Elementary School, or as it was commonly known, the Dewey School, was conceived in the spirit of experimentation as a place where one could test hypotheses and learn more about the psychology of the child. Under Dewey’s leadership, teachers were to view the child as an active, dynamic being with his own impulses and interests. The primary job of the teacher was to cultivate the childrens’ natural interests, and help direct their activities in ways that allowed them to learn through activity. Because, according to Dewey’s psychology, ideas do not exist prior to activity, teachers were to work from the assumption “that ideas arise as the definition of activity, and serve to direct that activity in new expressions.” The children were expected to learn from problematic situations that would naturally arise as they pursued their interests. And because Dewey held that learning was a social matter, the children were encouraged to engage in group activities. Moreover, Dewey believed this social interaction facilitated the development of moral and social attitudes necessary in a democracy.

The Dewey School became famous and attracted numerous state and national organizations to the campus for their convention meetings. Many prominent educators came to observe the school and speak on pedagogical topics. The Dewey School and Dewey’s writings on education brought

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8 Harper’s dismissal of Alice in 1904 instigated Dewey’s resignation from the University of Chicago. Dewey claimed, however, that Alice’s dismissal was “but one incident in the history of years.” Dewey to William Rainey Harper, 10 May 1904. For a full history of the Dewey School see Katherine Camp Mayhew and Anna Camp Edwards, The Dewey School (New York: Atherton Press, 1966).

9 Dewey, “Interest in Relation to the Training of the Will” (1896), EW 5: 141.
considerable acclaim to the University of Chicago’s program in education; by 1900 it was considered the best in the country.\textsuperscript{10} From this time on, Dewey’s writings on psychology were based on actual observation of children at the school and were much more empirical. At Chicago, Dewey’s interest in experimental science and its application to philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences came to the forefront of his writings, furthering the trend in his thought toward increasingly practical philosophy, focused on the development of strategies that would facilitate the intelligent solution of specific human problems.\textsuperscript{11}

Chicago provided Dewey ample opportunity to reflect on the practical import of the metaphysical issue of unity in diversity. The city was crowded with European immigrants, the most recent of whom had arrived since the Civil War and were primarily from southern and eastern Europe. This ethnic diversity naturally led to unprecedented cultural and intellectual diversity. By the time Dewey arrived in Chicago, it had grown to a city of over one million inhabitants. Worlds apart from Ann Arbor, the city was a hotbed of social activism. Dewey arrived in the city to look for a home for his growing family in the midst of the great Pullman strike of 1894. He wrote to Alice, enclosing editorials from Harper’s Weekly that were critical of the strikers and Eugene Debs. Dewey adamantly disagreed with the editorials, writing,

\begin{quote}
It is hard to keep one’s balance; the only wonder is that when the `higher classes’—damn them—take such views there aren’t more downright
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{10} See George Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, 87-91.
\textsuperscript{11} Dewey became increasingly involved in particular social and political problems, especially after he left Chicago in 1904, but the core of his philosophy was the promotion of intelligent action more generally. This is the central theme of Michael Eldridge, Transforming Experience: John Dewey’s Cultural Instrumentalism (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1998).
socialists....It doesn't make any difference that I see what the facts are; that a representative journal of the upper classes—damn them again—can take the attitude of that Harper's weekly & in common with all other journals, think Debs is a simple lunatic or else doing all this to show his criminal control over the...criminal 'lower classes'—well, it shows what it is to become a higher class. And I fear Chicago Univ. is a capitalistic institution—that is, it too belongs to the higher classes.  

In many ways Dewey's stay in Chicago facilitated his efforts to put Thomas Davidson's notion of practical philosophy to good use, but his concerns about the University being a "capitalistic institution" probably tempered whatever enthusiasm he may have had about political action. Those concerns were soon confirmed when a colleague, Edward Bemis, was dismissed for his pro-labor stance. Dewey noted ironically that at the University of Michigan, a state university, "there was freedom as to social questions, but some restraint on the religious side," while at the University of Chicago, a private, "Baptist institution there is seemingly complete religious freedom, but...a good deal of constriction on the social side." Like Davidson and the leaders of the Ethical Culture movement, however, Dewey's writings focused mainly, though not exclusively, on psychology, ethics and education, but perhaps because of concerns about job security he did not engage in the sort of controversial political activism for which he became famous in later years.

But Dewey saw opportunity in the mayhem of Chicago, and he wanted the full experience of the city. "Chicago," he wrote to Alice, "is the place to make you appreciate at every turn the absolute opportunity which chaos affords—it is

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12 Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey and children, 20, 21 July 1894.
14 Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey and children, 4, 5 July 1894.
sheer Matter with no standards at all!” Dewey hoped his philosophy could ultimately provide direction for the chaos of matter in random motion that he experienced in one of the fastest growing cities in the United States. A friend took Dewey on tours of the city, showing him “a salvation meeting out of doors, a ‘happy gospel’ meeting in doors, part of the show at the Park Theatre, the worst one in town, four or five wine rooms, where some of the street women hang around, a ten cent lodging house...two gambling places...& three houses of prostitution.”\textsuperscript{15}

Dewey also quickly connected with intellectuals in the city. During his first winter in Chicago he met Denton Snider of St. Louis Hegelian fame at the Chicago Kindergarten College, and at a meeting of an “Aristotleian Society” held at the home of Dr. Foster, whom he and Alice had met at Davidson’s Glenmore. Dewey remarked that Snider was not the “long-bearded thing” he expected, but “looked quite a regular business man type.”\textsuperscript{16} Dewey read a paper at Foster’s and was amused at the response he received. He spoke of “several bright women there” who “warmed up to my paper,” while Snider, and other “strictly ‘phil’ gentlemen,” criticized his contention that “philosophy must become experimental.” Dewey explained that “Snider talked about 15 minutes on the limitations of physiological psychology, & said, amiably, (then apologizing still more amiably) that when the Zeitgeist went through the gates of the future the college professor would be left on the ground outside somewhere.” Dewey joked

\textsuperscript{15} Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey, 23 September 1894. Chicago was second only to New York in the rate of population growth from 1890 to 1900, increasing from a population of 1,099,850 to 1,698,575, a 54% rate of growth. See Bayrd Still, \textit{Urban America: A History with Documents} (Boston: Little Brown, 1974), 210-211.

\textsuperscript{16} Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey, 2 August 1894.
“that after having been called a speculative Hegelian by the scientific brethren I finally had the pleasure of being set down by the orthodox Hegelians as a crass empiricist....”\textsuperscript{17} At this time, Dewey’s philosophy did not fit neatly into any existing school of thought, nor did he demonstrate any concern about that fact.

Philosophically, Dewey had struck out in his own direction, and it was understandably difficult for his contemporaries to label his thought. And now Dewey began to apply his philosophical theories to social reform more earnestly than ever before. Before he arrived in Chicago, he was a member of the first board of trustees of Jane Addams’s Hull House which was founded in 1889 as a settlement house for social work among immigrant working men and women. Dewey had lectured at Hull House before he moved to Chicago but now he had more opportunity to meet workers and witness their daily problems. He was also exposed to liberals, socialists, anarchists, communists, and others who frequently met at Hull House to exchange ideas.\textsuperscript{18} Dewey’s exposure to workers and people with more radical views than his own sharpened his social thought and nourished his interest in real social problems.

Dewey’s first task at the University of Chicago was to build the Department of Philosophy. James H. Tufts was already an associate professor of philosophy at Chicago, and Dewey quickly expanded the department by hiring James R. Angell and George Herbert Mead. Tufts, Angell and Mead had all been affiliated with the University of Michigan and had all pursued graduate studies

\textsuperscript{17} Dewey to Alice Chipman Dewey, 20 November 1894.
\textsuperscript{18} Dykhuizen, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, 105.
in Germany. Addison W. Moore and Edward S. Ames were selected as teaching fellows in 1894, and both eventually became regular members of the department after completing their doctorates there. Moore was primarily interested in logic, and Ames in the psychology of religion. Dewey, Tufts, Angell and Mead were particularly interested in developing a psychology that was consistent with the latest findings of evolutionary biology, and these four were founders of the school of functionalist psychology for which the University of Chicago became known.

Of these colleagues, Dewey claimed that George Herbert Mead had the greatest influence on him, but their development is so parallel that it is difficult to reconstruct his influence with any precision. In his eulogy for Mead, written in 1931, Dewey emphasized the importance of Mead’s work “in social psychology, and in a social interpretation of life and the world.” Dewey explained that Mead’s social psychology

worked a revolution in my own thinking though I was slow in grasping...its full implications. The individual mind, the conscious self, was to him the world of nature first taken up into social relations and then dissolved to form a new self which then went forth to recreate the world of nature and social institutions.  

As an instructor at Michigan, Mead was impressed by Dewey’s version of Hegelianism. Mead claimed that his social treatment of self-consciousness was indebted to Hegel and, much like Dewey, he argued that “with Hegel, philosophy becomes a method of thought rather than a search for fundamental
entities." Mead asserted that the purpose of philosophy, for Hegel, was to articulate "the method by which the self in its full cognitive and social content meets and solves its difficulties." From the Hegelian dialectic, Mead took the theory that thought proceeds by negating objects of thought that have come into conflict and discovering a new synthesis in which the present difficulty is overcome and the problematic object of thought is reinterpreted or reconstructed. On this theory, the objects of thought are not "fixed presuppositions," but "means for the purpose of conduct."21 Gary A. Cook explains that, although after 1903 he rarely invoked the name of Hegel in his writings, Mead always retained an emphasis on

the reconstructive function of thought, and his conception of the intellectual method to be employed in the realization of this function never departed from the view he had set forth in his early Hegelian period: he simply stopped speaking of this method as Hegelian or dialectical and began referring to it instead as the method of reflective, scientific, or experimental intelligence.22

Cook's description of Mead's debt to Hegel is also true of Dewey. Both philosophers retained Hegel's emphasis on the social nature of consciousness, were particularly interested in Hegel's method, which they viewed as a general method of inquiry rather than a method of metaphysical inquiry, and reinterpreted the dialectic in naturalistic language they learned from biology and the new psychology. They were not the only American idealists who came to read Hegel in this way. In 1919, in a discussion of the post-Kantian dialectic,

Josiah Royce stated that "Our idealists were, one and all, in a very genuine sense what people now call pragmatists..." because of their emphasis upon "the relation of truth to action, to practice, to the will."\textsuperscript{23}

Mead ultimately rejected Hegel's term "absolute" because he believed that Darwinian biology's talk of organisms living in environments to which they must adapt in order to survive provided a more transparent nomenclature for an organic philosophy. Darwinian biology provided a way to articulate how qualitatively new forms of organisms could emerge from a natural process without connotations of an immutable or transcendent principle of teleology. Moreover, Mead believed that Hegel's dialectic was the fundamental structure of human reflection in its highest form, and that it described the procedure of the experimental sciences though Hegel did not fully appreciate it as such.\textsuperscript{24} Once more, this description of the development of Mead's Hegelianism is also true of Dewey's.

The question arises, if Dewey and Mead found the intellectual tools they needed in Darwinian naturalism, why would they retain anything from Hegel? A bit later in this chapter we shall see that Hegel's theory of causation, which was essentially rooted in his organic holism and dynamic view of reality, gave a peculiar twist to Dewey's naturalism. First, the holistic aspect of Hegel's view of


\textsuperscript{23} Royce, \textit{Lectures on Modern Idealism}, ed. Jacob Loewenberg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1919), 85-86. One of Royce's last graduate students, Jacob Loewenberg, made a significant contribution to the post-World War II renaissance in Hegel studies by publishing an existentialist reading of Hegel's \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit}, a reading Loewenberg claimed was inspired by Royce's \textit{Lectures on Modern Idealism}. Loewenberg, \textit{Hegel's Phenomenology: Dialogues on the Life of the Mind} (LaSalle, IL: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1965), x.

\textsuperscript{24} Joas, \textit{G.H. Mead}, 53, 60.
causation convinced Dewey that scientific method must not be reductive; it must
address and seek to account for the whole of experience, including elements
which were often devalued by empiricist philosophers as merely subjective.
Second, Hegel’s dialectical account of causation inclined Dewey to view
mechanistic, stimulus/response accounts of human behavior as simplistic or
only partial explanations of a more complex process. Finally, Hegel’s theory of
causation prevented Dewey from succumbing to the scientific determinism that
plagued late-nineteenth century intellectuals such as William James and John
Stuart Mill, according to which environmental causes seemed determinative of
human behavior and denied free will. 25 Hegel showed Dewey that cause and
effect are instruments we use to rationalize, makes sense of, experience, but it is a
mistake to assume that those categories exist prior to experience. Another way to
state this is that Hegel’s dialectical theory of causation undercut the metaphysical
and linear conception of causation, leading Dewey to view cause and effect as
instrumental categories best understood as circular when we rise to the level of
Vernunft, seeing the larger organic whole of which these relationships are a part.
This allowed Dewey to avoid a narrow conception of instrumentalism as a mode
of analysis that pursues ends efficiently, but without regard for the morality of
the means employed or evaluation of the ends that should be sought. 26 Hegel’s

25 Thomas L. Haskell, “Persons as Uncaused Causes: John Stuart Mill, the Spirit of
Capitalism, and the ‘Invention’ of Formalism” in Objectivity is Not Neutrality (Baltimore: The
Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 318-367. Note that Haskell compares Mill’s ultimate
solution to this existential problem as akin to that of James and Dewey (356). On James’s
depression brought on by the problem of free will and determinism see Ralph Barton Perry, The
26 See Larry Hickman’s insightful comparison of narrow, “straight-line instrumentalism”
and Dewey’s instrumentalism. Hickman distinguishes the two quite convincingly. Hickman, John
Dewey’s Pragmatic Technology (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 13, 153-154. The term
“straight-line instrumentalism” comes from Langdon Winner, Autonomous Technology
theory of causation places means and ends in a dialectical relationship, in which both constantly effect one another and thus must both be continuously evaluated and reevaluated. As we shall see, this theory of causation underlies Dewey's psychology and philosophy of education, and neither can be understood without a recognition of this; later in this chapter we shall directly address Dewey's understanding of Hegel's theory of causation.

**Psychology and Philosophy of Education**

According to Angell, the primary goal of the Chicago psychologists was to develop, through experimentation, a model of the mind consistent with evolutionary biology. It was crucial that this theory of the mind "be shown to generate hypotheses and predictions that could be experimentally tested." Because they sought an organic theory of the mind, the Chicago psychologists looked for ways to undermine mechanistic interpretations of the mountains of data being collected about conscious behavior by physiological psychologists. Their first target was a reinterpretation of the reflex arc theory of stimulus and response.

Though Dewey was not involved in experiments aimed at undermining the reflex arc hypothesis, his paper, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), came to be viewed as the foundation of functionalist psychology. The  

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(Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977). See also Hickman's "Habermas's Unresolved Dualism: Zweckrationalität as Idée Fixe," in Perspectives on Habermas, ed. Lewis Edwin Hahn (Chicago and La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing Co., 2000), 501-513. In this article, Hickman argues that Dewey's richer conception of scientific technology allows his instrumentalism to avoid the pitfalls of the instrumental reason that has been criticized by Weber, the Frankfurt School and Habermas, as narrowly goal and efficiency oriented without regard for moral issues. According to Hickman, Dewey's rich notion of inquiry, the "method of intelligence," allows him to integrate what Habermas calls the "empirical sciences" with the "human sciences." Though Hickman does not suggest this, my claim is that Dewey appropriated this richer notion of inquiry from Hegel's dialectic.
paper is also important to historians because it marks Dewey’s first explicit use of James’s “psychologist’s fallacy.” Jennifer Welchman claims that Dewey’s use of this “Jamesian concept, together with adoption of the functionalists’ goals for psychology...gradually transformed Dewey’s theory of mind to such an extent that it was no longer compatible with idealism.” But as Shook points out, Dewey had worked out a version of the psychologist’s fallacy ten years earlier in “The Psychological Standpoint.” It is accurate to say, however, that in the mid-1890s Dewey and Mead found a way to replace the neo-Hegelian notion of a transcendent absolute with a naturalistic conception of process. As Dewey explained to James in 1903, “It may be the continued working of the Hegelian bacillus of reconciliation of contradictories in me that makes me feel as if the conception of process gives a basis for uniting the truths of pluralism and monism, and also of necessity and spontaneity.” In the letter, Dewey made it clear that the realm of necessity corresponded to “the world of fact,” and the realm of spontaneity corresponded to “the world of ideas.” He understood the two realms to be “teleological and dynamic conceptions rather than ontological and static ones.” In other words, fact and idea, world and mind, refer to functions rather than static realities within the process of experience.

The significance of function can be clarified by examining “The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology.” In this paper, Dewey sought to counter a mechanistic interpretation of stimulus and response, the reflex arc. In an effort to banish metaphysics from psychology, psychologists had sought to model their theories

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on the natural sciences, particularly Newtonian mechanics. Psychologists had postulated that mental and physical process emanated from ontologically different entities, and sought to discover mechanical principles of their interaction. The reflex arc, presupposed by psychologists, was a theory about the relation between the experimental subject and his or her environment, a relation all too neatly bounded in time and mechanical in character. In the article Dewey developed a position James articulated in his *Principles of Psychology*, even borrowing James’s example of an infant reaching for a bright light that turns out to be a lit candle. According to the view Dewey was criticizing, the light stimulates the infant’s mind, causing it to focus its attention on the light and form an attitude toward it—e.g., curiosity. At the same time the infant’s body is stimulated to undertake an overt action based on its psychological response—reaching for the candle. Dewey complained that this interpretation made the stimulus/response process “a patchwork of disjointed parts, a mechanical conjunction of unallied processes” initiated by external sensory stimuli.\(^{30}\)

Dewey attacked the reflex arc theory in the same way he had criticized the dualistic psychology of British empiricism for over ten years. He charged that the mechanistic theory of the reflex arc was not based on science but on unfounded metaphysical assumptions; it was just another species of mind/body dualism:

> We ought to be able to see that the ordinary conception of the reflex arc theory, instead of being a case of plain science, is a survival of the metaphysical dualism, first formulated by Plato, according to which the sensation is an ambiguous dweller on the border land of soul and body,

\(^{29}\) Dewey to James, 27 March 1903. I made minor spelling corrections in this quotation.  
the idea (or central process) is purely psychical, and the act (or movement) purely physical.\textsuperscript{31}

Not only is there no scientific basis for this dualistic metaphysics, Dewey argued, it has no explanatory value. The theory merely assumes, without proof, that two unexplained entities behave in a particular way, and perpetuates a metaphysical puzzle that has never been successfully defended or resolved.

According to Dewey, the process did not begin with the external stimulus of the light from the candle, but with a “sensori-motor co-ordination,” the child’s act of seeing. When the act of seeing stimulates the act of reaching, both acts “fall within a larger co-ordination.” Sensation/movement is not a fixed and bounded event, rather it is contained within a larger temporal process, the act. When the child is burned, once more the sensation from the flame is a component of the larger whole: “it is simply the completion, or fulfillment, of the previous eye-arm-hand co-ordination and not an entirely new occurrence.” It is only because the entire process is a unit that the child is able to learn from the experience. For the child, seeing a lit candle becomes, “seeing-of-a-light-that-means-pain-when-contact-occurs.” Stimulus and response are not distinct entities, but “distinctions of function...with reference to reaching or maintaining an end.”\textsuperscript{32}

Psychologists had misunderstood stimulus and response because they committed a version of James’s “psychological fallacy.” Dewey preferred to call the error the “historical fallacy” in order to emphasize that those who make this mistake do so because their analysis artificially truncates a temporal sequence or process. The fallacy occurs when,

\textsuperscript{31} Dewey, “The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology” (1896), EW 5: 104.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 98, 104.
A state of things characterizing an outcome is regarded as a true description of the events which led up to this outcome; when, as a matter of fact, if this outcome had already been in existence, there would have been no necessity for the process. Or, to make the application to the case in hand, considerations valid of an attained organization or co-ordination, the orderly sequence of minor acts in a comprehensive co-ordination, are used to describe a process, viz., the distinction of mere sensation as stimulus and of mere movement as response, which takes place only because such an attained organization is no longer at hand, but is in process of constitution.\(^{33}\)

In this awkwardly worded passage, Dewey sought to make the point that psychologists had substituted their point of view for that of their subjects. More specifically, Dewey argued that actions seem mechanical when they are analyzed in a fragmentary manner. When we are sensitive to process, the mechanical events of “stimulus” and “response” appear as moments within a larger, more complex behavior. All acts proceed out of a prior coordination, a habit, in which we never distinguish between stimulus and response. We only become aware of stimulus and response when a problem arises that interrupts our usual coordinated interaction with our environment.\(^{34}\) Dewey provided an example to clarify this point. If a child has had conflicting results when reaching for a bright light, sometimes agreeable sometimes painful, the child’s response will be uncertain rather than habitual, and for the child the stimulus is uncertain. The child distinguishes between stimulus and response, examining the stimulus before constituting his response. In so doing the child constitutes a more

\(^{33}\) Ibid., 105-106. During these years there were two other essays in which Dewey discovered the psychological fallacy, in different forms, in the positions of his opponents. Dewey, “The Ego as Cause” (1894), EW 4: 94-95; and “The Psychology of Effort” (1897), 5: 163.

intelligent, habitual way of acting. A stimulus is a phase within a problematic situation, not a separate existence.

For Dewey, the reflex process was not an arc, part of a circle, but a circuit, or a complete circle of action that had been temporarily disrupted by a problem. Noting that stimulus and response can be understood to stand for world and mind, we can see that Dewey was translating into the empirical and naturalistic language of his generation the dynamic process that Hegel called the dialectic. An original unity of stimulus and response, world and mind, which Dewey called habit, is disrupted by a problem or conflict of some kind. The self, or in biological language, the organism, takes steps to restore this unity. The self seeks knowledge in such a situation, but only as a means to the restoration of the integrity of its unified relationship with the world. In the following section we shall see further evidence of the similarity between Dewey's description of this process and his understanding of Hegel's dialectic.

Scholars often point to the "Reflex Arc" essay as an important marker in Dewey's move away from Hegel, but the primary argument is itself a Hegelian critique of the reflex arc. In good Hegelian fashion, Dewey asserted that what we call the stimulus is always relative to the larger context of which it is a part, and the object as sensed is always a product of the experiential context in which it is sensed. To illustrate this, Dewey discussed the hearing of a loud noise. "If one is reading a book, if one is hunting, if one is watching in a dark place on a lonely night, if one is performing a chemical experiment, in each case, the noise has a very different psychical value; it is a different experience."\(^{35}\) Dewey concluded

\(^{35}\) Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), EW 5: 100.
that the stimulus should not be viewed as a static entity but a function that has meaning only within a specific activity. In essence, Dewey’s claim was that, although not false, the reflex arc was a one-dimensional, artificially truncated theory of mental operation that obscured the fundamentally dialectic character of experience. If we always try to understand behavior as part of an ongoing dialectical process of interaction between the individual and the world, we will achieve a higher level of understanding.

Yet the essay also reveals that Dewey was modifying his idealism in a couple of ways. First, he had articulated a critique of the deepest of all the dualisms that had troubled him for years, mind and world, without appealing to a transcendent consciousness. Second, Dewey soon began to employ the historical fallacy in a critique of neo-Hegelian ethics. Neo-Hegelian, self-realization ethics, had hypostasized an ideal reality that was latent or potential in the self, as in Bradley’s theory, or metaphysically separate from the particular self, as in Green’s theory. In 1902, Dewey argued that this was an example of the historical fallacy. In this context, the primary point Dewey sought to make with the historical fallacy was that it pinpointed cases in which philosophers’ discounted some part of experience as mere appearance, as less real than some other part. In self-realization ethics, Dewey argued, the later form of the self “is the reality of which the first form is simply the appearance.”36 This was an abandonment of the psychological standpoint because it assumed that part of our experience is mere appearance, not real. For Dewey, all experiences, including ones as ethereal as dreams or illusions, are equally real experiences.

We only distinguish between the real and the apparent when we discount the subjective and imagine that there is an ontologically distinct objective realm beyond experience. Ultimately, Dewey was motivated by a social and political concern. This becomes more clear in later writings, but Dewey worried that when we valorize one part of experience, we then conclude that there is ultimately one good, one truth, for all. This conclusion can then be used to devalue people who, it is believed, do not measure up to the one standard. After the turn of the century, as Dewey criticized moral theories that postulated one, all-embracing and fixed end, he included self-realization ethics in his critique. Ultimately, Dewey argued that there is no one moral end, but that self-realization was a happy side-effect of moral action.\textsuperscript{37}

Westbrook claims that "The Reflex Arc" essays reveals Dewey's drift away from idealism to naturalism because he broke with idealism's tendency to equate experience with knowledge, instead subordinating knowledge to action.\textsuperscript{38} To be sure, Dewey believed that some idealists had committed this error. In 1906 he wrote that,

Sensationalist and idealist, positivist and transcendentalist, materialist and spiritualist, defining this object [the object of knowledge] in as many differing ways as they have different conceptions of the ideal and method of knowledge, are at one in their devotion to an identification of Reality with something that connects monopolistically with passionless knowledge, belief purged of all personal reference, origin, and outlook.

This passage reveals a development of Dewey's thinking about the psychological standpoint, because he now believed it is a mistake to think of experience only in terms of knowing experiences. This is also related to the historical fallacy

\textsuperscript{37} See especially, Dewey, "The Good as Self-Realization" in Ethics (1908), MW 5: 351-357.
\textsuperscript{38} Westbrook, John Dewey and American Democracy, 69-70.
because, in his mature works, Dewey argued that, in order to fully understand experience, philosophers must learn to appreciate the entire range of experiences we actually have as we act in the world. For example, emotional experiences are not less real, or less important, than knowing experiences. In a footnote to the passage above, however, written at least three years after Dewey allegedly abandoned his idealism depending on how one dates the abandonment, Dewey wrote,

Hegel may be excepted from this statement [the passage quoted above]. The habit of interpreting Hegel as a Neo-Kantian, a Kantian enlarged and purified, is a purely Anglo-American habit. This is no place to enter into the intricacies of Hegelian exegesis, but the subordination of both logical meaning and of mechanical existence to Geist, to life in its own developing movement, would seem to stand out in any unbiased view of Hegel. At all events, I wish to recognize my own personal debt to Hegel for the view set forth in this paper, without, of course, implying that it represents Hegel’s own intention.39

Dewey’s conviction that experience includes more than knowledge may well be at odds with British neo-Hegelianism, but was not a break from Hegel. Hegel, Dewey implied, held the same expansive meaning of experience as he did.

In her analysis of the “The Reflex Arc,” Welchman emphasizes the importance of the historical fallacy as a signal of Dewey’s drift away from idealism as he himself abandoned self-realization ethics, which entailed that the ultimate goal of the moral life was to liberate a self metaphysically more real than the apparent self. She argues, however, that Dewey may not have immediately seen the full implications of the historical fallacy for idealist ethics, because in another essay published in 1896, “Interest in Relation to the Training

of the Will,” Dewey described the goal of education as the encouragement of a
child’s “self-expression,” the term Dewey began to use in place of “self-
realization.” The key premise of Welchman’s argument seems to be that, “There
is no intimation in this paper that the self to be expressed is in any way altered
through or as a result of the educative process.” If Dewey believed that there is
an unchanging, ideal self to be manifested through education, Welchman
contends, then he was guilty of the historical fallacy himself. Yet we have already
seen that as early as his 1887 Psychology, Dewey claimed that “Self is, as we have
so often seen, activity. It is not something which acts; it is activity.” This
definition of the self demonstrates that he never believed in a substantial self,
even at the height of his own self-realization ethics.

Moreover, Dewey continued to use the term “self-expression” in his
mature thought, after his Hegelian phase as Welchman demarcates it. Dewey
first used the term “self-expression” in his 1891 Outline of a Critical Theory of
Ethics, and continued to use it in his 1894 The Study of Ethics. During the 1890s,
however, the term appeared most in “Interest in Relation to Training of the
Will.” But Dewey extensively revised the essay in 1899 and, in response to
complaints from his critics about the vagueness of the term “self-expression,” in
some places he substituted terms such as “growth,” “direct experience,” and
“realization.” Beginning in How We Think, first published in 1910, Dewey
criticized educational theorists who used “self-expression” to advocate
spontaneous, unstructured activity for children in school, however, he used the

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40 Welchman, Dewey’s Ethical Thought, 129.
41 Dewey, Psychology (1887), EW 2: 216.
term approvingly in 1915 and again in 1918. Rather than a commission of the historical fallacy, Dewey’s term “self-expression” simply meant the “development of powers” in which the impulse to action encounters a difficulty and is “checked and thrown back upon itself” (the process of alienation and return), prompting reflection.

While we are on the topic of self-expression, we should note that Dewey was quick to criticize educational theorists who saw self-expression as an end in itself, rather than as a means to education, because their view was based on a partial understanding of freedom, what Hegel called negative freedom. Dewey did not see “self-expression” as the moral goal, but as a means to growth. And in response to educational theorists who believed that perplexing tasks had to be imposed arbitrarily on students in order to stimulate reflection, Dewey argued that “Every vital activity of any depth and range inevitably meets obstacles in the course of its effort to realize itself—a fact that renders the search for artificial or external problems quite superfluous.” Like Hegel, in this passage and many others Dewey argued that the development of “genuine freedom,” that is to say, [Footnotes]

Hegel's positive freedom, requires opposition. His primary point in "Interest in Relation to Training of the Will," and in How We Think, was simply that educators must learn to use the self-expression that is generated by the child's natural interests to encourage reflection, problem-solving, and growth. Dewey made the same argument in 1895:

The fundamental principle is that the child is always a being with activities of his own, which are present and urgent and do not require to be "induced," "drawn out," or "developed," etc.; that the work of the educator, whether parent or teacher, consists solely in ascertaining, and in connecting with, these activities, furnishing them appropriate opportunities and conditions.

Dewey did disagree with one prominent Hegelian in "Interest in Relation to Training of the Will," however. W. T. Harris was a proponent of discipline, tradition, and the training of the will in the public schools, and he disapproved of Dewey's emphasis on working with the child's interest, claiming that it was not conducive to developing the will. Harris placed a greater emphasis on respect for authority, chosen rationally, and believed it was undermined by Dewey's principles. Harris was one of those who believed educators should impose problematic situations on children without regard for their natural interests. This was Harris and Dewey's first public disagreement, but they remained close friends until Harris's death in 1909.

Because Dewey used a version of the historical fallacy in "The Psychological Standpoint," published ten years before "The Reflex Arc" essay, it is not clear that his use of it in the latter essay signals a watershed in his

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46 Dewey, "Results of Child-Study Applied to Education" (1895), EW 5: 204.
philosophical development. It is significant, however, that Dewey used the historical fallacy in a critique of neo-Hegelian ethics and, in the following section, we shall see that Dewey did not believe Hegel made the same mistake.

The "Great Actualist"

One of the difficulties of determining the nature of Dewey's indebtedness to Hegel is that, in his published work, he engaged in precious little exposition of Hegel's writings. There is one extant, unpublished source, however, in which Dewey dwelt at length on Hegel's philosophy. This source is a one hundred and three page lecture, titled "Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit"; the lecture was typed by a university typist for a seminar Dewey offered at the University of Chicago in 1897, one year after the publication of "The Reflex Arc" article. According to the University of Chicago "Annual Register," the course was titled "Seminar in the Philosophy of Hegel" and was described in the following way:

Hegel's Lesser Logic and Philosophy of Mind, as translated by Wallace, will be the basis of study. Points of connection with the thought of his predecessors, especially Kant and Spinoza, will be studied, and Hegel's own ideas will be further developed by reference to selected portions of the Phenomenology, the Philosophy of Law, and the Ästhetics. For graduate students. 48

Clearly the lecture is not a polished draft. It has many typographical errors, paragraphs that should be broken into smaller ones, a number of awkward sentences, and there are no citations. Keeping the course description in mind, however, we shall try to supply citations to Hegel’s works to indicate the textual basis of the lecture. Despite its roughness, the lecture provides evidence that Dewey was still quite sympathetic to Hegel at this late date and that he had embraced a humanistic/historicist reading of Hegel. The unifying theme of the lecture is Dewey’s claim that Hegel is a “great actualist” rather than a “grand metaphysician.” Briefly, Dewey’s reading of Hegel as a great actualist means that his idealism did not reduce reality to the thought processes of an absolute thinker, but affirmed the reality, and objectivity, of thought. As we seek to unpack this theme our discussion will shed light on four issues important to our endeavor to understand Dewey’s permanent Hegelian deposit: Dewey’s perception of Hegel’s project, how Dewey found functionalist psychology in Hegel, whether or not Dewey believed Hegel committed the historical fallacy, and how Dewey understood Hegel’s ethics and political philosophy. Careful examination of these themes will enable us to compare Dewey’s reading of Hegel to contemporary readings in the following chapter.

The lecture begins with a brief biographical section in which Dewey must have drawn upon Karl Rosenkranz’s biography of Hegel and possibly Rudolf Haym’s intellectual history as these were the only available sources of much of

this information. Haym's book served to establish the myth of Hegel as the official philosopher of the Prussian restoration, a view that Dewey rejected later in the lecture.\textsuperscript{49} We have already seen that the St. Louis Hegelians read Hegel as a politically liberal and practical philosopher because they were influenced by the work of center Hegelians like Karl Ludwig Michelet and Karl Rosenkranz. We also noted that Dewey offered to translate Rosenkranz's introduction to "Kirchmann's ed. of Hegel's Encyclopädie" for the JSP, and can assume that he read the St. Louis Hegelians' numerous translations of Rosenkranz's work.\textsuperscript{50}

From this evidence we can assume that Dewey knew of Rosenkranz's characterization of Hegel's project and his political thought. Further, in the following chapter we shall see that recent Hegel scholarship, drawing upon a richer panoply of sources than were available to Dewey, have confirmed his characterization of Hegel's early intellectual development and his primary philosophical concerns.\textsuperscript{51}

Like the St. Louis Hegelians, Dewey claimed Hegel was concerned with ideals only as they actually made a difference in the world. He noted that, unlike Hegel's immediate predecessors, Hegel was first driven to philosophy by the

\textsuperscript{49} Rosenkranz, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's Leben (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1844); and Haym, Hegel und seine Zeit, Vorlesungen über Entstehung und Entwicklung, Wesen und Werth der Hegel'schen Philosophie (Berlin, 1857). Edward Caird's Hegel, published in 1883, and Frederic Ludlow Luquer's Hegel as Educator, published in 1896, were partly biographical but could not have provided the sort of detailed knowledge that Dewey displayed in this lecture.

\textsuperscript{50} John Dewey to W. T. Harris, 1 July 1882. See also John Dewey to W. T. Harris, 22 October 1881. Most likely, Dewey was offering to translate Rosenkranz's second introduction to Hegel's Encyclopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im grundrisse, which appeared in the second edition published in 1870 in Berlin by L. Heimann. The first edition, with Rosenkranz's first introduction, was published in 1845.

social and political problems of real life; his interest in more technical issues of
logic and metaphysics came second. Dewey’s understanding of Hegel’s primary
interest set the stage for the central argument of the lecture:

Hegel was a great actualist. By this I mean that he has the greatest respect,
both in his thought and in his practice, for what has actually amounted to
something, actually succeeded in getting outward form. It was customary
then, as now, to throw contempt upon the scientific, the artistic, the
industrial and social life, as merely worldly in comparison with certain
feelings and ideas which are regarded as specifically spiritual. Between
the two, the secular, which after all is here and now, and the spiritual,
which exists only in some far off region and which ought to be, Hegel had
no difficulty in choosing. Hegel is never more hard in his speech, hard as
steel is hard, than when dealing with mere ideals[,] vain opinions and
sentiments which have not succeeded in connecting themselves with the
actual world.52

In this passage, Dewey was surely thinking of Hegel’s frequently misunderstood
claim in The Philosophy of Right that “What is rational is actual; and what is actual
is rational.”53 Rather than reading Hegel’s statement as advocating acquiescence
to the status quo—whatever is, is what should be—Dewey understood it to mean
that only ethical principles with which agents can identify, i.e., view as rational,
can serve as actual principles of ethical life; ideal principles fail because no one

52 Dewey, “Hegel’s Philosophy of Spirit: Lectures by John Dewey,” The University of
Chicago, 1897 (Southern Illinois University, Morris Library, Special Collections, John Dewey
Papers, Collection 102), 6. Cf. Royce’s claim that “Nothing is true, for them [the post-Kantian
idealists], unless therein the sense, the purpose, the meaning of some active process is carried out,
expressed, accomplished. Truth is not for these post-Kantian idealists something dead and settled
apart from action. It is a construction, a process, an activity, a creation, an attainment.” Later,
Royce claimed that “It becomes manifest throughout the whole work [Hegel’s Phenomenology of
Spirit] that, for Hegel, thought is inseparable from will, that logic exists only as the logic of life,
and the truth, although in a sense that we shall hereafter consider absolute, exists only in the
form of a significant life process, in which the interests and purposes both of humanity and of the
Absolute express themselves. The deduction of the categories of the thinking process, in so far as
it is suggested in this work, is dialectical. It is based upon the method of antithesis, a method
possessing for Hegel pragmatic significance and illustrating the way in which men live as well as
the way in which men must think.” Royce, Lectures on Modern Idealism, 86, 145.

53 Hegel, Elements of the Philosophy of Right, ed. Allen Wood, trans. H.B. Nisbet
“What is actual can act.” Hegel, Hegel’s Science of Logic, trans. A. V. Miller (Atlantic Highlands, NJ:
can entertain them seriously.\textsuperscript{54} Dewey continued to depict Hegel in this way in his mature thought, writing in 1929 that “Hegel...is never weary of pouring contempt upon an Ideal that merely ought to be. ‘The actual is the rational and the rational is the actual.’”\textsuperscript{55} Dewey’s reading of Hegel’s dictum is consistent with Hegel’s clarification of it in the introduction to the “Lesser Logic,” where he explained that “The actuality of the rational stands opposed by the popular fancy that Ideas and ideals are nothing but chimeras, and philosophy a mere system of such phantasms,” and “by the very different fancy that Ideas and ideals are something far too excellent to have actuality, or something too important to procure it for themselves.”\textsuperscript{56} To put it in another way, Dewey understood Hegel’s pronouncement to mean that the actual, the efficacious, is the real which is rational, and what is rational is actual, or efficacious. On this reading, Hegel’s claim is a call to action, meaning that philosophers should discover the rational in reality and work to advance it. Again, in 1929 Dewey wrote that, for Hegel, “The moral task of man is not to create a world in accord with the ideal but to appropriate intellectually and in the substance of personality the meanings and values already incarnate in an actual world.”\textsuperscript{57} Clearly, Dewey saw a pragmatic

\textsuperscript{54} In The Origin of Dewey’s Instrumentalism, Morton White maintains that "when he [Hegel] attacked the mechanical approach [to human problems], he made way for the growth of social science and the emphasis on process; when he called the real 'rational,' he made way for the right Hegelians." From this, White concludes that Hegel’s organicism and emphasis on process culminated in Dewey’s social psychology, but "signs of right Hegelianism leave forever." This is a good example of errors that have arisen from speculating about Dewey’s Hegelian deposit without exegesis of Hegel’s writings. The notion that Hegel’s assertion inevitably led to right Hegelianism is based on a misunderstanding of Hegel’s meaning and is at odds with the way Dewey understood it. White, The Origin of Dewey’s Instrumentalism, 98.

\textsuperscript{55} Dewey, The Quest for Certainty (1929), LW 4: 51.


\textsuperscript{57} Dewey, The Quest for Certainty (1929), LW 4: 51. Cf. Karl Löwith’s claim that, with Hegel, “Philosophy becomes an eternally living activity, excluding any revival of past systems. The philosopher who is to do justice to this transitory nature must be the most persevering and
element in Hegel's controversial claim: principles are meaningful only to the extent that they are put to work and have actual effects in the world.

According to Dewey, the driving force behind all of Hegel's thought was the *concrete* realization of individual and social unity. In "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" Dewey explained that, "in [his] undergraduate days" he was influenced by Comte's "idea of the disorganized character of Western modern culture, due to a disintegrative 'individualism,' and his idea of a synthesis of science that should be a regulative method of an organized social life," and added that he "found...the same criticisms combined with a deeper and more far-reaching integration in Hegel."58 This lecture demonstrates that Dewey viewed Hegel's philosophy as cultural criticism and as offering a solution to the problem of modernity, the breakdown of community and the concurrent atomization and isolation of individuals.

Hegel's analysis of modernity was based upon a complex interpretation of western history. Though Dewey discussed Hegel's philosophy of history in some detail, here we can only examine it briefly, just enough to secure an understanding of how Dewey understood Hegel's project.59 As Dewey explained, Hegel's model of social harmony was to be found in the Ancient Greek polis but, according to Hegel, the polis had vanished because its moral order, or *Sittlichkeit*, made insufficient room for the individual to rise above society and critique it for

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58 Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (1930), LW 5: 154.
himself. After the decline of the ancient Greek polis, along with its political and religious practices and beliefs, the Roman empire instituted a purely formal, legal, or institutional conception of the individual. As Christianity emerged, however, it provided a conception of the individual not as an isolated unity, but "as a manifestation of the absolute unity of nature and of history, that is as an incarnation of the divine spirit."\(^{60}\)

This potential unification of man with nature and history was advanced, and simultaneously subverted, as modernity began to emerge in the Protestant Reformation. Dewey recounted Hegel’s claim that the Protestant Reformation sought to eliminate the dualism of the individual and formal institutions through the principle that the individual does not need an institution to guard the truth and dole out salvation. Martin Luther’s teaching of justification by faith affirmed the "direct relation of divine truth to the individual," but western man first understood this new principle in a subjective way, promoting "habits of minute introspective self-examination" which led to spiritual agony.\(^{61}\)

The view that all men have access to truth gave birth to modern science, and Dewey claimed that Hegel learned from science that nature is neither one with man, nor is it an obstacle to him; nature is instead "so bound up with man’s own life that he had to master its meaning in order to preserve his own mental integrity." But Protestant individualism also led to eighteenth-century rationalist philosophy which subjected all traditions and institutions to individual

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\(^{60}\) Ibid., 93.
\(^{61}\) Ibid., 96, 97. Cf. Dewey’s complaint about religion that “is reduced to internal experiences of morbid and health-destroying introspection. The individual must watch his every thought and feeling to see if it please God or no. His life is one vast query. Have I the evidences
judgment. Because no institutions could withstand such scrutiny, skepticism carried the day. Modernity had provided the concept of the individual—modern subjectivity—which could correct the incompleteness of Greek society, but had not provided a Sittlichkeit in which the individual could be grounded. On the contrary, modern subjectivity had proven corrosive of all social institutions and led to a compartmentalization and fragmentation of society. In the Enlightenment and in eighteenth and nineteenth-century religious sects—Pietism, Wesleyanism—man had ultimately withdrawn from society and retreated into his subjectivity, concluding that he could act according to his own conscience regardless of the effects of his actions on society. As Dewey explained, for Hegel, “a man can live as a whole, neither surrendering himself to a fixed external authority, nor in his desire to escape this external something, retiring into his own private feelings or into a region of intellectual abstractions.”

Dewey explained that a crucial element of the problem of disharmony, according to Hegel, was that Protestantism’s rigid separation of church and state had created divisions within society and within individuals because it gave “the domain of the internal, the domain of conscience in the sense of subjective ideas and beliefs, wholly to the Church, to religion, while the outward forms of life and the actual points of contact between men should be reserved wholly for the State.” In this way the inner, spiritual life was “deprived...of all concrete bases


and ends, reducing it to an empty spirituality,” and the outward life became “perfunctory and without any deep spiritual meaning.”

Furthermore, Dewey explained, Hegel rejected the rational religion of Enlightenment philosophers like Kant and Fichte because it perpetuated the Protestant error by confining religion to intellectual abstractions. Hegel also believed, according to Dewey, that modern philosophy facilitated the retreat into private feelings and intellectual abstractions by creating divisions within the self because it makes a thing out of matter and another thing out of the soul and then asks how it is possible that these two fixed and separate things should have any relation to each other. The question put is, by its very nature, insoluble, and thus we have from the persons who put this problem long dissertations upon the incomprehensibility, upon the mysteriousness of the relations of the soul to matter.

Ultimately, modern subjectivity led to one of the most important advances in western history, the French Revolution, but it also culminated in the Reign of Terror, which, in Dewey’s words, “in principle was the conflict of the private reason of the individual with the public reason embodied in law, institution and tradition.” Subjective freedom—“the right of the particular subject...to get his own satisfaction and get it in his own way, not having to take either his ideals or his means from another person”—thus led to an anarchic individualism. As Dewey explained, “Seemingly all social ties, all objective institutions, all settled authority, had been dissolved in favor of an unstable liberty of the individual.

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63 Ibid., 15.
64 Ibid., 38. Cf. Hegel’s claim that, “In every dualistic system, and especially in that of Kant, the fundamental defect makes itself visible in the inconsistency of unifying at one moment what a moment before had been explained to be independent and therefore incapable of unification. And then, at the very moment after unification has been alleged to be the truth, we suddenly come upon the doctrine that the two elements, which, in their true status of unification,
The excess of the French revolution seemed to be the logical outcome of the [Enlightenment] principle of freedom." The Enlightenment disregarded the right of the other, or what Hegel called, "the right of the object." The other, or the object, has the right "to be recognized in its own rationality." This is true when we seek knowledge of material objects—we must deduce "the true meaning of the facts themselves"—but also when we interact with other self-conscious beings. We have a duty to seek "the rationality of the subject-matter."^65

In this way, Dewey depicted the primary goal of Hegel's philosophy as not only cultural unity, but also cultural criticism. Because Hegel embraced modern subjectivity, unity and criticism went hand in hand. In the modern era, only a society which provided for the individualism necessary for penetrating critique of its practices and institutions could gain, to some degree at least, the sense of community of the Greek polis. The task of philosophy was to articulate a conception of the individual and society that would support the reconstruction of society along these lines, and provide for a blending of social and individual imperatives.

Several other avenues of interpretation follow from the notion that Hegel was the great actualist. The goal of Hegel's philosophy of spirit, Dewey explained, was self-knowledge, which should always be understood as including understanding of one's culture, because Hegel viewed reality as an organism which united in a totality reason and feeling, man and nature, and man and

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society. This organism was Geist or spirit but, for Hegel, spirit was not an unchanging substance, rather “spirit is only what it does”; it is a dynamic process. On a humanistic reading, toward which Dewey was moving, Hegel’s notion of spirit can be understood as humanity in its development rather than a transcendent God. At one point in the lecture, Dewey described Hegel’s concept of Geist as “the process of evolution itself out of which every species of individual comes, and back into which it goes.” He went on to write that “different human beings” can be seen “simply as so many accidents or qualities into which the one substantial process of life has differentiated itself during its evolution.”

In his discussion of Geist, Dewey briefly addressed the methodology of Hegel’s philosophy of history, defending him from the oft-stated charge that he made history “purely a priori,” forcing events into a preconceived end to be realized in history. On Dewey’s reading of Hegel as the great actualist this charge “is absurd.” According to Dewey, every history must be given some sort of unity or it would not even be “a child’s fairy tale, for children require a certain point in their stories.” The charge against Hegel would be correct if he had postulated the goal of history arbitrarily, but Dewey claimed that Hegel found the goal by taking the facts of history seriously and letting them speak for themselves. Dewey implied that Hegel was able to see reason in history because he had become “conscious of the end of the whole and identifier[d] himself with

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it; consequently, Hegel "actively participate[d] in the whole." Further, to the degree that a nation becomes conscious of, and identifies itself, with the end of history, it becomes both a means to the end and an end in itself. When Dewey spoke of the end of history in this passage, it seems apparent that he meant the goal of history rather than its conclusion.

Dewey’s strong defense of Hegel’s philosophy of history indicates that it resonated with him and that we should expect to see elements of it in his thought. In the lecture, Dewey discussed Hegel’s theories about the history of art in some detail, closely tracking the developmental aesthetics he had studied in Joseph Torrey’s A Theory of Fine Art as an undergraduate at the University of Vermont. And in 1897, the year of this lecture, Dewey began to discuss historical and social factors that, he believed, have impacted the development of philosophers’ thinking about epistemology and logic, specifically discussing how the Ancient Greek search for self-knowledge and the modern search for scientific knowledge have shaped the field of epistemology. This type of historical, or genealogical, account of the problems of philosophy was a prominent feature of Dewey’s mature thought.

Because Hegel’s term Geist can be legitimately translated into English as “mind” as well as “spirit,” it provides clues about Hegel’s philosophical

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many scholars who have gone before them on the humanistic Hegelian left and the metaphysical Hegelian right.

67 Dewey, “Hegel’s Philosophy of Spirit,” 86. To some degree at least, Royce agreed with Dewey on this point. According to Royce, “It is easy to say that in Hegel’s treatment of his ethico-
logical parallelism, as one might call it, he becomes a formalist, and often appears to falsify history by interpreting its catastrophes and its warfare in terms of the categories of his system. But this offense, in so far as it can be charged against Hegel, in much less present in the Phaenomenologie than in his much later lectures on the philosophy of history.” Royce, Lectures on Modern Idealism, 144.
psychology, and how Dewey found functionalism in Hegel. Whereas British empiricism had hypostasized the abilities or functions of mind into faculties, and sense data into an external metaphysical realm, on Dewey’s reading of Hegel, he viewed the mind, mental faculties, and empirical data as “elements in the development of the active unity of spirit.” Dewey explained that,

We understand spirit, then, not when we begin by supposing a substance which we term soul or by supposing a lot of separate mental faculties, but only when we trace the varied process by which spirit realizes itself. Our so-called faculties will then appear in their proper place as stages in its evolution.⁶⁹

Dewey also explained that, according to Hegel’s actualism, the soul’s “unity with nature” entailed that “it can feel its own qualities only so far as these find bodily expression,” taking on an outward form. Further, “a man cannot feel his own feelings except as they come in this round-about way through his body.... That is to say, sadness or joy, scorn, hatred, courage, etc., are not felt directly and of themselves; they are felt only through the outward bodily expression.”⁷⁰ This brings to mind Dewey’s letter to James in which he stated that the theory of emotions in James’s Principles of Psychology “is good Hegelianism” because “according to Hegel a man can’t feel his own feelings unless they go around, as it were, through his body.”⁷¹ In the lecture Dewey also explained that, for Hegel, “we only know our thoughts when we give them an objective form,


⁶⁹ Dewey, “Hegel’s Philosophy of Spirit,” 28. Cf. Hegel’s statement that “the distinction between thought and will is simply that between theoretical and practical attitudes. But they are not two separate faculties; on the contrary, the will is a particular way of thinking—thinking translating itself into existence, thinking as the drive to give itself existence.” Hegel, Elements of the Philosophy of Right, ed. Allen Wood, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), §4.
when we...get them out into spoken sounds or written words.” Only when thoughts and ideas are verbalized and shared do they gain a certain reality and universality. Thought that is inexpressible is simply confused, because clear thought “must objectify itself and get concrete form.” In the same way, in an 1896 essay on the teaching of artistic expression, Dewey criticized the notion that we can speak of an idea and its expression, because “the expression is more than a mode of conveying an already formed idea; it is part and parcel of its formation.” Dewey elaborated on the implication of this view of thought for education: “Education, like philosophy, has suffered from the idea that thought is complete in itself, and that action, the expression of thought, is a physical thing.” According to Dewey, recent psychology bolstered his view of thought by showing that “thought is thought only in and through action.” The pupil does not have a fully developed idea until he has acted on it, and learning truly consists in doing.

Dewey claimed Hegel’s philosophical psychology successfully reconciled Fichte and Schelling, and he portrayed this accomplishment as a particularly significant moment in Hegel’s development. Hegel surpassed his two predecessors

by conceiving of spirit as an active unity in which all absolute oppositions are overcome but in which they are maintained as relative distinctions. Nature, for example, is neither swallowed up in spirit nor of equal value with it. It is a factor in the process of spirit itself and spirit maintains itself by means of the eternal maintaining of nature in existence.

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71 Dewey to William James, 6 May 1891.
In this way Hegel rejected the view that spirit and nature, subject and object, were somehow distinct realities and that one was superior to the other. We have already seen that Dewey did the same in the "Reflex Arc" article, and countless other writings. Unlike Schelling, Dewey explained, Hegel postulated the absolute as "a unity of activity to be realized in and through diversity and opposition."

Further,

The true absolute could be found only when this original identity had differentiated itself and when out of its differences it had reached a unity of life and of activity in which the subject and the object no longer expressed two parallel lines, but were themselves factors contributing to the higher unity of the spirit.74

On Dewey's reading Hegel conceived subject and object as factors within, or functions of, spirit's development. The above passage also demonstrates that Dewey believed there was room for diversity in Hegel's philosophy. As Dewey explained it, in Hegel's metaphysics, unity required diversity.

According to Hegel's and Dewey's rejection of faculty psychology, reason, feeling, and will can be logically distinguished as different activities of the self, but should not be viewed as separate agents or realities. The self is not an aggregate of independent parts, each of which exists and operates by itself, or which can oppose one another, rather they are simply different aspects of one self-conscious being and, ideally, all work together. According to this unitary notion of the self, it is misleading to suggest that the will or emotions must be subdued in order to allow reason to function properly. As Hegel would say, the self is a unity in difference. Further, epistemology and ethics are artificial separations of the subject matter of philosophy because the objects they
investigate are intertwined within the self. Experience is a concrete whole in which the self-conscious subject is at once reasoning, feeling, and willing.\textsuperscript{75}

Dewey further elaborated on Hegel’s philosophical psychology by claiming that all of the activities of mind or spirit are “ways by which the external is brought back to the internal, is made ideal.” Here we encounter the St. Louis Hegelians’ process of alienation and return. The internal and the external are not ontologically separate realms; the process of idealization is a restoration of the original unity of the internal and the external. Dewey repeated a position similar to the one he voiced in “Psychology as Philosopher Method.” According to Hegel, he explained, when philosophy deals with spirit “man is not dealing with a material external to himself.” Knowledge is not a process in which mind comes to know a reality external to itself, but “the process by which the reality comes to a consciousness of its own basis, meaning and bearings.”\textsuperscript{76} In the same way, Dewey had argued that because psychology studies man’s finite mind, and reality is an absolute mind, the results of psychology could be generalized to resolve philosophical questions.\textsuperscript{77}

Dewey noted that Schelling and Hegel disapproved of Fichte’s notion that, because absolute spirit requires opposition in order to achieve fulfillment, it creates the world of nature solely for the purpose of overcoming it. Schelling and Hegel objected that if Fichte’s absolute succeeded in overcoming the opposition


\textsuperscript{77} Dewey, “Psychology as Philosopher Method” (1886), EW 1: 144.
of nature, it would destroy the grounds for its own moral perfection, and that Fichte’s moral ideal was therefore unattainable. This is precisely why Dewey referred to Green’s ethical theory as “Neo-Fichtean.” As we have already seen, in “Green’s Theory of the Moral Motive,” Dewey’s main objection was that Green made the moral ideal unattainable because it was transcendent.\textsuperscript{78}

Along the same line, Dewey argued that Hegel’s philosophical method surpassed Schelling’s Romantic method, because Schelling “fell back on intellectual intuition.”\textsuperscript{79} Hegel built upon Fichte’s and Schelling’s dialectical method by claiming that reason, understood as logical relationships, is in the world, and thus the world is rationally comprehensible. But, for Dewey, this did not make Hegel a subjective idealist who reduced reality to thought. As we saw him do in “The Present Position of Logical Theory,” six years earlier, Dewey argued that, for Hegel, “thought is so real that it can be found only in the object

\textsuperscript{78} Dewey, “Self-Realization as the Moral Ideal” (1893), EW 4: 53; and Dewey, “Green’s Theory of the Moral Motive” (1892), 3: 163. Note that in the Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics, Dewey criticized F. H. Bradley for making the moral ideal unattainable and concluding that morality must be based on faith. Fichte made a similar move, ultimately arguing that all knowledge and action is based on faith. See J. G. Fichte, The Vocation of Man trans. William Smith, introduction by E. Ritchie (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1906), 100. Hegel found this aspect of Fichte’s thought very troubling, precisely because he feared that it could lead to the kind of irrational passions that had manifested in the French Reign of Terror. Hegel wrote that, according to Fichte, “The Will itself...requires that its End should not be realized.” Hegel, Hegel’s Logic, §234. He also worried that Kant’s belief in an unknowable noumenal realm could lead to the same kinds of problems. Joseph Flay correctly claims that Dewey’s rejection of the neo-Hegelian dualism between the present and ideal selves “exemplifies his ‘return to Hegel,’ circumventing neo-Hegelianism.” Joseph Charles Flay, “Hegel and Dewey and the Problem of Freedom” (Ph. D. diss., University of Southern California, 1965), 94. See also George Armstrong Kelley, Idealism, Politics and History: Sources of Hegelian Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 302-309. Dewey continued to critique Fichte in this way in his mature thought. See Dewey, The Quest for Certainty (1929), LW 4: 50.

and not in any subjective opinion." The primary point of Hegel's dialectic, Dewey asserted, was

that all thought is objective, that relations of thought are forms of the objective world, that the process of thinking is simply following the movement of the subject matter itself. This is often interpreted as exactly the opposite of what Hegel meant. It is often considered to mean that thought as a special faculty of the mind has the power of evolving truth out of itself; that subjective ideas, by some magic, transform themselves into objective facts. But his real meaning is that there is no such thing as a faculty of thought separate from things: that thinking is simply the translation of fact into its real meaning; it is subjection of reality subjecting.  

According to Dewey, Hegel put thought in the world, denying Cartesian dualism, by asserting that relations are objectively real. Relations are not added to the data of experience by thought which exists apart from the data; rather, thought recognizes the logical relations latent in the world and articulates them in rational form.

Dewey also offered a functionalist account of Hegel's theory of the will. For Hegel, in the process of molding one's world, reason becomes will, and rationalizes the individual's appetites and inclinations, organizing them "into unity with all the aims and ends of life." In other words, when intelligence is successful, it rationalizes the self, making it more consistent with the rationality it has discovered in the objective world. This process is the formation of good

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80 Dewey, "Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit," 3. Cf. Dewey, "The Present Position of Logical Theory" (1891), EW 3: 136. This misunderstanding of idealism has been remarkably persistent. In 1913 Morris Cohen, who Dewey knew well from Glencoe and later venues, stated that the New Realists were "fighting epistemological subjectivism; but for some unaccountable reason they always call it idealism. That this use of the word idealism involves unusual violence to the facts of history, e.g., in the implication that an idealist like Hegel is an epistemologic subjectivist, ought to be clear to all students of the history of philosophy." Cohen, "The New Realism," The Journal of Philosophy 10, no. 8 (10 April 1913): 197, n3.

81 Dewey, "Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit," 4. Cf. Dewey's claim that Hegel agrees with Kant that space and time are forms of perception, but for Hegel this does not imply that they are subjective forms because "they are true forms of the perceived objects themselves" (60).
habits which allow the individual to know, and master, his experiences. Dewey explained that the will spans the divide between the objective and the subjective because it gives outward, objective manifestation to ideas. "Will...is not merely an act of changing ideas into existences," however, "it is the activity which comprehends within itself as factors both an idea and an object."\(^2\) Reason and the will translate objective and subjective particulars into universal, rational form.

Dewey also claimed that, for Hegel, the merely felt unity of body and soul is completed in habit by the activity of the soul. In habit the soul masters the body, and thereby gains the power to master the world. Like will, intelligent habits are "the transition between the soul and the whole outer world." This is why Brokmeyer insisted that each member of the St. Louis Philosophical Society give a rational account of his life. Dewey and the St. Louis Hegelians believed that man seeks harmony within himself and with his world. This harmony is attained by forming rational habits that are consistent with universal laws and thereby overcoming contradictions, diremptions, or dualisms. According to this American Hegelian tradition then, knowledge, and in fact all life activity, should be directed at a practical goal because man is not an atomistic, knowledge-seeking being, but a social self, seeking psychological or spiritual integrity.\(^3\)

This discussion of intelligence and habit clarifies what it meant for Hegel, and Dewey, to claim that the distinction between subject and object, soul and the


\(^{3}\) Dewey, "Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit," 49. Cf. Hegel's claim that "an individual cannot know what he [really] is until he has made himself a reality through action." Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, §401.
world, "is not a fixed separation but...one stage in the process of spirit by which it ultimately affects its own particular unity and activity." The individual finds subjective unity through the formation of habit, and objective unity through the discovery of laws, or universals, in the objective world. In so doing the self "finds itself and thus becomes self-conscious." In discovering "a concrete universal or ideality manifested in differences, the self is elevated to universality." But according to Hegel, Dewey explained, the self is not a uniting activity, as it was for Kant, it is the unity of experience, and as the self comes to self-consciousness, "it realizes this unity which is forever involved in the constitution of the objective world." 84

On Dewey's reading of Hegel's theory of desire, the self must become practical in order to get a clear sense of its power over nature. Desire is a function of the requirement that self-consciousness have external objects for its survival, and yet finds itself limited by anything that is outside itself. Consumption of physical objects is the most rudimentary level of practicality because, in consuming, the self demonstrates its negative power over its environment. The self does not take things as they are, but changes them in accordance with its own needs. In consumption, self-consciousness expresses its desire for survival; self-consciousness appropriates realities foreign to itself, but then overcomes this foreignness and regains its integrity. But this integrity proves to be fleeting, Dewey noted, because once the object of desire is done away with as an independent object, self-consciousness will have "annihilate[d] the object which

satisfied it." Self-consciousness seems doomed to be permanently unsatisfied, in a perpetual state of desire. Because new desires arise endlessly, man never returns to a non-desiring, static self. In sum, the object constrains but also provides the context for the survival of self-consciousness.

For this reason, man seeks an object that endures, "an object which is as permanent and universal as himself." Dewey explained that, for Hegel, the process of satisfying desire leads to self-consciousness because the individual recognizes that the self is not an object that is consumed, but an object that consumes, a universal. As Dewey depicted Hegel's theory, what man truly seeks is not knowledge per se, but a certain integrity within himself and with his environment. To truly achieve integrity man needs an other which can be negated without being consumed, thus Hegel's functionalist psychology is also a social psychology. The basic desire of human self-consciousness can only be fulfilled, therefore, by another self-consciousness. For this reason, man struggles for recognition from equivalent selves and finds himself surrounded by other individuals struggling for recognition. Initially, the individual responds to this situation "by giving battle to every other self," trying to reduce the other to a thing for his own satisfaction. The one who is victorious in the struggle becomes the master and enslaves the other because he learns that if he cares for the other, rather than destroying him, he can force the other to care for him. In this way the master realizes that his free existence is dependent upon others. The slave learns to subordinate his desires to the wants of others, and thereby becomes socialized. In this struggle both individuals ultimately realize that others are not things, but

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85 Ibid., 55.
persons like themselves. At this stage, individuals have risen above “mere isolated individuality,” but only as the individual realizes “that there is a true unity of will to which all equally owe obedience” does he become fully free. In this way, individuals learn that “the true objective self is neither itself nor some other particular self,” and “is truly objective instead of being simply one object among, or by the side of, other objects.”

Hegel’s functionalism takes Dewey to the heart of his metaphysics. When scholars think about the differences between Dewey’s thought and Hegel’s many correctly think of Dewey as a pluralist and, more questionably, Hegel as a monist. Dewey’s explanation of Hegel’s break with Schelling is revealing on this point. Hegel rejected Schelling’s principle of identity which proclaimed the absolute identity of nature and spirit. Hegel objected that the underlying unity was not “a common substratum, but...a unity of activity to be realized in and through diversity and opposition.” Schelling’s absolute identity, which he took to be the ultimate conclusion of philosophy, was only a starting point for Hegel. Schelling’s absolute was a substance that simply swallowed up the differences of “subject and object, man and nature.” We should recall that, in his second publication, Dewey made the same objection to Spinoza’s “identity philosophy,” claiming that he had affirmed the unity of reality at the expense of the diversity

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86 Ibid., 56, 57. Cf. Hegel, “Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness: Lordship and Bondage,“ in Phenomenology of Spirit, §§178-196. Cf. Mead’s claim that “the immediate analysis of consciousness reveals an essentially social nature of the self. From childhood up we see that the individual recognizes and formulates the personalities of others before he does his own; that the formation of his own personality is the result of the organization of that of others...Immediate consciousness...must recognize others in order that it may state itself.” Mead, “A New Criticism of Hegelianism: Is It Valid?,” The American Journal of Theology 5 (1901): 95-96.

of ordinary experience. Dewey was inclined toward Hegel’s idealism precisely because he believed that Hegel had successfully accounted for the unity of reality without resorting to a monistic, identity philosophy. In contrast to Schelling, Hegel’s absolute was a subject rather than a substance, meaning that it is “a spiritual principle which maintains itself as unity, not by abolishing distinctions, but by making them elements in its own self-conscious life. It is a principle of activity as against one of mere existende [sic].” Dewey believed that Hegel’s dialectic provided for the existence of diverse elements, functions, within a unified reality.

Dewey explained that Hegel’s “idea of method was deepened and almost transformed by [his] conviction of the important place of opposition, of contradiction and negation in life.” In his discussion of negation, Dewey described Hegel’s three stages of historical development in more detail:

First, the period of implicit unity when, apparently all was harmony; when man and Nature and God were one. [sic] Then, secondly, there was the period of negation and of discord, the period when the various elements of the original unity were isolated and set over against each other. In the third period, however, a true reconciliation takes place. It is seen that underlying the discord and opposition there is still a unity, nay, even more, it is seen that the very principle of difference, of negation, is itself an expression and a realization of this unity,—that the period of discord is an element in the process by which the real harmony maintains and extends itself.

The fundamental truth of the dialectic, Dewey maintained, was that all thought, like reality itself, involves “a union of affirmative and negative, or of universal and particular factors.” Approvingly, Dewey explained that Hegel

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88 Dewey, “The Pantheism of Spinoza,” EW 1: 10. It is significant that Schelling first proclaimed his identity philosophy in his Vorlesungen über die Methode des academischen Studiums, which he wrote in Spinoza’s axiomatic mode.
always retained the notion that the negative was as real as, or more precisely, a component of, the positive. That which had not been negated could not really be called a positive because it had merely not been questioned. In Hegel’s political philosophy this meant that social unity requires continual critique from the members of society. Moreover, the negation is not final, because in its fullest development it must give rise to a more inclusive positive and negate itself. This brings us to the third stage of the dialectic, the “negation of negations.” This stage, however, is not “mere annihilation,” rather it is “the statement of a positive in which all contradictions had been reconciled.” Dewey also described the first stage of the dialectic as dogmatic thought, “thought which is not at all aware of its own conditions, limitations and relations.” The second stage is skepticism, in which doubt at first appears to nullify all truth, but this is actually only doubt of unreflective, dogmatic truth. The sceptical period must give way to “the period of criticism” or of “self-conscious thought” in which truth “is aware of its own contradictions and relations.” As we have already seen with both Morris and Dewey, for this reason Hegelians do not take skepticism seriously as a philosophical position; it is merely a partial understanding, a stage on the path to truth.

Hegel’s actualism also facilitates a discussion of whether or not Dewey faulted Hegel, as he did the British neo-Hegelians, with committing the historical fallacy. This issue arises in Dewey’s discussion of Hegel’s theory of causation. Dewey maintained that, on Hegel’s theory of causation, there is no practical

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difference between materialism and idealism because a consistent materialism leads to idealism.\footnote{Ibid., 17, 18. Cf. Hegel’s discussion of the role of skepticism in Phenomenology of Spirit, §§78-80. Dewey’s periodization—dogmatic thought, skepticism, criticism—may be based on Kant, Critique of Pure Reason (New York: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1929), 668-669.} Materialism, for Hegel, disregards the fact that “the cause goes into its effect.” When materialists claim that matter is the cause of the soul, they unwittingly concede that “it is the very nature of matter to become soul, that the soul is the real meaning, the real truth of matter, and this is precisely what is meant by idealism.” Dewey’s phrase, “the cause goes into its effect,” is a virtual quotation of Hegel’s claim in §153 of his “Lesser Logic,” as translated by William Wallace, that the cause “is wholly passed into the effect.”\footnote{In this context, we should recall Dewey’s claim in Dewey to H. A. P. Torrey, 17 November 1883, that consistent use of the psychological standpoint would inevitably lead one to idealism.}

Assuming that Dewey was familiar with Hegel’s discussion of causation in §§153-157 of the “Lesser Logic,” we can speculate about whether or not he believed that Hegel’s theory of causation commits the historical fallacy. In 1902, Dewey objected to the

purely metaphysical conception of causation...according to which the cause is somehow superior in rank and excellence to the effect. The effects are regarded as somehow all inside the womb of cause, only awaiting their proper time to be delivered. They are considered as derived and secondary, not simply in the order of time, but in the order of existence.

This theory of causation is an example of the historical fallacy because it holds that the cause is more real than the effect. According to Dewey, “Materialism arises just out of this fetish-like worship of the antecedent.” The materialist believes that he can trace all effects back to material causes, and that this proves that reality is ultimately material because matter is the universal antecedent.

Dewey went on to write that the idealist makes the same mistake in reverse because he "isolates and deifies...the later term," the consequent.

To him [the idealist] the reality is somehow "latent" or "potential" in the earlier forms, and, gradually working from within, transforms them until it finds for itself a fairly adequate expression. It is an axiom with him that what is evolved in the latest form is involved in the earliest. The later reality is, therefore, to him the persistent reality in contrast with which the first forms are, if not illusions, at least poor excuses for being.\textsuperscript{94}

In §153 of the "Lesser Logic," Hegel argued not that the effect is more real than the cause, but that the two are implicitly identical to experience. One could understand Hegel to have articulated the pragmatic principle that we only perceive a cause after we see its effect and, in the same way, we only perceive an effect after we discover its cause. He went on to claim that "Both cause and effect are thus one and the same content..." And in his \textit{Science of Logic}, Hegel claimed that the "...effect contains nothing whatever that cause does not contain" and "...cause contains nothing which is not in its effect."\textsuperscript{95} According to Hegel, the distinction of cause and effect is introduced by the understanding (\textit{Verstand}) into an essentially homogenous continuum, but further reflection (\textit{Vernunft}) reveals that they are not ontologically distinct. They are functions of our effort to understand our experience.

Hegel elaborated on his theory of causation by arguing that only when a cause produces an effect, does it become a cause and thus, in this sense, it is the cause of itself and also the effect of itself. The effect can also be viewed as a cause because only when it occurs does the cause become a cause. In this way cause and effect seem to reverse their roles, and are more fruitfully seen as being in a

\textsuperscript{94} Dewey, "The Evolutionary Method as Applied to Ethics" (1902), MW 2: 12.
\textsuperscript{95} Hegel, Hegel's \textit{Science of Logic}, 559.
reciprocal rather than a linear relationship. Hegel’s notion of reciprocity is consistent with his distinction between a bad infinity, in which the antecedents of an effect regress indefinitely, and a true infinity, which is circular. For Hegel, this is a more complete picture of causation than one that elevates one element, cause or effect, as somehow more real than the other. We can assume that Dewey was familiar enough with Hegel’s writings, especially §§153-157 of the “Lesser Logic,” to realize that Hegel did not fit into the class of idealists who commit the historical fallacy. Moreover, as we shall see, like Hegel, Dewey maintained throughout his philosophical development that cause and effect, means and ends, are not ontologically distinct but are integrally related. As early as 1893 Dewey stated that we separate “cause from effect...means from end,” because we have “a partial and vague idea of the whole fact...”

There is another clue about Dewey’s perception of whether or not Hegel committed the historical fallacy in his analysis of Schelling’s and Hegel’s critique of Fichte. Schelling and Hegel objected that, for Fichte, “the realm of Nature and history [have] no true objective worth.” For Dewey then, Fichte would be guilty of the historical fallacy because he made one part of experience, the subjective, more real than another, nature. But Dewey believed Hegel rejected Kant’s and Fichte’s transcendentalism because the notion of a beyond that presents itself to consciousness as “otherness” creates the feeling of being an alien in the world or, as Hegel often stated it, of not being at home. As we have already seen, Dewey also rejected the transcendent during the 1880s as he moved away from Christianity and the neo-Hegelian notion of a transcendent absolute spirit. This is

precisely why Dewey rejected any moral theory that made the ideal otherworldly and unattainable.

Dewey also emphasized that Hegel saw nature as a function within spirit’s process of development rather than an ontologically distinct realm. Accordingly, on Dewey’s reading, Hegel was not guilty of the historical fallacy because he depicted spirit and nature as equally real. Moreover, in spite of the ambiguity of speaking of spirit’s process of development, we must bear in mind that according to Dewey, Hegel understood spirit as “a principle of activity”; spirit is the process of development rather than an entity that develops.97

Dewey continued with a discussion of Hegel’s ethics and political philosophy that begins with an explanation of Hegel’s criticism of formal reason. Dewey explained that Hegel criticized “merely formal” reason because he maintained that, rather than a process of abstraction, thinking should comprehend “the true meaning of the facts themselves,” which is the universal. Because abstraction dissects the whole into parts—e.g., the table possesses the qualities of solidity and extension—it does not apprehend facts. Solidity and extension do not exist in and of themselves, but the table does; the table is a factual existence. The universal is not tacked onto the particular mechanically; it is organically integral within the fact. Dewey explained, “When this is discovered, thought ceases to be merely formal, a process of operation upon an outside material and becomes one with the content of the facts themselves.” When there is a distinction between form and content, thought is merely

understanding (Verstand); reason (Vernunft) comprehends facts in their interrelated unity.\textsuperscript{98}

In the same way, when a person has understood his true good in a particular, specific way, it no longer seems like a law externally imposed upon his actions. In Dewey's words, if a person "translates his good into particular acts...it becomes his interest as well as his duty to perform the specific act." Duty and motive become one; a person fulfills his moral obligations because he understands that they coincide with his best interest. "In other words, the stage of doing a duty for the sake of a duty marked the point in the morality [sic] at which a man is sufficiently moralized to see that there is a good which should control his actions, but not sufficiently moralized to bring this good home to himself as his own good in every specific act."\textsuperscript{99} The former stage is abstract, formal morality (what Hegel called Moralität); the latter stage is the ethical (Sittlichkeit, in the sense of actual, concrete morality). The particular and the universal, in both reason and morality, must be united. The individual will is not fully realized when it conforms to universal law—such as Kant's categorical imperative—but only when it is one with universal law.

Furthermore, for Hegel, ethical action is not purely individual. As Dewey explained, "The will finds complete expression only when it gets realized in actual institutions and when these institutions are so bound up with the very life purposes of the individual that they supply him his concrete motives." In such a society the law is not something external to, and beyond, the individual, nor is it something that simply ought to be. The law becomes concrete and is "the life and

\textsuperscript{98} Dewey, "Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit," 68.
movement of existing social institutions." These institutions have an educative influence on individuals, teaching them that their "true interest is public rather than private" that their interests are "not hostile to, but one, with that of others." Dewey argued that Hegel understood this to be especially true in modern, civil society in which labor is specialized for the sake of efficiency, so that "the satisfaction of each is made dependent upon the labor of others." In such a society, "individuals are knit together through their mutual dependencies." For this reason, individuals should not seek to satisfy only themselves, but should labor "for the satisfaction of society as a whole." In Dewey's words, "It is the essence of civil society that the individual will...can [only] satisfy [its] private interests by contributing to the satisfaction of others by producing wealth," which Hegel viewed as social, "as distinct from mere property," which Hegel viewed as individual.\footnote{Ibid., 77-78.} Hegel's ethics led Dewey quite naturally to his social philosophy.

Dewey examined Hegel's philosophy of religion because Hegel believed that religion could contribute to social unity. Dewey's description of Hegel's philosophy of religion is remarkably sympathetic:

\[\text{[T]he development of religion is that of the religious consciousness, of consciousness which appreciates, at least in the form of feeling that God is both the subject and object of life; that he is not unknowable nor far-away spirit, but is the spirit of all spirits. In other words, the development of religion is simply the progressive revelation of man to man, the revelation in which man discovers that the ground and aim of his existence is neither in man as a mere individual nor in a world of physical force external to him, but in a living process which unites within its activity him and all other persons, the process of nature itself. The development of religion, in other words, is man finding that the divine spirit is the source and end of all his activity and that therefore the absolute power of the universe is}\]

\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, 80, 82.}
neither mere blind force nor simply an intelligent person outside of the world, that is, a living spirit who lives in and through the world.\textsuperscript{101}

The key idea in this passage is that religions progress, or get closer to the truth with time. In this way, Dewey, like Hegel, adapted religion to a more forward looking, though not necessarily apocalyptic, metaphor in order to make it more credible in the face of the continual progress of scientific knowledge.

Furthermore, it seems that God has completely disappeared from “religion.” Religion is not about God, it is about man, and man’s understanding of nature. Thus science is religion. As Dewey wrote in 1889, in “The Value of Historical Christianity,” “the Spirit of God…is not a mystery working only in miracles, in revivals, etc., but is the intelligence present in all man’s science, is his inspiration for whatever is better than himself.” Some scholars have argued that, in the “Religion” chapter of the Phenomenology of Spirit, Hegel depicted religious practice as a collective reflection on what matters most to a people and, ideally, on what is most important to humanity.\textsuperscript{102} According to Dewey, “Hegel conceived a natural religion which would unite the reason, avoiding all superstitions, with the positive course of history and the imagination and feelings.” Such a religion would countenance “no division, no divorce of the worldly and the spiritual, or piety and virtue.” Rather, “Man [would live] a single, concrete life in which science, art, religion and politics were as one.”\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., 102. Cf. Dewey’s claim that, “God is no remote Being away from the world, that He is no Force which works in physical Nature alone, but…He is an ever present fact in life, in history, and in our social relations.” Dewey, “The Value of Historical Christianity” (1889), LW 17: 531.

\textsuperscript{102} See Robert Solomon, In the Spirit of Hegel, 591-597.

\textsuperscript{103} Dewey, “Hegel’s Philosophy of Spirit,” 9, 7, 8. In this passage, Dewey was discussing Hegel’s early theological writings which at that time were published only in fragments in Rosenkranz’s and Haym’s biographies. Only later did Wilhelm Dilthey’s research into Hegel’s early writings, published in 1905 as Die Jugendgeschichte Hegels und andere Abhandlungen zur
In much the same way, many years later in *A Common Faith* (1934), Dewey depicted God as humanity’s highest ideals and aspirations.\textsuperscript{104} Though scholars have argued for over one hundred years about whether Hegel was a theist, a pantheist, or more of a humanist who equated God with humanity, the following passage indicates that in this 1889 essay Dewey had already come very close to the humanistic view he held in *A Common Faith*, and thus had already moved to the Hegelian left of W. T. Harris regarding the philosophy of religion.

...God is neither a far-away Being, nor a mere philosophic conception by which to explain the world. He is the reality of our ordinary relations with one another in life. He is the bond of the family, the bond of society. He is love, the source of all growth, all sacrifice, and all unity. He has touched history, not from without but has made Himself subjected to all the limitations and sufferings of history; identified Himself absolutely with humanity, so that the life of humanity is henceforward not for some term of years, but forever, the Life of God.\textsuperscript{105}

Dewey went on to describe two crucial characteristics of Hegel’s notion of spirit: its “freedom and its self-revealing power.” Spirit can be in a relationship of opposition to all of nature and “still retain and assert its one being.” Natural things cannot endure a contradiction but “spirit can sustain itself even under infinite self-denial.” This power is spirit’s freedom. Yet the power to stand alone is merely abstract freedom. “Spirit attains to positive freedom, not when it withdraws from all positive relations and still maintains its identity, but only when it impresses its own identity upon all the material which seems to resist it.”

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Dewey’s exposition of the Hegelian theory of freedom sheds light on why the St. Louis Hegelians were critical of the individualism of Thoreau, and why Denton Snider referred to Brokmeyer’s retreat into the wilderness as “his grand act of negation,” and his transition from social recluse to institutionalist as a “spiritual transformation.” 106 Hegel convinced Dewey and the St. Louis Hegelians that mere independence was only partial freedom. In order to attain positive freedom, spirit also reveals or manifests itself by “externaliz[ing] itself in nature,” by returning “to itself through and by means of this externality,” and by overcoming the dualism between the objective and the subjective, a dualism which is internal to absolute spirit. When this occurs, “Nature is no longer a limit which has to be overcome by spirit, but simply a stage in the process by which self consciousness elevates itself to its own complete and objective being.” 107 In the same way, individuals need both negative and positive freedom, the latter being the opportunity and ability to contribute to the construction of their world, including their society.

Though Dewey did not discuss Hegel’s writings on the state in great detail, he rejected the notion that Hegel was an apologist for Prussian absolutism, but criticized him for advocating constitutional monarchy:

...Hegel’s philosophy of the state has often been termed simply a philosophical extraction and justification of the then existing Prussian monarchy. While this, perhaps, is saying too much there can be no doubt that Hegel’s discussion of the internal organization of the state is the most artificial and the least satisfactory portion of his political philosophy. He makes the ideal State most highly realized in the constitutional monarchy

105 Dewey, “The Value of Historical Christianity” (1889), LW 17: 531.
in whose structure simple monarchy, aristocracy and democracy are simply subordinate phases.

Dewey was correct to note that Hegel never embraced democracy, but he did not view Hegel’s statism as inherently inimical to individualism. Rather, Dewey explained that Hegel believed it was the task of the modern state to work out the Christian principle of individuality “in its definite, outward realization.” Moreover, in his discussion of Hegel’s philosophy of history, he noted that Hegel claimed that, in the modern era, man began to examine human action rationally, seeking a foundation for law and morality within his own reason and will rather than in any external authority, and discovered that “society and the State were themselves [man’s] own objective reason.” Consequently, society and the state “did not need to be overthrown in order that the individual might be free, but it was in and through them that the individual was free.”

When we combine this with the notion in the master/slave dialectic that individuals come together because they recognize that they need recognition from other free, self-conscious beings, we can see why Hegel scholars have argued that his political philosophy makes diversity as essential to community as opposition and negation are to the dialectic, rather than something we must learn to tolerate in order to achieve community.

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108 Ibid., 84, 94, 98. This indicates that if Dewey studied Haym’s biography of Hegel, Hegel und seine Zeit, he rejected its primary thesis because, to a large degree, the book instigated the characterization of Hegel as the philosopher of the Prussian state. Hence, we can surmise that either Dewey did not read Haym’s book, or he was more influenced by Rosenkranz’s biography, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel’s Leben.

Finally, we shall close our discussion of Dewey's lecture on Hegel with a consideration of his claim, published in 1939, that he was influenced by "Hegel's idea of cultural institutions as an 'objective mind' upon which individuals were dependent," but that the notion of an "absolute mind" dropped out. Although this passage is often taken to describe Dewey's rejection of Hegel, we have already established reasons to believe that it is best viewed as a rejection of the neo-Hegelian's metaphysical reading of Hegel, in favor of a historicist reading in which the absolute is in no way a transcendent reality. This is consistent with the postulate that Dewey took Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* more seriously than W. T. Harris or the British neo-Hegelians. Dewey also explained that whereas his confidence in Hegel's dialectic ultimately gave way, Hegel's "emphasis on continuity and the function of conflict persisted on empirical grounds..." In this passage, Dewey also referred to his continued rejection of philosophical dualisms of all kinds, according to the emphasis on continuity, and his notion of the necessity and inevitability of problematic situations which spur growth. He explained that he retained Hegel's emphasis on the "power exercised by cultural environment in shaping the ideas, beliefs, and intellectual attitudes of individuals," and thus came to believe that "the only possible psychology, as distinct from a biological account of behavior, was a social psychology." Perhaps the most relevant part of this passage is Dewey's explanation that,

There was a period extending into my earlier years at Chicago when, in connection with a seminar in Hegel's Logic I tried reinterpreting his categories in terms of "readjustment" and "reconstruction." Gradually I came to realize that what the principles actually stood for could be better
understood and stated when completely emancipated from Hegelian
garb.\textsuperscript{110}

Note that this passage indicates that Dewey retained the principles that
Hegel’s categories stood for; he simply sought to restate them more clearly. In
the following section we shall see how Dewey began to emancipate these logical
principles from Hegelian nomenclature.

\textbf{Instrumental Logic}

It is fruitful to view Dewey’s philosophy, as it developed in Chicago and
continued to develop until his death, as a philosophy of learning. This point is
critical to a full understanding of his writings on logic. Completely out of step
with the way logic was beginning to develop in the early twentieth century,
Dewey’s logic was not concerned with proof, but with learning or, as he
generally stated it, “inquiry.” Dewey’s theory of learning was suggested in “The
Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology,” and was taking shape in his essays on the
philosophy of education throughout the 1890s. In a series of publications on logic
from 1900 to 1903 Dewey continued to develop his theory of learning.\textsuperscript{111}

As we examine the early development of Dewey’s logic, we must recall
that in 1898 James had introduced pragmatism in “Philosophical Conceptions
and Practical Results,” a lecture he delivered at Howison’s Philosophical Union
at Berkeley. In that lecture, James turned American philosophers’ attention to


\textsuperscript{111} This way of looking at Dewey’s logic was first suggested to me by Larry Hickman,
\textit{John Dewey’s Pragmatic Technology} (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1990), esp. Ch. 2;
and Tom Burke, \textit{Dewey’s New Logic: A Reply to Russell} (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,
1994), 3ff, 136-156. With regard to these early essays, this characterization of Dewey’s logic is
consideration are, Dewey, “Some Stages of Logical Thought” (1900); his four chapters in the
Peirce, whom he credited with the initial development of the pragmatic method for evaluating the meaning of ideas, although James extended it to a method of ascertaining the value of ideas. In 1903, Dewey acknowledged to James that he had been reading Peirce, and that he could see how far his thought had developed when he considered “how much I got out of Peirce this year and how easily I understand him; when a few years ago he was mostly a sealed book to me aside from occasional inspirations.” But the influence of Peirce was already apparent in Dewey’s “Some Stages in Logical Thought,” published in 1900.

In “Some Stages in Logical Thought,” Dewey began to speak of the doubt-inquiry process Peirce had introduced in “The Fixation of Belief” (1877), and further elaborated in “How To Make Our Ideas Clear” (1878). Dewey described four stages in the doubt-inquiry process, but he defined these stages much more clearly in later writings. Part of the ambiguity in “Some Stages in Logical Thought” is due to his thesis that the “different stages denote various degrees in the evolution of the doubt-inquiry function.” Like Hegel, Dewey correlated the thought process of the individual with the historical development of Western thought. He claimed that these stages of development are “easily recognizable in the progress of both the race and the individual,” but the difficulties Dewey

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112 Dewey to James, 27 March 1903. Dewey acknowledged his indebtedness to Peirce’s Monist articles in a letter to Peirce. Dewey to C. S. Peirce, 23 December 1903.

113 Dewey, “Some Stages in Logical Thought” (1900), MW 1: 165-166. Cf. Hegel’s claim that “The same evolution of thought which is exhibited in the history of philosophy is presented in the System of Philosophy itself.” G. W. F. Hegel, Hegel’s Logic, §14. Dewey discussed the stages of the process of inquiry much more clearly and precisely in How We Think (1910), MW 6: 179-356. Consistent with the view that Dewey’s logic was a theory of learning rather than proving, How We Think was a book on the philosophy of education.
seems to have had explaining the stages in this essay suggests that they are not so apparent.\textsuperscript{114}

In the first stage, we are engaged in activities in which we employ settled beliefs that we take to be facts, without recognition that those beliefs were initially formulated to relieve specific doubts that had arisen in conflicting situations. These beliefs are based upon social customs, which "are no less real than physical events," and "habit[s] of understanding." According to Dewey, this stage of the doubt-inquiry process was analogous to "primitive communities" in which customs are to be followed uncritically, and "are made valid at once in a practical way against anyone who departs from them."\textsuperscript{115} This stage corresponds to the first stage of Hegel's dialectic, the dogmatic stage, as Dewey described it in his lecture.

Even in a more advanced society, Dewey explained, the fixation of belief is essential to action, because "the necessities of action do not await our convenience"; in everyday life we do not always have the luxury to engage in exhaustive inquiry before we act. In this vein, Dewey made a comment about Hegel that is worth quoting in its entirety:

The alternative to vacillation, confusion, and futility of action is importation to ideas of a positive and secured character, not in strict logic belonging to them. It is this sort of determination that Hegel seems to have in mind in what he terms \textit{Verstand}—the understanding. "Apart from \textit{Verstand}," he says, "there is no fixity or accuracy in the region either of theory or practice"; and, again, \textit{Verstand} sticks to fixity of characters and their distinctions from one another; it treats every meaning as having a subsistence of its own." In technical terminology, also, this is what is meant by "posing" ideas—hardening meanings.\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{114} Dewey, "Some Stages in Logical Thought" (1900), MW 1: 151.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., MW 1: 154.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., MW 1: 156. Dewey quoted this passage from Hegel's "Lesser Logic." It is probably his own translation from the German. In Wallace's translation we find: "Thought, as
Of necessity we shall discuss Hegel's notions of *Verstand* and *Vernunft*, understanding and reason, in the following chapter. For now it will suffice to say that Hegel spoke of the understanding as a moment—or in Dewey's words, a "stage"—of reason, rather than a separate faculty or mode of cognition, that "starts from a presupposed, and therefore individual, Concrete subject matter." The understanding was, for Hegel "analytic cognition" which is "a positing that no less immediately determines itself as a presupposing."

The first stage is followed by the stage of "external connection," in which society has multiplied rules to the extent to which thought must inquire into which rule to apply in particular circumstances. In this stage, "doubt and inquiry are directed neither at the nature of the intrinsic fact itself, nor at the value of the idea as such, but simply at the manner in which one is attached to the other." In such a society, critical inquiry is used merely to refine the rules of the society, not to question them. Thus ideas, social customs, have a conservative function, the preservation of social institutions. "In Hebrew history," Dewey explained, we see the transition from this stage to the following one "in the growing importance of the prophet over the judge," which was a "transition from a justification of conduct through bringing particular cases into conformity with existent laws, into that effected by personal right-mindedness enabling the individual to see the

*Understanding*, sticks to fixity of characters and their distinctness from one another: every such limited abstract it treats as having a subsistence and being of its own." Later in the same section, we read: "It must be added, however, that the merit and rights of the mere Understanding should unhesitatingly be admitted. And that merit lies in the fact that apart from Understanding there is no fixity or accuracy in the region of theory or of practice." G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Logic*, §80.

117 Hegel, *Hegel's Science of Logic*, 787, 788. Cf. Hegel's claim that "The self, in that it is aware of the living unity of spirit, is itself opposed to its being split up into what are presented as
law in each case for himself." In other words, the principle of subjectivity, in its most rudimentary form, began to emerge in ancient Hebrew culture, assuming we accept Dewey's equation of the emergence of the Hebrew prophets with the emergence of a greater awareness of individuality and the individual's ability to understand morality. But in this short essay it was impossible for Dewey to explicate the stages of inquiry and develop a full-blown philosophy of history. Although, Dewey continued, this was a profound change in the "conception of the relation between law and particular case[s]," the Hebrews did not apply it to the rules of logic; that development awaited the Greeks, who effected "a continuous and marked departure from positive declaration of custom."\(^{118}\)

In the third, "subjective" stage, which emerged in Ancient Greece, man realizes that "fixity" is not an essential property of ideas themselves, but rather something we attach to them. An idea is seen "as a manufactured article needing to be made ready for use." The "friction of circumstances" reveals the "fiction" of the idea. During this stage we enter into the "conversation of thoughts" or "dialogue—the mother of dialectic in more than the etymological sense." This conversation can take place between individuals, or it can occur as the process of reflection within the consciousness of one individual. Dewey emphasized that this is not a comfortable stage; it is one we seek to minimize as much as possible, because we are primarily acting, not thinking, beings. In Greece, we see "assemblies meeting to discuss and dispute, and finally, upon the basis of the considerations thus brought to view, to decide. The man of counsel is set side by

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\(^{118}\) Dewey, "Some Stages in Logical Thought" (1900), MW 1: 158.
side with the man of deed." The Greek emphasis upon discussion gave birth to logical theory, and a particularly profound development occurred when it was realized that the individual could conduct this discussion within himself by weighing pros and cons; this was the birth of reflection. The Sophists, however, took advantage of the negativity of this subjective stage by claiming that all ideas "are just expressions of an individual's way of thinking." Logical theory arose as an effort to counter the Sophists, who misunderstood the value of the subjective stage which is necessary because in situations that call for reflection "we cannot appeal directly to the 'fact,' for the adequate reason that the stimulus to thinking arises just because 'facts' have slipped away from us." The Sophists correspond to Hegel's second stage, the "period of negation and of discord." ¹¹⁹

The "Socratic school" represents the third stage of logical thought because, instead of doubting all ideas wholesale, they doubted because they sought a "common denominator" that would bring "different ideas into relation with one another." Plato objectified the universals Socrates sought because he wanted a decisive standard to regulate reflection. For Aristotle, there was no longer a need to prove the existence of standards, but to establish rules of procedure in applying those standards, hence his codification of logical rules. With Aristotle there emerged "a distinctive type of thinking marked off from mere discussion and reflection. It may be called either reasoning or proof." Yet Aristotelian logic required first principles that could serve as major premises in syllogisms, and this model of reflection was passed down to medieval logicians who rigidly limited inquiry by requiring that all ideas be subsumed under universal

¹¹⁹ Ibid., MW 1: 160; and Dewey, "Hegel's Philosophy of Spirit," 16.
principles, and by denigrating matters of fact which paled by comparison to their first principles.

The final stage, "covering what is popularly known as inductive and empirical science," corresponds to Hegel’s final stage in which the negation is negated, and it is realized that the negative is an essential component of every positive, and thus that the dialectic is a never-ending process.\textsuperscript{120} As Dewey described it, in the final stage we seek inferences rather than proof. Proof, Dewey claimed, seeks to connect a proposition with another proposition we take to be secure. Inference, on the other hand, seeks propositions that take us beyond established facts and provide us with a more inclusive apprehension of the initiating situation. The doubt-inquiry process leads to the fixation, rather than the crystallization, of belief. In language similar to his letter to James in which he spoke of "the intellectual forces which have been gathering since the Renascence & Reformation," Dewey explained that "The growth...of freedom of thought during the Renaissance was a revelation of the intrinsic momentum of the thought-process itself." Renaissance intellectuals, such as Galileo and Copernicus, extended the process of inquiry "into the region of particulars, of matters of fact, with the view of reconstituting them through discovery of their own structure," rather than "by connecting them with some authoritative principles."\textsuperscript{121}

In this final stage, ideas are always subject to revision. Specialization in the sciences, an important phenomenon in Dewey’s day, was not a mere

\textsuperscript{120} Dewey, "Some Stages in Logical Thought" (1900), MW 1: 153, 154, 157, 158, 168.
\textsuperscript{121} Dewey to William James, 3 June 1891; and Dewey, "Some Stages in Logical Thought" (1900), MW 1: 167.
historical epoch, but a logical requirement, because knowledge must be based upon fact; consequently all apparent facts "must be resolved into their elements."

"Every phase of experience must be investigated, and each characteristic aspect presents its own peculiar problems which demand, therefore, their own technique of investigation."¹²² For Dewey this was far more than a purely logical advance, however; it was an expression of the democratic spirit, a leveling of facts:

...when interest is occupied in finding out what anything and everything is, any fact is just as good as its fellow. The observable world is a democracy. The difference which makes a fact what it is, is not an exclusive distinction, but a matter of position and quantity, an affair of locality and aggregation, traits which place all facts upon the same level, since all other observable facts also possess them, and are, indeed, conjointly responsible for them.¹²³

Dewey ended the essay with the question he sought to answer in his contributions to the Studies in Logical Theory:

Does not an account of thinking, basing itself on modern scientific procedure, demand a statement in which all the distinctions and terms of thought—judgment, concept, inference, subject, predicate and copula of judgment, etc., ad infinitum—shall be interpreted simply and entirely as distinctive functions or divisions of labor within the doubt-inquiry process?¹²⁴

In 1903, Dewey, along with seven of his associates at the University of Chicago, published Studies in Logical Theory. The Studies is an anthology of eleven essays by Chicago philosophy professors and graduate students, to which Dewey contributed the introduction and four essays. All seven writers agreed on "the intimate connections of logical theory with functional psychology," and

¹²² Dewey, "Some Stages in Logical Thought" (1900), MW 1: 169.
¹²³ Ibid., 171.
¹²⁴ Ibid., 174.
acknowledged "a pre-eminent obligation...to William James."\textsuperscript{125} Dewey's focus in the \textit{Studies} is a critique of the assumptions of traditional epistemology, exemplified in Rudolf Hermann Lotze's \textit{Logic}.\textsuperscript{126} Because Lotze was known as an idealist, scholars assume that Dewey attacked Hegelian logic in his critique of Lotze. But Lotze viewed his logic as an attack on Hegelian logic, and was criticized by Henry Jones, a British neo-Hegelian, in much the same way that Dewey criticized him.\textsuperscript{127} Yet some of Dewey's contemporaries also viewed the \textit{Studies} as an official break from idealism. F. C. S. Schiller, the noted English pragmatist, declared that Dewey had dealt a fatal blow to absolute idealism by "his admirable proof of the superfluity of an absolute truth-to-be-copied, existing alongside of the human truth which is \textit{made} by our efforts."\textsuperscript{128} Notice, however, that Schiller's description of the absolute idealist theory of truth is at odds with Dewey's understanding of Hegel's theory of truth; Schiller described a neo-Hegelian theory of truth.

In his introduction to the volume, Dewey noted that all of the authors agree that "judgment is the central function of knowing, and hence affords the central problem of logic." Beyond that point, it is readily apparent that this was no ordinary treatise on logic because, Dewey affirmed, all the authors also agree that "the act of knowing is intimately and indissolubly connected with the like yet diverse functions of affection, appreciation, and practice..."\textsuperscript{129} Logic must be understood in its emotive and working context; otherwise it is distorted. This is

\textsuperscript{125} Dewey et al., \textit{Studies in Logical Theory} (1903), MW 2: 296, 297.
\textsuperscript{127} Henry Jones, \textit{A Critical Account of the Philosophy of Lotze: The Doctrine of Thought} (Glasgow: J. Maclehose and Sons, 1895).
\textsuperscript{128} Ferdinand C. S. Schiller, "In Defense of Humanism," \textit{Mind} n.s. 13 (1904): 100.
the crux of Dewey's criticisms of the logic of Lotze, who held that logic studies the "universal forms and principles of thought which hold good everywhere both in judging of reality and in weighing possibility, irrespective of any difference in the objects."\textsuperscript{130} Of course this criticism applies to a host of philosophers, who have engaged in what Dewey called "traditional" or "epistemological" logic, because they have proceeded on the conviction that the principles of logic are universal. Dewey explained that philosophers have fallen into this error because they assumed that thought and being are ontologically distinct. Philosophers have believed that rational thought, because its principles seem universally applicable, had to be somehow above the flux of experience, in a different realm. Dewey's proposed "instrumental" logic would avoid this error.

This criticism is not new to Dewey's writings. We have already seen that, in his earliest essays, Dewey criticized British empiricism for positing an ontological distinction between thought and being. Moreover, as early as 1886, in "Psychology as Philosopher Method," Dewey began to criticize neo-Hegelians for claiming that philosophy and psychology are distinctly different. Ultimately, in his ethical writings, Dewey pointed out that neo-Hegelians made this distinction because they too believed in an ontological dualism. Philosophy, which the neo-Hegelians equated with logic, dealt with pure, eternal being; psychology dealt with the flux of experience and required an empirical, rather than logical, methodology.

Dewey's objection to traditional logic stemmed from his commitment to functional psychology. Knowledge is a function of experience; it is always

\textsuperscript{130} Ibid., 302.
involved in the reconstruction or transformation of a specific, problematic situation. Dewey also reaffirmed his convictions that reality, which is "dynamic or self-evolving" can be properly defined only "in terms of experience," and that such a logic would be useful to both science and morality. Dewey expressed high hopes that instrumental logic would prove beneficial to our efforts to solve a myriad of complex practical problems:

The value of research for social progress; the bearing of psychology upon educational procedure; the mutual relations of fine and industrial art; the question of the extent and nature of specialization in science in comparison with the claims of applied science; the adjustment of religious aspirations to scientific statements; the justification of a refined culture for a few in face of economic insufficiency for the mass, the relation of organization to individuality—such are a few of the many social questions whose answer depends upon the possession and use of a general logic of experience as a method of inquiry and interpretation.\textsuperscript{131}

Epistemological logic, Dewey explained, is committed to a particular sort of metaphysics because it studies "the relation of thought as such to reality as such," and is, therefore, the study of "absolute entities and relations." In fact, Dewey claimed that viewing thought processes (or any processes for that matter) "apart from the limits of a historic or developing situation, is the essence of metaphysical procedure."\textsuperscript{132} Because epistemological logic is concerned with absolute entities and relations, it is concerned with proof and certainty. By way of contrast, instrumental logic "makes no pretense to be an account of a closed and finished universe. Its business is not to secure or guarantee any particular reality or value."\textsuperscript{133} Instrumental logic is a logic of experience; it studies inquiry, how we resolve problems and dilemmas that arise in specific situations. Because

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{131} Ibid., 313-314.
  \item \textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 305, 315.
  \item \textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 313.
\end{itemize}
of this focus, instrumental logic is a logic of learning, rather than a logic of proof, and will facilitate "the methodic control of experience."\textsuperscript{134}

Dewey equated instrumental logic with the "naïve point of view," a development of his earlier "psychological standpoint." The naïve point of view makes no metaphysical assumptions. For it, thought and being occur within experience, and we experience situations, wholes, rather than series of discrete, atomistic sensations, and they are experienced in a temporal flow. From the naïve point of view there is no mystery about the relationship of thought to reality; we think about anything and everything and there is "a certain rhythm of direct practice and derived theory." We assume that we have unrestricted "passage from ordinary experience to abstract thinking, from thought to fact, from things to theories and back again....The fundamental assumption is continuity."\textsuperscript{135} The distinction between idea, or meaning, and fact is simply a useful division of labor in the effort to perform a specific task, rather than an ontological principle.

According to the naïve point of view, thinking always arises when a conflicting situation disrupts a specific practice or activity in which we are engaged. Thought is viewed as "derivative and secondary," prompted by tensions, conflicts, within a particular situation and for a particular purpose, resolution of the conflict. Normally, we are in an organic relationship with our environment, working to accomplish goals, thinking through problems when they arise, and moving ahead with our activities as problems are resolved. We rarely stop to reflect on why we were motivated to begin thinking, or why we

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 306.
decided to return to our temporarily interrupted activities, because the answers to those questions seem obvious, and because, ordinarily, there is no problem that requires us to reflect on thought “überhaupt.” The measure of the success of thought, or theory, according to the naïve point of view, is simply the extent to which it disposes of the immediate problem “and allows us to proceed with more direct modes of experiencing, that are forthwith possessed of more assured and deepened value.”\textsuperscript{136} Truth is what works, and logic should help us understand how to validate particular thoughts, rather than thought overall.

Moreover, “there is no difference of kind between the methods of science and those of the plain man.” Scientists are simply more in control of the articulation of the problem, and the selection of “relevant material, both sensible and conceptual.”\textsuperscript{137} Dewey described four stages of scientific inquiry, which are similar, but not entirely analogous, to the stages of the doubt-inquiry process. The disanalogies undercut his claim that scientific process is simply a refined version of the doubt-inquiry process, but it is not difficult to see significant similarities between the two. Like the doubt-inquiry process, the first is the stage in which no inquiry occurs at all, because no problem has provoked it. In the second, “empirc stage,” rather than engaging in the “conversation of thoughts,” the scientist proceeds by gathering facts. Rather than analyze particulars in the third stage, the scientist moves into “the speculative stage” in which she formulates hypotheses, and makes distinctions and classifications. In the final stage, however, scientific inquiry concludes with “a period of fruitful interaction

\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 299, 306.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 299-300.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 305-306.
between the mere ideas and the mere facts: a period when observation is determined by experimental conditions depending upon the use of certain guiding conception.” This is analogous to the final stage of the doubt-inquiry process which ends with inference rather than proof, because, during this period, the scientist checks conclusions by experimental data and the need to solve a specific problem and thus further inquiry, and the “evolution of new meanings.”\(^{138}\) Despite the disanalogies, the methods are the same at crucial points. Both are stimulated by a problematic situation, are empirical as well as rational, and both are open-ended.

Only “the epistemological spectator” sees the plain man and the scientist “rashly assuming the right to glide over a cleft in the very structure of reality.” It is worthwhile to note here that Dewey depicted the epistemologist as a passive spectator, since we know Dewey believed we learn by doing. Because he studies thought as though it were in a vacuum, the epistemological logician is removed from the constraints of the plain man. “The epistemological logician deliberately shuts himself off from those cues and checks upon which the plain man instinctively relies, and which the scientific man deliberately searches for and adopts as constituting his technique.”\(^{139}\) The primary example of this error is the notion that thought and fact are representatives of distinct ontological realms. When we view thought and being in this way, we create a philosophical conundrum that can only be addressed on its own terms because it cannot be resolved by appeals to ordinary experience.

\(^{138}\) Ibid., 307.
\(^{139}\) Ibid., 311-312.
Why then, have philosophers been so consumed with traditional logic? According to Dewey, "a generic account of our thinking behavior, the generic account termed logical theory, arises at historic periods in which the situation has lost the organic character above described." Traditional logic arises when we encounter problems so vast and unsettling that we are forced to question thinking itself rather than thinking in a particular situation. At this point one is reminded of the beginning of the "First Part" of Descartes's Discourse on Methods, in which he explained, in the midst of the disintegration of the medieval world, that he had studied at "one of the most celebrated schools in all of Europe,...learned there everything that others learned," but "found nothing there to satisfy me." In times of immense cultural transformation, in which our frame of reference is radically undermined, we begin to ask, "What is thought?," or "What is the relationship of thought to the world?"; we begin to reflect upon logic in the generic sense. With this analysis, Dewey, like Nietzsche, put philosophy "on the couch" as it were, explaining its preoccupation with abstract, non-worldly, issues as a function, or product, of existential anxiety. Though Dewey did not say so explicitly, the inference seems to be that because epistemological logicians seek to avoid existential anxiety, their logic ignores the limitations of real life and "assumes an activity of thought 'pure' or 'in itself,' that is, 'irrespective of any difference in its objects,'" and reaches "results which are not so much either true or false as they are radically meaningless."

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Reminiscent of Hegel's claim that every "philosophy... is its own time comprehended in thoughts," Dewey also explained that "every system of philosophy... has been evoked out of specific social antecedents, and has had its use as a response to them." Epistemological logic's denial of its own historical context, and "of the significance of historic method" in logic, is indicative of how unrealistic and useless it is. When philosophers remove the varieties of thought from their functional context, they isolate them "from the conditions in which alone they have determinable meaning and assignable worth." Logic, Dewey asserted, should take its cue from biology and learn to study the elements of thought as instruments of adaptation to an environment. By ignoring "the chain of historic sequence," the epistemological logician has set "the vessel of thought... afloat to veer upon a sea without soundings or moorings." Here we see Dewey's debt to James, who taught him to think of perceptions and conceptions as "biological sports," which we maintain if they are applicable to concrete situations.

Extending his emphasis upon logic as the study of the history of thinking activities, Dewey asserted that psychology should be "the natural history of the various attitudes and structures through which experiencing passes." Psychology should examine the conditions under which various attitudes have emerged and the ways those attitudes have stimulated or inhibited the formation of other forms of reflection. When we treat logic "as an account of thinking as a response to its own generating conditions," such a psychology is "indispensable

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142 Hegel, Elements of the Philosophy of Right, 21; and Dewey, Studies in Logical Theory, MW 2: 314.
to logical evaluation." We shall then be able to evaluate the validity of various ways of thinking by reference to their "efficiency in meeting [the] problems" that provoked them. Thus, for Dewey, psychology became what it was for Hegel. In the introduction to the Phenomenology of Spirit, Hegel explained that the book was a study of "the way of the Soul which journeys through the series of its own configurations" on its path to self-knowledge. The Phenomenology, Hegel claimed, presented "The series of configurations which consciousness goes through along this road" and was, therefore, "the detailed history of the education of consciousness."

In his next contribution to the Studies, Dewey focussed more specifically on his criticisms of Lotze's logic. For our purposes, his methodology is revealing. Dewey proposed to examine the relationship of thought to its antecedent, its provocateur, as it were,

indirectly rather than directly, by indicating the contradictory positions into which one of the most vigorous and acute of modern logicians, Lotze, has been forced through failing to define logical distinctions in terms of the history of readjustment and control of things in experience, and being thereby compelled to interpret certain notions as absolute instead of as historic and methodological.

Like Hegel, Dewey sought to critique traditional logic, and thereby promote his own theory, by revealing the contradictions into which it is inevitably lead by its assumptions. Dewey was not pursuing Lotze per se, rather he claimed to have chosen "one of the most vigorous and acute of" traditional logicians, in order to examine traditional logic at its best. Revealing the contradictions in Lotze's theory, Dewey believed, would uncover the assumptions of traditional logic; in

\[144\] Dewey, "From Absolutism to Experimentalism" (1930), LW 5: 157.
\[145\] Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, §§77-78.
true dialectical fashion he examined the endpoint of Lotze's theory in order to articulate what was implicit from the very beginning. Once those problematic assumptions were identified, Dewey believed, we can productively move on to more inclusive assumptions that would avoid the contradictions of traditional logic. Dewey also explained that Lotze's unexamined assumptions are characteristic of the assumptions we all bring to the study of logic from our "concrete experience," and from "the logical theory which has got embodied in ordinary language."\textsuperscript{146} This claim may appear problematic because Dewey maintained that the plain man employs the doubt-inquiry process, yet also claimed that we are easily led astray by the assumptions of traditional logic. Dewey's point was simply that we need to articulate what the plain man and the scientist do when inquiry is successful; that was the goal of his instrumental logic. Because Dewey's critique of Lotze was a critique of all of our implicit assumptions, it was, like Hegel's dialectic, an exercise in self-knowledge.

Like the plain man, Lotze assumed that thought is reflective, "and thus presupposes a given material," something to reflect upon.\textsuperscript{147} But because he assumed, unlike the plain man, that thought and being are ontologically distinct, he was forced to struggle with the issue of how thought, which is subjective, can gain its materials from something ontologically foreign to it, the objective, take those materials into the subjective realm and shape them into results which are objective or true. When stated in this way, the problem seems obviously intractable, but Dewey argued that because philosophers have not examined

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., 318.
their ontological dualism, they have not become so starkly aware of the contradictions created by that presupposition.

Lotze maintained that we receive impressions from external objects and, upon reception, they become ideas, or "mere psychical states or events." We receive series of ideas, some of which are associated coincidentally and some which are associated coherently. That is to say, some series of ideas, the coherent, really belong together and provide us with knowledge; others merely occur together and are the source of error. Thought must actively distinguish between the merely coincident and the coherent associations of ideas; it must determine their worth. Dewey commended Lotze for avoiding "the extravagancies of transcendental logic," which asserts that impressions are pre-determined, prior to our experience of them, by rational thought. Lotze also "avoids the pitfall of purely empirical logic" which does not distinguish between the association of ideas and their real worth, and thus cannot account for truth. Similar to Kant, for Lotze, "unreflective experience" passively receives impressions, while reflective thought "has to introduce and develop systematic connection—rationality."148

But according to Lotze, "the action of thought...is never anything but reaction"; it merely interprets relations it finds in our associations of ideas in order to determine which are coherent and which are merely coincidental. This brought Dewey to the contradiction he sought to uncover. Initially, impressions were simply the "crude material" of experience, but somehow, as they are associated, they become the content of thought. According to Dewey, Lotze maintained that reflective thought discovers relations in our associations of ideas.

148 Ibid., 321.
“which have been prepared for it by the unconscious mechanism of the psychic states” themselves. In effect, Lotze described impressions as raw data, wholly undetermined, and ideas as determined, because the impressions have a mysterious ability to prepare themselves for reflective thought. Dewey argued not only that this is a contradiction within Lotze’s logic, but that this contradiction is necessary to his system. If our ideas were simply undetermined psychical states, they could not be adequate materials for thought. Consequently, Dewey argued,

The idea forms a most convenient halfway house for Lotze. On one hand, as absolutely prior to thought, as material antecedent condition, it is merely psychical, bald subjective event. But as subject-matter for thought, as antecedent which affords stuff for thought’s exercise, it characteristically qualifies content. 

Once more, Dewey’s historical fallacy makes its appearance. Lotze fell into this error because he assumed that thought works with atomistic, unrelated impressions. Dewey argued that in the doubt-inquiry process, we analyze experience into atomistic units (Hegel’s Verstand), but that it is fallacious to then assume that experience is composed of those units. For Dewey, thought is reflective, as it is for Lotze. It works upon a material, but that material is a situation, replete with relations, rather than series of atoms. But Dewey avoided the neo-Hegelian temptation to attribute inherent rationality to these situations by, once more, invoking the psychological fallacy. He never spoke about situations-in-themselves, but only about situations as they are experienced. Dewey also argued that coincidence and coherence are functions that make sense only within a reflective context, rather than essential properties of ideas.

\[149\] Ibid., 323.
The side-by-sideness of books on my bookshelf, the succession of noises that rise through my window, do not trouble me logically. They do not appear as errors or even as problems. One coexistence is just as good as any other until some new point of view, or new end, presents itself. If it is a question of the convenience of arrangement of books, then the value of their present collocation becomes a problem. Then I contrast their present state as bare conjunction over against another scheme as one which is coherent.\footnote{Ibid., 326.}

As long as philosophers assume that thought and being are ontologically distinct, they have to resolve the dilemma of how the materials of thought, which come from a foreign reality, become suitable for thought. If relations are \textit{a posteriori}, and the mind always shapes our impressions, thought is falsifying because we never experience impressions as they are in themselves; if relations are \textit{a priori}, and the mind passively receives pre-determined materials, thought is futile because there is nothing for it to add to our experience. If, however, thought and being are both within experience, as Dewey maintained, rather than distinct ontological realms, they have features in common that facilitate their interaction. Coincidence and coherence can both be found within situations, depending upon our specific purpose. When a situation “is in conflict within itself,” thought is provoked and we begin a “search to find what really goes together and a correspondent effort to shut out what only seemingly goes together.” To read those qualities back into the preliminary situation is fallacious, because they only emerged in inquiry. Like Hegel’s notion of reason (\textit{Vernunft}) which can reconstruct and apprehend the whole, Dewey claimed that the “redefining and re-relating” of conflicted situations “is the constructive process termed thinking.”\footnote{Ibid., 328, 330.} In the same way, Hegel’s “understanding” (\textit{Verstand}) leads

\footnote{Ibid., 326.}
\footnote{Ibid., 328, 330.}
us into error if we stop with its analysis of the subject-matter into constituent parts without proceeding to Vernunft. This is where, in Dewey’s parlance, we fall into the psychological fallacy. We must move beyond the analysis of the components of an experience to an apprehension of the whole experience.

At this point we encounter passages that have led scholars to claim that Dewey publicly broke with idealism in the Studies. Dewey noted that the British neo-Hegelian philosopher, Henry Jones, had formulated a critique of Lotze’s logic very similar to his own.152 Jones had criticized Lotze for trying to find any existence antecedent to thought. Dewey noted that this position is often called neo-Hegelian, but added, parenthetically, “though, I think, with questionable accuracy.” Dewey tried to carefully distinguish his critique from that of Jones, conceding that they agreed that reflection cannot arise from an “antecedent bare existence,” or that there is such a thing as bare existence. They also agreed that “reflective thought grows organically out of an experience which is already organized, and that it functions within such an organism.” They disagreed, however, on a fundamental point. Dewey rejected the notion that everything is organized by thought, and that there is some other type of thought—“Pure Thought, Creative or Constitutive Thought, Intuitive Reason, etc.”—that organizes the situations we encounter in experience.153

According to Dewey, “the more one insists that the antecedent situation is constituted by thought, the more one has to wonder why another type of thought is required; what need arouses it, and how it is possible for it to improve upon the work of previous constitutive thought.” Like Lotze, neo-Hegelians run the

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152 Sir Henry Jones, A Critical Account of the Philosophy of Lotze.
risk of making human thought futile. In order to avoid this problem, neo-
Hegelians abandon the logic of experience, the psychological standpoint, and
formulate "a metaphysics of purely hypothetical experience." The neo-Hegelians
posit a transcendent absolute, but this does not help because one wonders why
the absolute "does such a poor and bungling job that it requires a finite
discursive activity to patch up its products?" Neo-Hegelians resort to more
metaphysics by explaining that the absolute chooses to work in limited
conditions, but

Why and how should a perfect, absolute, complete, finished thought find
it necessary to submit to alien, disturbing, and corrupting conditions in
order, in the end, to recover through reflective thought in a partial,
piecemeal, wholly inadequate way what it possessed at the outset in a
much more satisfactory way?154

Dewey implies that neo-Hegelianism dies the death of a thousand qualifications,
ever finding a way to back-peddle and add another metaphysical doctrine
post-hoc to explain its position. But neo-Hegelianism lands in the same position
as Lotze because, if the absolute is limited, then the situations we encounter are
not always entirely rational, and therefore we must encounter some bare
existences that are not already suitable materials for thought.

Rather than argue that Hegel avoided this problem, however, in this essay
Dewey began to refer to neo-Hegelians simply as absolute idealists, and one
might conclude from this that he was also condemning Hegel. But Dewey's
primary criticism of the neo-Hegelians was that they resorted to a transcendental
logic in order to explain how the antecedents of thought could have the qualities
(relations) needed to provoke thought. Both empiricist and transcendental logic

commit the error of making “into absolute and fixed distinctions of existence and meaning...things which are historic or temporal in their origin and their significance.” Both view thought as representational, instead of reconstructive. Consequently,

The rock against which every such logic splits is that either existence already has the statement which thought is endeavoring to give it, or else it has not. In the former case, thought is futilely reiterative; in the latter, it is falsificatory.\textsuperscript{155}

We have already seen, however, that on Dewey’s reading, Hegel avoided the error of positing something beyond history, beyond possible experience, and did not encounter the problem inherent in all representational logics.

The \textit{Studies in Logical Theory} received a variety of reactions. Dewey had sent proofs to James before the volume was published, and asked James’s permission to dedicate the book to him. In a letter to Dewey, James expressed embarrassment that he had underestimated the extent to which Dewey and the other philosophers at Chicago were moving toward his philosophical position, but he was obviously delighted to have their company, and Dewey was also clearly flattered by James’s praise. James explained to Dewey that he had not appreciated their increasing similarity because “you all have come from Hegel...I from empiricism, and though we reach much the same goal it superficially looks different from the opposite sides.” In a letter to Schiller, James excitedly declared that the \textit{Studies} “was splendid stuff, and Dewey is a hero. A real school and real

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., 334.  
\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., 336.}
thought. At Harvard we have plenty of thought, but no school. At Yale and Cornell, the other way about.”

Peirce reviewed the book for the *Nation*, but was less enthusiastic than James. According to Peirce, “The Chicago school or group...are not making any studies which anybody in his senses can expect, directly or indirectly, in any considerable degree, to influence twentieth-century science.” This is especially clear in Peirce’s letter to Dewey, written before the review appeared, in which he explained,

> that your style of reasoning about reasoning has, to my mind, the usual fault that when men touch on this subject, they seem to think that no reasoning can be too loose, that indeed there is a merit in such slipshod arguments as they themselves would not dream of using in any other branch of science. You propose to substitute for the Normative Science which in my judgment is the greatest need of our age a “Natural History” of thought or of experience. Far be it from me to do anything to hinder a man’s finding out whatever kind of truth he is on the way to finding out. But I do not think anything like a natural history can answer the terrible need that I see of checking the awful waste of thought, of time, of energy, going on, in consequence of men’s not understanding the theory of inference.”

Peirce explained to Dewey that he hoped to publish a review in the *Nation*, and after this letter, Dewey may have preferred that Peirce’s review never appear.

Peirce recognized the *Studies* as a “Phänomenologie” of thought, which he equated with moral licentiousness:

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156 Dewey to James, March 1903; Dewey to James, 19 December 1903; James to Dewey, 23 March 1903; and James to Schiller, 8 April 1903, in Perry, ed., *Thought and Character of William James* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1935), 2: 374, 521. James also contributed a positive review of the *Studies* to *The Psychological Bulletin* 1 (1904), titled “The Chicago School.”

The effect of teaching that such a Natural History can take the place of a normative science of thought must be to render the rules of reasoning lax; and in fact I find you and your students greatly given over to what to me seems like a debauch of loose reasoning. Chicago hasn’t the reputation of being a moral place; but I should think that the effect of living there upon a man like you would be to make you feel all the more the necessity for Dyadic distinctions,—Right and Wrong, Truth and Falsity.

Unlike Dewey, Peirce sought a normative science of logic that would fix the rules of logic beyond the flux of history. Consequently, Peirce was the first in a long line of critics who accused Dewey’s instrumentalism of a debilitating relativism, an inability to establish transcendent values. Of course that was a risk Dewey took when he made the transition to a historicist reading of Hegel, and incorporated insights gained from that reading into his instrumentalism.

So far in this study, we have determined that Dewey had close ties to an American Hegelian tradition that was dominated by center Hegelians. Dewey quickly moved, with ease, to the left of his Hegelian colleagues in both theology and politics. By the time he began his graduate studies at Johns Hopkins in 1882, Dewey was probably already a panentheist, and the notion of a transcendent being dropped out of his religious and ethical writings completely by 1891. Soon after Dewey met Alice Chipman in 1884, he began to express political sympathies to the left of the St. Louis Hegelians, and this shift was reinforced by his association with Franklin Ford. The influence of his new wife and Ford, combined with the influence of Thomas Davidson, provided him with a conception of the role of the philosopher consistent with the St. Louis Hegelians’ emphasis on the transformation of subjective ideals into objective social reform. And all of these people energized Dewey’s interest in education as a crucial way

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to make American society more democratic. Dewey’s conception of the philosopher as a public intellectual coincided with his rejection of the transcendental metaphysics of the neo-Hegelians, and the development of his new conception of Hegel as a humanistic/historicist philosopher who planted intellect firmly in the everyday world of practical affairs. This new version of Hegel provided him with conceptual tools with which to develop his functional psychology and his instrumentalist logic. In this chapter, our examination of Dewey’s psychology and philosophy of education, his 1897 lecture on Hegel, and his instrumental logic have confirmed the claim that Dewey found functionalism and pragmatic themes in Hegel’s thought, and adapted them to the biological vocabulary he found in James’s Principles of Psychology. In the following chapter, we shall examine recent readings of Hegel that compare favorably to Dewey’s.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE HUMANISTIC/HISTORICIST HEGEL

A year before Dewey died Hans Reichenbach published The Rise of Scientific Philosophy, which began with a quote from a characteristically obscure passage in Hegel’s Philosophy of History. Reichenbach identified the source of the quote only after he had lampooned speculative philosophy, heralding the triumph of “scientific philosophy,” for sixty-six pages. When Reichenbach began to discuss Hegel’s thought, his ad hominem attack made it clear that his aversion to it had little to do with logic. Hegel’s system, he claimed, was the “caricature” of idealist philosophy; his philosophy of history was “worthy of a freshman who sets out to construct his own philosophical system.” According to Reichenbach, Hegel “generalized his law of dialectics into a law of logic and developed a system according to which contradiction is immanent in logic and...pushes thought from one extreme to the other, thus producing the dialectical movement.” Hegel believed, he continued, that the statement “‘the rose is red’ is a contradiction, because in it the same thing is said to be two different things.” This “primitive error,” stated Reichenbach, is easily dismissed by anyone who understands the most basic elements of logic, and so it is.¹ Reichenbach was

particularly distressed that, according to him, Hegel's philosophy of history derived statements about what should happen from what will happen; Hegel made no distinction between fact and value. But Reichenbach offered no evidence that Hegel was so obtuse. Indeed, one might wonder if Reichenbach actually read Hegel at all.

It would be difficult to find a better example of what Richard Watson calls "shadow history" than Reichenbach's depiction of Hegel. Watson contends that shadow histories are perpetrated by philosophers for the polemical purpose of promoting their own positions. Philosophers will portray their philosophy, or the philosophical movement of which they are a part, as a radical break from, and improvement upon, all past philosophy. To bring the break into sharp relief, shadow histories must present past philosophy as not just mistaken, but outright foolish. When viewed in the light of Watson's notion of "shadow history," Reichenbach's characterization of Hegel brings to mind Gustav Emil Mueller's comment that, "Once the Hegel legend was established, writers of textbooks in the history of philosophy copied it from their predecessors. It was a convenient method of embalming Hegel and keeping the mummy on display for curious visitors of antiquities." The embalming of Hegel was a crucial moment in the promotion of analytic philosophy.²

Twelve years prior to the publication of The Rise of Scientific Philosophy, Reichenbach contributed a critique of Dewey's philosophy to The Philosophy of

John Dewey. The essay is ambivalent, as Reichenbach praised Dewey for his positive attitude toward the empirical world and for his support of modern science, but was perplexed by Dewey's identification of scientific objects with relations, ontologically equivalent to moral relations. Reichenbach feared that Dewey fell into subjective idealism because he was eager to affirm the reality of moral values as well as scientific principles. Dewey replied that Reichenbach understood relations to be less real than things because he unwittingly accepted the metaphysical baggage associated with the words "subjective" and "objective," assuming that the words signify an ontological dualism and that relations are merely subjective when in fact they are as real as what we call the objective.3

Though his attitude was different, Reichenbach's core objection to both Dewey and Hegel was the same. Neither philosopher distinguished sharply between fact and value; thus their philosophies were at odds with scientific philosophy as he defined it. Scientific philosophy dealt only with facts, that is to say, with what can be adjudicated by the methods of science as Reichenbach understood them. Reichenbach believed that philosophy should be reduced to logic and the theory of knowledge. Of course, the ambiguities of the notion of scientific philosophy are made obvious by the fact that Hegel, Dewey and Reichenbach all believed they were making philosophy scientific.

It is perhaps no accident that the influence of both Hegel and Dewey reached its nadir immediately after World War II. Both philosophers’ blurring of the fact/value distinction required that philosophy address social and political issues as well as logic and epistemology. But as the “scientific philosophy” Reichenbach had in mind began to take hold, American philosophers became less willing to address social and political concerns. John McCumber has argued that analytic philosophers’ separation of fact and value was a reactionary move to protect philosophy departments from the ravages of McCarthyism. If philosophers’ work was apolitical, they could avoid suspicion during this political scourge. Though certainly an intriguing thesis, it would go well beyond the scope of the current study to pursue its validity. However, those sympathetic to Dewey should be suspicious of shadow histories of Hegel. This chapter examines how Dewey might have come to understand Hegel as the “great actualist” by comparing Dewey’s reading of Hegel to recent Hegel scholarship which depicts him as a humanist and historicist rather than a defender of a philosophical theology and a grand metaphysician. After a brief excursus on the

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5 McCumber, “Time in the Ditch: American Philosophy and the McCarthy Era,” Diacritics 26, no. 1 (1996), 33-49. Additionally, there have been many publications that address this transition in American philosophy and its wisdom, without necessarily impugning the motives of American philosophers. See for example, Vincent M. Colapietro, “Transforming Philosophy into a Science: A Debilitating Chimera or a Realizable Desideratum?,” American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly 72, no. 2 (Spring 1998): 245-278; and Rorty, The Consequences of Pragmatism (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), ch. 12. Rorty claims that Reichenbach’s history of philosophy actually served to undermine the cause it sought to promote.
emergence of the humanistic/historicist reading of Hegel in the twentieth-century, we shall follow the four sub-themes we identified in Dewey’s 1897 lecture on Hegel—Hegel’s project, functionalist psychology, the historical fallacy, and Hegel’s ethics and political philosophy—all of which Dewey used to support his reading of Hegel.

The Twentieth-Century Rennaissance in Hegel Studies

After achieving an extraordinary intellectual ascendancy over the German intellectual world in the 1820s, Hegel’s popularity declined rapidly after his death in 1831. His followers quickly fell into warring factions, and his former friend Schelling, who had grown increasingly conservative in his later years, was summoned by Berlin authorities to “stamp out the dragon seed of Hegelian pantheism in Berlin.” Schelling presented Hegel as a pre-Kantian metaphysical thinker, trapped in the realm of pure thought to the neglect of empirical existence. Propitiously, Søren Kierkegaard, Mikhail Bakunin, and Friedrich Engels attended Schelling’s inaugural lecture at the University of Berlin in 1841. Schelling’s interpretation of Hegel helped shape subsequent philosophers’ understanding of his thought, including Trendelenberg. By mid-century Hegel’s legacy had fallen into complete oblivion in Germany. He was viewed as the philosopher of the conservative Prussian state and peripherally approved of or vilified in consequence. Hegel, many believed, sought to restore the pre-Kantian, pre-French Revolution socio-political order by resurrecting “the old metaphysics, the dogmas of the church, and the substantial content of the moral

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powers." American intellectuals, many of whom pursued advanced studies with Trendelenburg and other scholars in Germany, were well aware of Hegel’s status in his native land. Some were influenced by the rebellion against Hegel to reject his thought; others, like the St. Louis Hegelians, G. S. Morris and Dewey, continued to mine for treasures in Hegel’s writings and in the work of the British neo-Hegelians. Because we have already discussed late-nineteenth-century Hegelianism in sufficient detail, we shall proceed to the twentieth-century renaissance in Hegel studies.

The study of Hegel in the English-speaking world was largely dead by the outbreak of World War I. In 1903, G. E. Moore publicly repudiated his early interest in the idealism of F. H. Bradley, John McTaggart and Kant with the publication of “The Refutation of Idealism.” About the same time that Dewey penned his lecture on “Hegel’s Philosophy of Spirit,” Bertrand Russell, a close friend and colleague of Moore, was also abandoning the idealism of Bradley and McTaggart under the influence of developments in mathematics and Moore’s and Whitehead’s work in logic.8

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Interestingly, one of the chief idealist doctrines Moore and Russell rejected is more properly attributed to the neo-Hegelianism of T. H. Green and Bradley than to Hegel. What Moore and Russell reacted against was the neo-Hegelian removal of relations to a transcendent realm, the absolute, a doctrine that Dewey argued was antithetical to the thought of Hegel.\(^\text{10}\) While Dewey was concluding that Hegel was the "great actualist," Moore and Russell initiated the analytic tradition which was increasingly antipathetic to Hegelianism because, they supposed, it denied the actuality of everyday experience by making illusory relations between individual entities and the individual entities themselves. To state this point in another way, Moore and Russell came to believe that all forms of idealism were what Dewey, and Hegel, called "identity philosophies," philosophies that reduced all of reality to one metaphysical substance, that substance being mind or thought. By way of contrast, Dewey accepted Hegel's claim to have overcome the identity philosophies of Spinoza and Schelling with his conception of the dialectic, intended as a richer notion of process than that found in identity philosophies.\(^\text{11}\)

During and after the First World War, the Anglo-American rejection of Hegel became vituperative as many intellectuals tried to blame Prussian militarism on Hegel's statism. Some pragmatists sought to sharply distinguish


Dewey's instrumentalism from idealism after the war, and even Dewey showed some concern with this issue. As John Shook notes, when Sterling Lamprecht published "An Idealistic Source of Instrumentalist Logic" in 1924, he was roundly condemned by a defender of Dewey, F. C. S. Schiller.¹²

Before the end of the Second World War, interest in Hegel among Anglo-American philosophers began to show meager signs of revival. In the United Kingdom, G. R. G. Mure published his Introduction to Hegel in 1940. In the same year T. M. Knox published "Hegel and Prussianism," a largely ignored effort to exonerate Hegel from charges that he laid the philosophical groundwork for Prussian militarism. Knox quickly followed this by publishing his translation, with his extensive annotations, of Hegel's Philosophy of Right in 1942. After the war, Knox's translation efforts were seemingly indefatigable as he provided translations of Hegel's Early Theological Writings (1948) and Hegel's Political Writings (1964). Just as Rosenkranz's writings on Hegel's politics in the nineteenth century countered the notion that Hegel was a reactionary thinker by emphasizing Hegel as a political pamphleteer and journalist, as well as a philosopher, in the twentieth century, the publication of T. M. Knox's translation of Hegel's minor political essays, with Z. A. Pelczynski's introductory essay, has, in the words of Frederick G. Weiss, "quietly embarrassed" the myth of "Hegel's

¹² Shook, Dewey's Empirical theory of Knowledge and Reality, 22. For the exchange between Schiller and Lamprecht see Lamprecht, "An Idealistic Source of Instrumentalist Logic," Mind 33 (October 1924): 415-427; and Schiller, "Instrumentalism and Idealism," Mind 34 (January 1925): 75-79. Bruce Kuklick argues that "the anti-idealist movement might have been a dubious challenge to Hegel's place in Modern Philosophy were it not for the war....After the war Hegel became, for Americans, a silly, pompous, and defeated figure, unworthy of the great tradition." Kuklick, "Seven Thinkers and How They Grew" in Philosophy in History, 133.
reactionary conservatism...into silence."\(^{13}\) Knox's translation work continued with the Introduction to Hegel's Aesthetics (1979), and Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy (1985).\(^{14}\) The writings Knox chose to translate demonstrate his interest in Hegel's intellectual development and Hegel's philosophy of spirit rather than his Logic. Except for Knox's dislike of the Phenomenology, his interest in Hegel is typical of the renaissance of Hegel studies in the Anglo-American world that began in 1958 with the publication of J. N. Findlay's Hegel: A Re-examination.\(^{15}\) Though Findlay dismissed Hegel's political thought as reactionary, he sought to rescue Hegel from the distortions of his thought by the neo-Hegelians, and when he moved to the United States Findlay served as a transatlantic link in Hegel studies.\(^{16}\)


\(^{16}\) Findlay, a Rhodes Scholar at Balliol College, Oxford, taught in South Africa (his home country) and New Zealand for a number of years. In 1948 he accepted an appoint to King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the University of Durham, England, and in 1951 he moved to King's College, London. Relocating to the United States in 1966, he joined the philosophy department at the University of Texas at Austin, but after one year transferred to Yale where he remained until 1972. He then moved to Boston University where he was appointed Borden Parker Bowne Professor of Philosophy in 1978, remaining in that capacity until his death in 1987.
For our purposes it is noteworthy that esteemed Hegel scholar, H. S. Harris, explains that when he was in graduate school in the early 1950s some of the best recent scholarship on Hegel available in the United States came from one of Dewey's graduate students, Sidney Hook. Though Harris notes that Hook's study of Hegel's philosophy of history, *The Hero in History* (1943), had a strong Marxist bias, he observes that Hook's *From Hegel to Marx* (1950) provided a solid reading of Hegel. Indeed, much of the initial recovery of Hegel's political thought during the post-World War II era was achieved by Marxist intellectuals. Harris also notes that "the best survey of Hegel and German Idealism in an anglophone history of philosophy is probably that given by the pragmatic humanist John Herman Randall" in *The Career of Philosophy*; Randall was another of Dewey's graduate students. But Harris explains that, in the 1950s, students of Hegel's *Phenomenology* had to look to French existentialist sources—the writings of Jean Hyppolite, Jean Wahl, and Alexandre Kojève—for commentary, and

According to Errol Harris, Findlay "had a sound understanding of Hegel, avoiding the errors and limitations of the earlier British Idealists. He recognized the essential realism of Hegel's thought..." Errol E. Harris, "In Memoriam: John Neimeyer Findlay (1903-1987)," *The Owl of Minerva* 19, 2 (Spring 1988): 252-253.

students of the Logic were relegated to studying W. T. Stace's 1924 commentary. One of the few Hegel scholars in the United States, Jacob Loewenberg, was one of Royce's last graduate students. Not published until 1965, Loewenberg's only book on Hegel was essentially an existentialist reading of the Phenomenology. Yet Lowenberg credited Royce with the suggestion that led him to view the Phenomenology as a literary biography and motivated his desire to "captur[e]...the spirit of the humanism" that pervades the Phenomenology. Like Dewey, Royce too had come to emphasize the importance of the Phenomenology of Spirit, and made many comments about Hegel's thought that are consistent with Dewey's humanistic reading. Lowenberg's book may suggest that there is a way to trace the contemporary, humanistic reading of Hegel in the United States back to the tradition in which Dewey was schooled, but that project goes far beyond the current one.

During the 1960s the existentialist reading of the Phenomenology became prominent, not only in the United States, but in much of western Europe. In the United States this reading found a passionate advocate in Walter Kaufmann, but many Hegel scholars view existentialist readings of the Phenomenology as highly suspect because they are at odds with Hegel's desire to be a systematic philosopher. Moreover, existentialist interpreters of Hegel were less concerned

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19 Lowenberg, Hegel's Phenomenology: Dialogues on the Life of the Mind (LaSalle, IL: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1965), x.

20 Royce's preference for the Phenomenology is most apparent in his posthumously published Lectures on Modern Idealism which were edited by Lowenberg and published in 1919.
with recovering Hegel than with promoting existentialism, thus their reading of Hegel has not endured.\textsuperscript{21}

Another 1960s initiative in Hegel studies continues to flourish, however. Working at the University of Bonn, Klaus Hartmann developed what he termed a non-metaphysical interpretation of Hegel which initiated a renewed emphasis on Hegel’s \textit{Logic}, and played an important role in the revival of Hegelian philosophy over the subsequent period. A visiting professor at the University of Texas at Austin during the mid-1960s, Hartmann gathered a small but significant number of graduate students who were sufficiently impressed by his intellectual probity and scholarship that many of them followed him to Bonn to continue their studies of Hegel.\textsuperscript{22} Hartmann’s approach is helpful to situate the following discussion of the contemporary humanistic/historicist reading of Hegel.

According to Hartmann, rather than lapsing into a pre-critical metaphysics, Hegel formulated a metaphysics on the Kantian model, a theory of the concepts, or categories, necessary for the possibility of knowledge, rather than a theory of reality. In an effort to avoid confusion arising from the historical ambiguities of the term “metaphysics,” Hartmann refers to Hegel’s theory as a “hermeneutical ontology,” an endeavor to derive the categories according to

\textsuperscript{21} The devastating broadside Kaufmann launched at Popper’s caricature of Hegel in \textit{The Open Society and Its Enemies}, first published in 1951 (previously noted), was his first foray into Hegel studies. Subsequently, Kaufmann published several books that deal extensively with Hegel; the most important are: Kaufmann, \textit{Hegel: A Reinterpretation} (New York: Doubleday, 1965); Kaufmann, \textit{Tragedy and Philosophy} (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor, 1969); Kaufmann, ed., \textit{Hegel’s Political Philosophy} (New York: Atherton, 1970); Kaufmann, \textit{From Shakespeare to Existentialism} (Freeport: Books for Libraries, 1971).

which we experience the world. A growing number of Hegel scholars have continued to develop Hartmann's interpretation, pointing out that the traditional reading leads to peculiar historical and philosophical conclusions. Robert Pippin has made this point forcefully:

...the standard view of how Hegel passes beyond Kant into speculative philosophy makes very puzzling...how [he] could have been the post-Kantian philosopher he understood himself to be...how he could have accepted Kant's revelations about the fundamental inadequacies of the metaphysical tradition, [and]...enthusiastically agreed with Kant that the metaphysics of the "beyond," of substance, and of traditional views of God and infinity were forever discredited, and then...promptly created a systematic metaphysics as if he had never heard of Kant's critical epistemology.

How could Hegel be "a post-Kantian philosopher with a pre-critical metaphysics"? In his *Science of Logic*, Hegel claimed that his "objective logic...takes the place...of formal metaphysics which was intended to be the scientific construction of the world in terms of thoughts alone."  

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Hegel's Project

In the twentieth century, the recovery of Hegel’s popular political writings, complemented by biographical study, has led to a conception of how Hegel understood his project that is similar to that of Rosenkranz.²⁶ According to recent biographers, Hegel was convinced that the primary problem of modernity was alienation and the breakdown of community. Hegel believed it was imperative to develop a philosophy which depicted humans as inherently social beings who can reach agreement about morality and achieve unity within themselves and with one another. He evidently read the Critique of Pure Reason and the Critique of Practical Reason for class as early as 1790 but, from the beginning, he believed Kant overemphasized man’s rationality and neglected the reality of his moral passions.²⁷ Working in the post-Kantian milieu, Hegel approved of Kant’s insight that the mind is active, but saw Kant’s philosophy as


²⁷ This is evident in Hegel’s earliest known essay, the “Tubingen Essay” in G. W. F. Hegel, Three Essays, 1793-95.
emblematic of modern alienation: Kant’s noumenal/phenomenal dualism
alienated man from nature and made science impossible because the thing-in-
itself was unknowable. Man was alienated from himself because, according to
Kant, the empirical self could not know the transcendental self which ordered
experience according to transcendental categories. Man was also alienated from
his empirical needs and desires because he was required to fulfill his absolute
duty to the categorical imperative regardless of his desires and regardless of
considerations about the consequences of his actions. Hegel also believed that
Kant’s notion of transcendent duty could and would lead to further social
division because it could be used to foster religious and political zealotry.\[28\]

Hegel was vexed by the threat of fanaticism because he came of age
during a remarkably tumultuous time in European history. As a student at the
Lutheran seminary in Tübingen when the French Revolution began, Hegel
befriended Friedrich Schelling, who would soon become a renowned neo-
Kantian philosopher in his own right, and the poet, Friedrich Hölderlin. The
three friends were keen supporters of the Revolution, devouring French
newspapers and enthusiastically reading and discussing Rousseau and Voltaire.
Hegel never lost his commitment to the principles of the revolution, drinking a
toast to the storming of the Bastille every fourteenth of July, but his hopes for the

\[28\] Hegel had abundant reasons to fear that the critical philosophy would lead to divisive
fanaticism. A contemporary philosopher, Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, argued that because Kant’s
system precluded cognitive access to the thing-in-itself, his belief in its existence was an
expression of dogmatism rather than the conclusion of a rational proof. A fideist, Jacobi argued
that faith, not reason, was the basis of human knowledge of objective reality. For Hegel, Jacobi’s
fideism was tantamount to holding that a person’s beliefs were true as long as they were
passionately committed to them. See Hegel’s 1802 essay, “Faith and Knowledge. G. W. F. Hegel,
*Faith and Knowledge*, trans. Walter Cerf and H. S. Harris (Albany: State University of New York,
1977). See also Frederick C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte*
advance of liberalism were dashed when the Reign of Terror began in 1793; from then on he supported the Girondin, a moderate faction of the Jacobins.\textsuperscript{29} Intellectual problems raised by the Terror animated Hegel's thought for the rest of his life.

By 1800 Hegel was convinced that modern man's problems were rooted in philosophy, rather than theology, and began to pursue a secular academic career. He resolved to develop a rational articulation of reality that would unite reason and emotion within the individual in a harmonious whole, and the enlightened and unenlightened elements of society in a spiritual community. Hegel came to view Christianity as a rich resource for the symbols needed in such a philosophy, and began to speak of \textit{Geist}, or spirit, as the vehicle of unification. In this way Hegel took Christianity more seriously than the typical Enlightenment thinker, but he also sought to secularize it by incorporating its insights into philosophy.

In search of an academic position, in 1800 Hegel moved to Jena, the birthplace of Romanticism. The early Romantics, particularly August and Friedrich Schlegel, argued that we should seek complete individual freedom and dedication to spiritual ideals, transcending social imperatives. They advocated individual fulfillment through artistic activity in which the artist reveals his own divinity. In the \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit} (1807), Hegel argued that Romanticism degenerated into a "beauty of the soul," according to which the individual followed the dictates of his own conscience regardless of the judgments of, or their consequences upon, others. Such a soul is beautiful because it is unified, but it cannot act in a fragmented world without tarnishing itself. Ultimately, the

\textsuperscript{29} Pinkard, \textit{Hegel: A Biography}, 52-53.
beautiful soul does not dare to act because it knows it will compromise its own purity. Ironically, the beautiful soul can identify what ought to be done in a particular situation, but must keep its distance from society. Hegel concluded that the only way to move beyond this predicament is to recognize that we must act on reasons that can be shared by all, and that these reasons are not “given,” as were Kant’s, but must be negotiated and struggled over.\textsuperscript{30}

Hegel sought to strike a mean between the extremes of enlightenment reason and romantic mysticism. It is precisely this philosophical goal that makes him seem like the consummate enlightenment philosopher with an exaggerated faith in reason and systematic, scientific thought, and at the same time, the consummate romantic philosopher emphasizing spiritual unification within an organic, developmental vision of the whole of history and reality. In truth, Hegel was critical of both and indebted to both. As H. S. Harris explains, Hegel sought “the fusion of the ideal of rational enlightenment with the romantic ideal of direct experience and living intuition...” This ultimately led him “to a different and far deeper conception of reason itself,” which always included the emotions as well as discursive abilities.\textsuperscript{31}

Hegel believed Kant’s fundamental error was accepting two modern philosophical premises: the Newtonian model of reality as an aggregate of discrete particles of matter in motion, and the Cartesian model of mind and

world as two metaphysically distinct realities. Hegel was convinced that both of these assumptions made insoluble the problem of knowledge. If reality was composed of discrete objects, and knowledge is accurate judgment about how things are related, how could we have knowledge? And if mind and world are metaphysically distinct, how can mind connect with the world to gain knowledge?\textsuperscript{32} Like Kant, Hegel was convinced that we do in fact have knowledge, and he sought to articulate the sort of relationship we must have to the world in order for that to be the case. He postulated that the world is a whole (the absolute) in which all of the parts are interrelated as are the parts of a living organism. Hegel went so far as to say that all objects of experience are, in a sense, relations rather than unchanging entities that somehow possess relations. On this model, relations are not just in the world; they are the world. As Hegel stated it, "Being is Thought."\textsuperscript{33} On a historicist reading of Hegel, the claim that being is thought is not an assertion of a monistic metaphysics; the claim means that thought deals strictly with relations, and the world of our experience is relations. Hegel believed that this move allowed him to completely abandon Cartesian dualism and depict the mind as having direct access to the world in all its relational glory because mind and world have something significant in common; both are composed of relations.

Hegel also rejected Kant's notion of intuition because, as a passive medium, it necessarily separated us from reality as it is in itself. If we had no control over intuition, we could never get beyond it to experience the world as it

\textsuperscript{32} See Hinchman, *Hegel's Critique of the Enlightenment*, 72-73, 87-88, 103-104, 185-186. Even nineteenth-century scholars would agree that Hegel rejected the Newtonian model of reality and sought to move beyond the Cartesian problematic.
is. Hegel concluded that reason is not restricted to a realm metaphysically
distinct from the world; it is in the world in that relations are in the world. At the
same time Hegel rejected Kant’s theory that a noumenal realm serves as a limit to
thought, claiming that Kant’s noumenal realm is a posit of thought and that
thought cannot posit a limit to itself. Critics have argued that Hegel’s rejection
of Kant’s faculty of intuition and the thing-in-itself, led him down the slippery
slope to pre-critical, that is to say, pre-Kantian, speculation about the mind and
its world. Because it seems that Hegel rejected the limits that Kant placed on
thought, but embraced Kant’s theory that the mind actively constructs
experience, critics have concluded that he became a subjective idealist believing
that thought creates the world.

33 Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, §54.
34 Cf. Kant’s posit of a “supersensible substrate” in the Critique of Judgement: “There must
therefore be a ground of the unity of the supersensible, which lies at the basis of nature, with that
which the concept of freedom practically contains; and the concept of this ground, although it
does not attain either theoretically or practically to a knowledge of the same, and hence has no
peculiar realm, nevertheless makes possible the transition from the mode of thought according to
the principles of the one to that according to the principles of the other.” Kant was at pains to
claim that the supersensible substratum was not a dogmatic posit, arguing that it only has
practical validity, Kant, Critique of Judgement, trans. with an introduction by J. H. Bernard (New
philosophy came more and more to rest on its tangency with a ‘supersensible substrate’ until, in
the Third Critique, that notion of a transcendent ground featured decisively in rounding his
system to a close.” Zammito, The Genesis of Kant’s Critique of Judgment (Chicago: University of
Chicago Press, 1992). To Hegel, Kant simply revealed that he had not overcome the Cartesian
problematic that strained British empiricism. As an example, according to John Locke, although
material substance is the source of our ideas, it was an idea “which we neither have, nor can
have, by sensation or reflection.” Locke claimed that we “signify nothing by the word substance,
but only an uncertain supposition of we know not what, i.e. of some thing whereof we have no
particular distinct positive idea, which we take to be the substratum, or support, of those ideas
we do know.” Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, ed. Peter Nidditch (Oxford:
Clarendon Press, 1988), 95. George Berkeley’s subjective idealism sprang from his conviction that
Locke’s postulation of material substance as the cause of corporeal phenomena was an ad hoc
fiction, not a vera causa.
35 See Allen Hance, “Pragmatism as Naturalized Hegelianism: Overcoming
Transcendental Philosophy?” in Rorty and Pragmatism: The Philosopher Responds to His Critics, ed.
Herman J. Saatkamp, Jr. (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1995), 100-125. Hance criticizes
Rorty’s claim that pragmatism is “naturalized Hegelianism,” demonstrating that Rorty incorrectly
assumes that Hegel’s rejection of Kant’s thing-in-itself commits him to subjective idealism. Fance
argues that Hegel rejected representational epistemology much more successfully than Rorty, but
the question of Hegel’s relationship to Dewey is beyond the scope of his argument. Further,
Because of his rejection of Kant's transcendent realm, other critics have claimed that he was a relativist. In his critique of philosophical dualisms, Hegel rejected the transcendent because he feared that the notion of transcendent truth would only fuel the flames of fanaticism, and instead argued that all of reality is within the flow of history. Critics have charged that if Hegel's historicism left nothing that was not subject to the vagaries of history, he landed in a complete historical relativism with no guarantee that we could rise above the phenomenal. The British neo-Hegelians sought to "rescue" Hegel from this critique by depicting his absolute as a Kantian transcendent realm, thus perpetuating the religious/metaphysical reading of Hegel. This is why Dewey complained about the "purely Anglo-American habit" of "interpreting Hegel as a Neo-Kantian..." 36

Because Hegel conceived the purpose of the Phenomenology of Spirit as laying the groundwork for proper philosophical thinking, an exercise in learning or clearing one's mind of the implicit foundational assumptions of the modern problematic, it provides scholars with insight into his philosophical project. 37 By elaborating a historicist reading of the Preface and Introduction to the Phenomenology, in which Hegel discussed his project in some detail, we can also confront several Hegelian concepts—the absolute, absolute truth, philosophy as

36 Dewey, "Beliefs and Existences" (1905), MW 3: 86.
37 See Stephen Bungay's characterization of Hegel's project, in which he explains that, for Hegel, "philosophy will not tell us anything we did not already know, like a new fact about the world, but will tell about what we already know, by subjecting our knowledge to an examination." Bungay, "The Hegelian Project," in Hegel Reconsidered: Beyond Metaphysics and the Authoritarian State, ed. H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr. and Terry Pinkard (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994), 20.
science, and Geist—that are generally thought to be completely at odds with Dewey’s post-1903 project.³⁸

In the Preface, Hegel asserted that philosophy is the presentation of philosophical or “absolute” truth. First we shall consider the historicist understanding of Hegel’s “absolute,” a term that may strike us as arrogant or philosophically extravagant, and then discuss his notion of absolute truth. The “absolute” was often used as a synonym for infinity, particularly by Schelling, but for the post-Kantian idealists, infinity was not a mathematical term at all, rather it was more akin to Anaximander’s apeiron: the boundless, or the unlimited.³⁹ For the German idealists, “infinite” meant simply complete or self-contained and the absolute meant the whole, that which is undivided or unqualified. In the Science of Logic, Hegel distinguished between the genuine and spurious infinite, or a bad infinity; the former was self-contained and autonomous, the latter simply goes on and on in an infinite regress. Cognition that is limited by the senses, the forms of intuition, the categories of the understanding, or the dictates of transcendent obligation was necessary to ordinary human life, but was merely finite. In order for such knowledge or action to fully make sense, to be fully meaningful, it had to be understood within a larger whole, the infinite unity of human experience. Thus any philosophy that

³⁸ Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, §2.
³⁹ Tom Rockmore, On Hegel’s Epistemology and Contemporary Philosophy (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1996), 49. Perhaps the fundamental difference between religious and secular readings of Hegel is that some commentators have assumed the absolute is a supernatural God, while others have preferred secular interpretations. Recent examples of secular readings include Joseph Flay’s claims that Hegel’s absolute merely shows what knowledge is and how it is possible. Flay, Hegel’s Quest for Certainty (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984), 284. Errol Harris argues that Hegel’s absolute is the highest, most adequate, form of knowledge. Harris, An Interpretation of the Logic of Hegel (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983), 286. Robert Solomon claims that Hegel’s absolute is God, but that his God is not
renders reality or our experience of it into separate, finite segments is inherently incomplete and inadequate.\textsuperscript{40}

Hegel criticized Romantics who had insisted that "the Absolute is not supposed to be comprehended, it is to be felt and intuited; not the Notion of the absolute but the feeling and intuition of it...."\textsuperscript{41} In this passage, Hegel used "absolute" to mean all of reality, containing all relations and thus not related to anything beyond itself. In this sense, Hegel's absolute was analogous to Kant's thing-in-itself, but for Hegel the thing-in-itself was knowable. And in contrast to the Romantics Hegel maintained that knowledge of the absolute requires "the Notion" (Begriff); it demands articulation and "reasons" (Grunden).

To those who advocate the historicist reading of Hegel's absolute, the view that it is the final cause of history makes his philosophy radically inconsistent. Historicists emphasize Hegel's claim that idealism can make no presuppositions or admit merely postulated entities, and argue that he could not consistently assert that the absolute is an ontological principle. On the historicist reading, Hegel's absolute is nothing more than an epistemological principle, and absolute knowledge is not knowledge that is beyond time. The historicist reading of Hegel's absolute takes its cues from the perspectival nature of the types of knowledge he discussed in the Phenomenology, his notion of historical reason, and the remark in The Philosophy of Right that we have already noted: "every individual is a child of his time; thus philosophy, too, is its own time comprehended"

in thoughts." At the end of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel did not describe absolute knowledge as the final and absolutely true perspective, but rather as a perspective that is different from all other perspectives because it is aware of its own conditions and limitations. On this reading, Hegel’s later historicist claim in *The Philosophy of Right* is not a change but a development of his position in the *Phenomenology*. Similarly, in the *Logic*, Hegel argued that the final philosophical perspective is simply one that is fully thought out in terms of concepts. If no one can transcend their historical epoch then, for Hegel, claims to know must be based on knowledge at its current state of development.

Hegel also used “absolute” to refer to the outcome of a dialectical investigation. The absolute notion “is what contains all the earlier categories of thought merged in it.” The absolute standpoint, reached at the end of the *Phenomenology*, is the point from which we are to begin philosophy in the *Science of Logic*. In that context the absolute is a theoretical standpoint achieved when we free ourselves from the dualism of thought and being that lies at the heart of representational epistemology, and apprehend their unity. From this standpoint, we can examine the limits and internal coherence of our beliefs. Hegel also claimed that the categorial scheme he laid out in the *Science of Logic* was absolute because it overcame the problematic of representational epistemology. His categories were not functions of the empirical subject (modes of representation),

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43 This reading of *The Philosophy of Right* and the *Phenomenology* draws strength from passages in the *Phenomenology* that appear to foreshadow the later claim that philosophy is its own time comprehended in thought. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §§800, 808.
hence they could not be subjective; rather they were in things as much as they were in thought.\textsuperscript{45} Hegel claimed that his categories were wholly a matter of thought, but by that he meant that they are relations, or logical structures, that exist in the world. On this reading, Hegel’s theory is idealist but not phenomenalist because he did not posit something behind or beyond the things of experience or, in the modern idiom, bracket off questions about what might exist beyond experience. Indeed, to accuse Hegel of phenomenalism or subjective idealism is to remain captive to the Cartesian conception of thought and its relationship to being. Hegel’s phenomenological method in the \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit} reveals not just phenomena, as opposed to noumena, but real objects, that is to say, relations.

Through the understanding, Kant conceived of individual objects as discrete and independent, but Hegel claimed we must grasp their interrelatedness through reason. Hegel’s “absolute idea,” the final result of the dialectic, is an ultimate principle according to which we conceive of the structural unity revealed by reason and overcome all dichotomies. Hegel transformed Kant’s account of the abstract conditions of the possibility of knowledge to an account of how it occurs by introducing a historical dimension to the problem of knowledge. The knowing process, for Hegel, is a concrete historical process, mediated through our relationships with other human beings. Hegel moved from the analysis of the conditions of experience to the analysis of

\textsuperscript{45} “Thoughts, according to Kant, although universal and necessary categories, are \textit{only our} thoughts—separated by an impassible gulf from the thing, as it exists apart from our knowledge. But the true objectivity of thinking means that the thoughts, far from being merely ours, must at the same time be the real essence of the things, and of whatever is an object to us.” Hegel, \textit{Hegel’s Logic}, 67-68.
experience, and thus moved the discussion from the \textit{a priori} level to the \textit{a posteriori}. Experience provides the concrete historical mediation of logical principles.\textsuperscript{46}

In sum, on the historicist reading of Hegel, absolute knowledge is an accession to a mode of self-critical thought that has abandoned dogmatic foundations and will only accept rational defense as philosophical justification. Absolute truth is truth that has been thoroughly, rationally examined, and thus is independent of external authority. On this reading, Hegel is a radically anti-foundationalist philosopher. In the words of Hartmann, "The Hegelian proposal is to avoid the problem of a first stance by invoking circularity...in terms of a theory of categories whose justification is borne out by the result of the categorial doctrine itself." Agreeing with Hartman on this point, Tom Rockmore claims that "Hegel...proposes a new paradigm of systematic knowledge without foundations with an obvious, but as yet largely unexplored relation to pragmatism."\textsuperscript{47}

In the Preface, Hegel also claimed that philosophical truth, as opposed to "random assertions and assurances," must be "systematic" and developmental in form. To be systematic, philosophy must be science, \textit{Wissenschaft}. Philosophy, for Hegel, is science when it presents the whole truth in a conceptually articulate fashion. When philosophy attains the status of science, he believed, it corrects the one-sided truth of previous philosophies. To be "developmental," philosophy can not be isolated hypotheses, but always a response to, and a development of,

\footnotetext{46}{Rockmore, \textit{On Hegel's Epistemology and Contemporary Philosophy}, 61-62.}
other philosophical positions. When Hegel wrote the *Phenomenology*, he believed the time was ripe for philosophy to become science. He spoke of a “sunburst” which one might take to be the French Revolution or Enlightenment liberalism, both of which were then impacting Germany. The sunburst was more than specific events, however; it was a new way of thinking, no longer in terms of provincial beliefs and authoritative religions.  

For Hegel science was the relentless revelation of all unexamined assumptions, and the ordering of proven beliefs into a logically consistent system. “Science” sought a general understanding of the various forms of human knowledge, including what we now think of as the empirical sciences, but also art, religion and philosophy. The dialectic, Hegel’s perception of scientific method, always begins with an hypothesis in that it is always adapted, developed, and ultimately sublated (*Aufheben*), that is, incorporated without being eliminated, in a more inclusive understanding of the subject matter. Moreover, Hegel believed the systematization of truth was a never-ending affair; it required a constant process of self-examination in which we continually seek, and are confronted by, inconsistencies in our beliefs and in our form of life.  

In this discussion we should recall Dewey’s claim that “it is Kant who does violence to science, while Hegel (I speak of his essential method and not of

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48 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §11.  
49 For a thorough refutation of the view that Hegel believed in an end of history, and thus an end of the dialectic, see Philip T. Grier, “The End of History and the Return of History,” in Jon Stewart, ed., *The Hegel Myths and Legends* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1996), 183-198. Cf. Solomon, *In the Spirit of Hegel*, 24-25. Solomon writes that the goal of the *Phenomenology* “is to gain a single all-encompassing conception, which makes sense of everything at once. But though this may be the goal of the *Phenomenology*, it is not its result; there is no end
any particular result) is the quintessence of the scientific spirit.” Dewey provided two reasons to support this statement. First, Hegel “denies...the possibility of getting truth out of a formal, apart thought.” Second, Hegel “denies the existence of any faculty of thought which is other than the expression of fact itself.”

Further, Dewey explained that Hegel’s contention is not that ‘thought,’ in the scholastic sense, has ontological validity, but that fact, reality is significant. Even, then, were it shown that Hegel is pretty much all wrong as to the special meanings which he finds to make up the significance of reality, his main principle would be unimpeached until it is shown that fact has not a systematic, or interconnected, meaning, but is a mere hodgepodge of fragments.50

For Dewey, the primary advance of Hegel’s philosophy over Kant’s was his elimination of the distinction between thought and being. Mind/body dualism, Dewey believed, completely undercut science because it eliminated the possibility that the mind could be in direct contact with reality. Consistent with his reading of Hegel as the “great actualist,” Dewey also claimed in this passage that Hegel did not reduce reality to thought, but affirmed that thought is a fact among the world of facts, and that all facts are interconnected.

We finally arrive at a point of prima facie agreement between Hegel and Dewey on the nature of philosophy in Hegel’s description of philosophy as an activity we only learn by doing. Hegel wanted to unite theory and practice and explicitly rejected the notion that philosophy is a body of knowledge or a set of conclusions. According to Robert Solomon, Hegel understood philosophy as a process, and though one must reach some conclusion, it is the thinking process,

not that conclusion, that is the truth of philosophy. For Hegel, philosophy, science, is a method, not a body of final truths.\textsuperscript{51}

In agreement with the Romantics, Hegel believed that philosophy must not be confined to the study, or taken as a substitute for life. Philosophy, argued Hegel, must ultimately demonstrate that its results do not pervert the "natural attitude," the certainty we all have in our everyday lives that we have access to reality and that our projects prosper or falter as we function within that reality. In the \textit{Phenomenology} Hegel sought to demonstrate that the absolute standpoint lies within the natural attitude, and thus to establish the natural attitude on firm philosophical ground by articulating what is latent (the absolute standpoint) within it. As Joseph Flay explains, the goal of the \textit{Phenomenology} was "to establish the unity of the experience of the natural attitude with the experience instantiated within the absolute standpoint of absolute idealism." On this reading of Hegel, he rejected the traditional notion that the philosophical attitude is "the esoteric possession of a few individuals," and believed that philosophy should be "completely determined," and thus "comprehensible, and capable of being learned and appropriated by all." Just as the absolute standpoint, for Hegel, lies within the natural attitude, we saw that Dewey claimed in the \textit{Studies in Logical Theory} that the psychological standpoint lies within the "naïve point of view."\textsuperscript{52}

In the Preface, Hegel also introduced his concept of \textit{Geist}, spirit. After the Enlightenment, Hegel claimed, religious faith was passé, but in desperation people turned "away from the empty husks" of religion to philosophy, not for

\textsuperscript{51} Solomon, \textit{In the Spirit of Hegel}, 15, 26, 158-160.

knowledge but for "the recovery...of that lost sense of solid and substantial being."§3 Building on a theme in his early theological writings, Hegel claimed that the loss of spirit is not due to the loss of religion but to the ethereal vacuity of a theology which he felt had never given sufficient attention to the importance of community, and to concrete understanding instead of in comprehensible doctrines. In this way, Hegel articulated the conception of spirit he had been working toward in his early writings, spirit as humanity rather than some divinity above or some intangible soul within.§4

According to the historicist reading of Hegel, spirit is essentially conceptual, articulate, and it is only through its "expression" of itself.§5 Spirit, as manifested in human history, is not an external providence directing historical action; rather, spirit is reason in history. When Hegel claimed that there is reason in history he meant that the process of historical events can be articulated rationally because there are relations in history. World War I began shortly after the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand on 28 June 1914 because of the interrelatedness of the events of that time. The historian looks for and discovers these relations, the reason in history, and attempts to construct a narrative on the basis of what he or she has found. This is a prime example of what Hegel meant when he claimed that we apprehend reason in, rather than impose it upon, the subject-matter. Spirit is not a sequence of events but an understanding of events thus, in a sense, there is no history until there is an historian, one who articulates

§3 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §7.
§5 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §10.
the rational meaning of history. But the facts of history, the relations, are there all along.

In the Introduction to the *Phenomenology*, Hegel addressed the tendency of modern philosophy to end in skepticism, which he considered an utterly absurd position. Rather than attempt a refutation of skepticism, however, he turned to a diagnosis of the modern problematic. Why have efforts to establish the grounds for knowledge repeatedly ended in skepticism about the very possibility of knowledge?

Hegel questioned the central project of modern philosophy, which was to begin with the search for the correct method for gaining knowledge. As Hegel explained, philosophers have sought a method because they "fear[ed]...falling into error"; he contended that we should consider "whether this fear of error is not just the error itself."⁵⁶ Rather than seek a method, we should take knowledge as a phenomenon to be examined and try to understand, as did Kant, what kind of beings we would have to be in order to have knowledge. Rather than searching for a method by which to gain knowledge, Hegel claimed, we should plunge into the subject matter. One does not learn what knowledge is by developing a method with which to prove it, but by assuming, from the outset, that we do know something, that we are in contact with the absolute, the things of the world, and do not need a method to prove this. Indeed the search for a method is precisely what made it appear, in previous philosophy, as if it is possible that we are not in immediate contact with the absolute, and therefore might not know reality at all. In this way he attacked the very idea of a theory of knowledge.

⁵⁶ Ibid., §74.
knowledge. To Hegel, the idea of knowing a theory that precedes knowledge itself is a manifest absurdity.

Hegel distanced himself from Kant as he attacked traditional epistemology through an examination of the two metaphors upon which it is based. The first assumes that consciousness is active; it is an instrument for getting hold of the things themselves. The second is a more passive metaphor, that consciousness is a medium through which we can see the absolute.\(^{57}\) Both metaphors lead to skepticism because the instrument or the medium would necessarily distort the things themselves, and even if they did not we would have no way of knowing this because we could not escape our inner reality. Both metaphors assume consciousness is one thing, and reality, the absolute, is something else. The assumption that thought and being, consciousness and physical reality, are ontologically different immediately raises the quandary of how consciousness ever reaches beyond itself to the absolute. The two metaphors are based upon a deeper one, "that there is a boundary between cognition and the absolute that completely separates them." Once one accepts the idea of an inner/outer boundary, then crossing that boundary, while always remaining on the inside, becomes impossible.\(^ {58}\)

Kant’s notion of a critique of pure reason was based on the assumption that we can separate ourselves from our cognitive functions and analyze them from a neutral vantage point, which is not itself an act of knowing, in order to discover how we gain knowledge. To Hegel, this begs the question because

\(^{57}\) Kant, of course, combined these two metaphors: Understanding was an active instrument. Intuition was a passive medium.

\(^{58}\) Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §73.
Kant's analyzing reason must be analyzed before it can be trusted as a faculty capable of a critique of reason. Moreover, Kant's epistemology assumes that it makes sense to assert that things as they are experienced are different from things as they really are while maintaining that we can have no knowledge of the noumenal world. Hegel's solution to this dilemma was to reject the appearance/reality distinction.

Though Hegel defended the common-sense view that we have knowledge, he criticized everyday "natural consciousness" which "takes itself to be real knowledge," only because it is naively certain, without questioning the matter at all. He implicitly praised Descartes for utilizing "the pathway of doubt" which provides "conscious insight into the untruth of phenomenal knowledge," but clearly his attack on traditional epistemology included Descartes. Hegel also referred to this method as "the way of despair" in order to emphasize that it is much more than an academic process of "shilly-shallying about this or that presumed truth, followed by a return to that truth again, after the doubt has been appropriately dispelled—so that at the end of the process the matter is taken to be what it was in the first place." What Hegel had in mind was doubt that calls into question our very forms of life, not just isolated, subjective beliefs. The way of doubt, as he sought to use it, allows the natural consciousness to recognize its untruth but, rather than mere negation, it should lead us to determinate negation, a more profound and inclusive standpoint. Through a series of determinate negations we could discover the absolute standpoint in natural
consciousness. In absolute knowing, "knowledge no longer needs to go beyond itself...Notion corresponds to object and object to Notion."\textsuperscript{59}

Yet Hegel did not affirm the correspondence theory of truth; he already rejected the inner/outer boundary upon which that theory is based. Robert Solomon claims that Hegel's "is a heavily practical conception of Truth with strong affinities to what has been defended in this century (by William James and others) as the 'pragmatic theory of truth.'"\textsuperscript{60} Though perhaps surprising to many scholars, Solomon's claim has \textit{prima facie} plausibility when we examine Hegel's discussion of truth in the \textit{Phenomenology}. According to Hegel, "'true' and 'false'" are incorrectly thought to be "inert and wholly separate essences, one here and one there, each standing fixed and isolated from the other, with which it has nothing in common." Hegel's point was that truth and falsity do not preexist our experience of the world and they are not unchanging, Platonic forms. Hence, there are no objects, "true" and "false," to which our ideas could correspond. "Dogmatism," according to Hegel, "is nothing else but the opinion that the True consists in a proposition which is a fixed result, or which is immediately known." In words that could have been penned by William James, Hegel wrote that "truth is not a minted coin that can be given and pocketed ready-made."\textsuperscript{61} By way of comparison, James claimed that "The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it. Truth \textit{happens} to an idea. It \textit{becomes} true, is \textit{made} true by events."\textsuperscript{62} In the same vein, in 1920, Dewey wrote: "That which

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., §§78, 80.
\textsuperscript{60} Solomon, \textit{In the Spirit of Hegel}, 176.
\textsuperscript{61} Hegel, \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit}, §§39, 40.
\end{footnotesize}
guides us truly is true—demonstrated capacity for such guidance is precisely what is meant by truth."\textsuperscript{63}

Perhaps much to the surprise of many who have seen fit to comment on his thought, including Reichenbach, Hegel rejected the view that, "in every falsehood there is a grain of truth," on the grounds that this "is to treat the two like oil and water, which cannot be mixed and are only externally combined." It is just as fallacious, claimed Hegel, to speak of "the unity of subject and object, of finite and infinite, of being and thought, etc." because as contraries these terms designate disunity; we can only speak of subject and object when "they are outside of their unity, and since in their unity they are not meant to be what their expression says they are, just so the false is no longer \textit{qua} false, a moment of the truth."\textsuperscript{64} We can only properly speak of true and false when there is a disunity of subject and object, when we encounter a contradiction or conflict of some sort.

Hegel claimed that "Consciousness provides its own criterion from within itself, so that the investigation becomes a comparison of consciousness with itself." Rather than correspondence of thought and being, truth is a conceptual activity through which we conceive the world together with our recognition that our concepts determine the world we experience. There is no reality "in itself" beyond our experience. Truth is experience conceived through "the Concept."\textsuperscript{65}

We comprehend our experience within the network of our concepts, the intelligibility of our concepts in the face of our actual experience, our over-all sense of total comprehension. Truth involves the logical coherence of a belief

\textsuperscript{64}Hegel, \textit{Phenomenology of Spirit}, §39.
\textsuperscript{65}Ibid., §37.
with the rest of our beliefs; but more importantly, coherence is a sense of self-satisfaction. We seek to avoid being driven back to "the same barren ego."

66 The attainment of truth provides an enrichment or deepening of our experience. It is this sense of personal inadequacy, rather than logical or epistemological demands alone, that provides the criterion for coherence, the standard of truth.

**Functionalist Psychology**

As we noted previously, Dewey claimed that he always retained Hegel's emphasis on the "power exercised by cultural environment in shaping the ideas, beliefs, and intellectual attitudes of individuals," and that this emphasis on culture convinced him that "the only possible psychology...was a social psychology."  

67 We have also argued that Dewey believed he found functional psychology in Hegel, though James showed him ways to articulate it more clearly. When James argued that there is no metaphysical distinction between "me" and "not-me" in the stream of consciousness, and that we make this distinction hypothetically, Dewey wrote to James that he had unwittingly stated "the real core of Hegel." According to Dewey, "the unity of Hegel's self...is not a unity in the stream as such, but of the function of this stream..."  

68 Hegel's commitment to social psychology is clear early in his writings. After the Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel critiqued three "shapes of consciousness," modes of epistemic justification, on their own terms. Hegel believed he undermined these shapes of consciousness by demonstrating that any mental content, even what seems immediate, contains concepts, or in

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66 Ibid., §§81, 84, 80.
Hegel’s terminology, is mediated. In today’s terms, we might express this point by saying that all experience is “theory-laden.” Hegel’s primary point is that there are no uninterpreted experiences and, even if there were, there could be no knowledge of them without concepts and interpretation. Experience requires concepts which consciousness provides. Nothing “originates in the sensuous.”

What we perceive is not simply based upon, or inferred from, the data of the senses, but already presupposes understanding (the use of concepts). There are no “given” objects that we experience directly, or that determine the judgments we make about them. In our experience, we are always aware of things as particular things and particular types of things, taking things to be this way or that, and contributing meaning to our experience that it does not automatically have. In order to avoid the contradictions of these three shapes of consciousness, we must recognize that we are always self-conscious about what we are doing and the goals we are working toward in making the judgments we make. We establish cognitive norms and make judgments on the basis of these goals and we seek reassurance that our cognitive norms, and hence our goals, are valid.

The view that we seek reassurance that our cognitive norms, our very ways of life, are valid, leads Hegel to a discussion of objective spirit, beginning in the section entitled “Self-Consciousness.” For Hegel, epistemology becomes a study of social psychology, how we interact with one another in our endeavor to find recognition that our form of life is a valid one. The phenomenology of objective spirit examines culturally distinct patterns of social interaction in terms

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69 Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §129.
of the patterns of recognition they embody. On the historicist reading, Hegel’s notion of objective spirit does not commit him to a transcendent, metaphysical reality; rather spirit is viewed as culture or humanity. Because we seek reassurance that our cognitive norms are correct, we demand recognition from others like ourselves, recognition that our norms, and thus our goals, are worthy. Like Kant, Hegel believed we desire norms that all rational agents would affirm and follow. Our cognitive norms are based upon structures of mutual recognition among self-conscious agents. Hegel examined the history of patterns of recognition in order to demonstrate why they have foundered, and thus how we have come to our current pattern of recognition. For Hegel, only a historically, socially constructed philosophical account of these patterns can facilitate our understanding of the modern standpoint and its cognitive norms.

This transition in the Phenomenology is crucial to the historicist interpretation and to our claim that Dewey found pragmatic themes in Hegel’s Phenomenology. As Pippin explains, Hegel’s transition to “Self-Consciousness” is based on a conviction that the problem of epistemic criteria is intimately connected to the satisfaction of desire: “the ‘truth’ is wholly relativized to pragmatic ends....what counts as a successful explanation depends on what practical problem we want solved.” Furthermore, Pippin continues, “which desires a subject determines to pursue, which ends to satisfy, and indeed what counts as true satisfaction...are results of the collective, historical, social subject’s self-determination and have no natural status.”

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70 Pippin, Hegel’s Idealism, 148, 149 (emphasis in the original).
As Hegel examined patterns of recognition, beginning with the master/slave dialectic, he argued that we have certain natural desires that cause us to seek goals, but those desires cannot fully determine the norms by which they are judged. When one self-conscious agent encounters another they both seek recognition that their norms are correct. In so doing each agent recognizes that it is his own self-conceived project for life that determines his hierarchy of norms. We become aware of what Hegel called our “negativity” as we realize that our projects are never fully determined by any particular desire, but are the result of a host of competing desires. When one person decides that his desire for recognition is more important than life itself he becomes willing to enter into a struggle to the death. When one agent surrenders, out of fear for his life, to the other, they enter into a master/slave relationship in which the master imposes his norms upon the slave. Ultimately the slave comes to see the master’s norms as one perspective among many and recognizes the sheer contingency of the master’s hold on him. The master realizes that the slave cannot give the recognition he sought because it is not freely given. Because the master/slave relationship could not sustain itself, western man sought other avenues (i.e., Stoicism and skepticism) for self-mastery and independence, but these also failed. Yet throughout the medieval period, a time of universal servitude, Christianity prepared the way for an assertion of self-activity. In the following section of the Phenomenology, entitled Reason, Hegel painted a series of obscure portraits of various ways that early modern European culture sought to ground its normative commitments, and how each undermined itself on its own terms. The conclusion of this section is that reason gains authority only when its norms are seen to be embedded in a worthy way of life.
"Reason" is followed by Hegel's explicit discussion of objective spirit or, on the historicist reading, culture. The historicist interpretation is supported by the fact that the second part of "Spirit" is entitled "Self-Alienated Spirit. Culture." 71 In "Spirit," Hegel described objective spirit as the world spirit, and even Royce argued that the term is not a transcendent metaphysical reality. According to Royce,

'world-spirit' is explicitly allegorical. It refers to the self, viewed as the subject to whom historical or other human events and processes occur, so that it is as if this world-spirit lived its life by means of, or suffered and enjoyed its personal fortunes through these historical and individual processes. The world-spirit, then, is the self viewed metaphorically as the wanderer through the course of human history.... The term is never a technically philosophical term. 72

Hegel's discussion of Spirit leads to his moral and social philosophy, but we shall analyze that part of his thought in our discussion of his political philosophy. For now, we must examine how Hegel's social psychology leads to the functional psychology Dewey discovered in his writings.

Geist, which can be legitimately translated into English as "mind" as well as "spirit," provides clues about Hegel's conception of mind. On the historicist reading, similar to spirit as a historical reality, what we call the human mind is an hypostatization, or a supposition of philosophers that distinguishes human experience from something else—e.g., the physical world, the experience of God, or of unreflective animals. The mind exists in its being recognized as such. It is a thing in the world by way of an interpretation. The parallel to Dewey's functionalist psychology is clear. For Dewey, mind was not an internal, non-

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spatial, non-temporal reality, but an instrument for referring to certain functions of intelligent organisms. The mind is not a pre-existing entity with faculties that can oppose one another, rather it is a collection of functions of self-conscious beings.

Though recent Hegel scholars use different terminology than Dewey, they commonly explain that Hegel rejected Kant's faculty psychology, instead presenting the different "faculties" of the mind as moments, or stages, within a process. Hegel's functionalism is particularly apparent in analyses of his concept of reason. In his mature thought, Hegel used the term *Verstand*, normally translated as "understanding," for the enlightenment notion of reason. Hegel also spoke of common sense (*der gemeine Menschenverstand*), or ordinary thinking, which deals with presentations, or the mental images of objects (*Vorstellung* *denken*), which the understanding turns into thoughts (*Gedanken*) by ordering them into logical categories. *Verstand* is deductive; it produces clear analyses by separating and differentiating the parts of the whole according to the principle of identity, and provides abstract understanding of the subject-matter. Understanding is essential to analysis, but because it dissects the whole into parts it deals with merely abstract qualities, never reaching the concrete. *Verstand* is a necessary stage of logic, but for Hegel, it was only a beginning. This brings to mind Dewey's frequent criticisms of the positions of philosophers in which he, in effect, accused them of an arrested development of their views. For Dewey, this occurred when philosophers confused the results of an analysis with the state of affairs they analyzed, rather than moving beyond analysis to an understanding of the parts as they are interrelated within a larger whole. This was precisely how Dewey critiqued the reflex arc concept.
Where Dewey spoke of continuing the process of inquiry until we had achieved a reunification of experience, Hegel spoke of Vernunft. Vernunft, which is translated as "reason," designated our ability to see implicit contradictions and ambiguities in the abstractions of the understanding; at this stage Vernunft is negative reason. When it reaches the level of speculative reason, Vernunft is able to derive positive results from the contradictions of the understanding and see the whole.\(^3\)

Hegel did not view Verstand and Vernunft as separate faculties; rather he saw Verstand as a necessary moment, or stage, of Vernunft. Further, because of his rejection of Kant's faculty psychology, which rigidly separated understanding from reflection, Lewis Hinchman argues that Hegel preferred not to distinguish sharply between common sense, understanding and reflection, because "he was profoundly aware of the continuity between ordinary consciousness and science. To Hegel, science and the grounds, explanations, and models it works with in its capacity as understanding or reflection signify an extension of common sense principles, not their reversal." Like Dewey, Hegel did not view science as something utterly different from common sense, but as a refinement of techniques we ordinarily use in everyday life.\(^4\)

Further, Hegel's theory of freedom, which we shall examine later, rests upon his concept of the will, which is also not a separate faculty, distinct from reason, but an aspect, or mode of reason. In The Philosophy of Right Hegel declared that,

\(^{3}\) Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, §§59, 61.

It must not be imagined [sich vorstellen] that a human being thinks on the one hand and wills on the other, and that he has thought in one pocket and volition in the other, for this would be an empty representation [Vorstellung]. The distinction between thought and will is simply that between theoretical and practical attitudes. But they are not two separate faculties; one the contrary, the will is a particular way of thinking—thinking translating itself into existence [Dasein], thinking as the drive to give itself existence.

Later, in the same passage Hegel wrote that "The theoretical is...contained within the practical..." Like Dewey, Hegel viewed all cognition as "purposive activity."  

Hegel’s conception of reason is central to his critique of Kant’s moral thought. Because Hegel was committed to the ideals of the French Revolution, he worried that the fragmentation of modern society threatened to undermine the advance of liberal political reforms. Although the emergence of modern subjectivity was a great advance, he believed, it had contributed to a breakdown of community as Enlightenment thinkers indiscriminately devalued all traditional institutions and codes of conduct. Drawing on Friedrich Schiller and Goethe, Hegel believed community was best represented in the Sittlichkeit of the ancient Greek polis. Modern subjectivity promoted philosophical reflection and individual critique of social mores (Verstand), but philosophy had failed to reach the level of Vernunft, uniting its results with practical life in a spiritually unified self and society. Western man needed to unite modern subjectivity and the negativity of the Enlightenment, its critical aspect, with a positive reunion within the self, and of the self with society.

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75 Hegel, Elements of the Philosophy of Right, §4.
76 Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, §22 (emphasis in the original).
Because they rejected Cartesian dualism and embraced functionalist psychology, Hegel's and Dewey's theories of knowledge, or more accurately, theories of learning, have more in common than at first meets the eye. Hegel began to explain his conception of knowledge in the cryptic phrase, "everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as Substance, but equally as Subject." In this statement Hegel meant to emphasize that there is no unbridgeable opposition between the knower and the known, and truth is the way the world is for subjects. Yet Hegel was not a subjective idealist because he abandoned the Cartesian model of subjectivity as an internal realm. "The living Substance... is in truth Subject"; that is to say, the acquisition of knowledge is a matter of spirit achieving self-realization as it sets up its own opposition (the other), and then recognizes that this opposition is of its own making. This characterization of knowledge was based upon a novel conception of the self and its relationship to the world:

Consciousness knows and comprehends only what falls within its experience; for what is contained in this is nothing but spiritual substance, and this, too, as object of the self. But Spirit becomes object because it is just this movement of becoming an other to itself, i.e. becoming an object to itself, and of suspending this otherness.\(^7\)

If we can get past Hegel's obscure language, we shall discover a concept of the self remarkably similar to Dewey's. For Hegel, the self does not begin with a definite essence. An individual's identity is revealed and defined as he interacts in the series of subject-object relationships of experience. In order for an

\(^7\) Hegel became critical of liberal reformers in Prussia and France precisely because he believed their acceptance of, and emphasis upon, atomistic individualism would undo liberal reforms. Pinkard, Hegel: A Biography, 608-609.

\(^8\) See Lewis Hinchman, Hegel's Critique of the Enlightenment, 80.

\(^9\) Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, §§17, 18, 36.
individual to define and come to know himself, he must become alienated from himself. When a person plunges ahead into the seemingly alien social and natural world, he discovers, as he creates, his own identity. Introspection is a very limited route to self-knowledge because it neglects the extent to which we are formed by our relationships with the "other," and the ways our relating is historically contingent. All experience is alienation and as we realize this we appreciate the degree to which we need recognition from others. Moreover, we recognize that our social self is forever separate from our inner awareness of who and what we are. In Hegelian terms, spirit is not simply self-alienated; it can only know itself as such.

So for Hegel, subject and object imply one another equally; neither exists alone. Rather, both the object experienced and the experiencing consciousness are dependent on each other for their respective existence. The experienced object may be said to exist only as it is experienced by an individual consciousness, and the existence or "being" of the individual mind or consciousness, consisting as it does in experiencing an object and thereby becoming aware of itself, is inseparable from the experience of the "other." This interdependence of consciousness/mind and "other," subject and object, brings us back to Hegel's principle that "Being is Thought."\textsuperscript{80} Hegel replaced the traditional, Aristotelian notion of substance as a union of form and matter, a self-identical and enduring entity that does not itself change but that possesses changing properties or attributes. Hegel's was an utterly new metaphysic based on the primacy of experience or consciousness which did away with the notions

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., §54.
of independence and unchanging self-subsistence. Independence is in no way applicable to experience/consciousness since it relies on the opposition of the experienced object to the experiencing subject. True self-consciousness, reason or rational self-consciousness, also denies unchanging self-subsistence in that it consists of a constant series of changes whereby the opposition between subject and object is removed, and oneness or identity is established. This reconciliation or unification of opposing entities is an example of the Hegelian dialectic.

A closer examination of Hegel's concept of experience will contribute to our understanding of what Dewey found fructifying in Hegel. In the Preface to the Phenomenology, Hegel wrote that

Consciousness knows and comprehends only what falls within experience....And experience is the name we give to just this movement, in which the immediate, the unexperienced, i.e. the abstract, whether it be of sensuous [but still unsensed] being, or only thought of as simple, becomes alienated from itself and then returns to itself from this alienation... ⁸¹

Here we encounter the theme of alienation and return that was central to the St. Louis Hegelians' philosophy of education. Experience is a process in which spirit alienates itself from itself by going out into the world, and returns to itself. In How We Think, published in 1910 and again in 1933, Dewey similarly spoke of reflection being stimulated when "the impulse is to some extent checked and thrown back upon itself." ⁸² Moreover, Hegel's commitment to experience ran deep. Later in the Phenomenology, he claimed that "nothing is known that is not in experience, or, as it is also expressed, that is not felt to be true, not given as an inwardly revealed eternal verity, as something sacred that is believed, or whatever

⁸¹ Ibid., §36

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other expressions have been used." According to Robert Solomon, to find a similar concept of experience, we would need to look at the "practical-minded writings of the American pragmatists William James and John Dewey." Let us see why Solomon might make such a surprising claim.

Since the self and object are reciprocally related, an increase or broadening of the understanding of an object through its dissolution by negation and mediation within the consciousness implies a corresponding increase in "determinacy" or awareness of the self through a similar dissolution by negation and mediation. These two processes are actually one in the same. This growth in consciousness occurs in varying degrees in all self-conscious beings, and the different degrees of consciousness form a single objective order which is ultimately transcended in something that is not a version but the whole itself. This whole, which is variously known as "truth," "spirit," or "absolute," is a living process; it is propelled by the energy of negation and mediation, in which both selves and their objects are continuously emerging and undergoing development and being replaced by higher forms of themselves. The "scientific" knowledge referred to previously in relation to an individual consciousness on a higher or more fully mediated level is the entire process of negation and mediation of both knowledge and consciousness such that the distinction between knowledge and reality is transcended. In much the same way, Dewey spoke of the goal of inquiry as,

the expansion of a given experience through suggestion, into a larger and richer whole. It consists in the capacity to see a whole in a part or to treat

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S2 Dewey, How We Think (1910), MW: 6: 230; and How We Think, revised edition (1933), LW 8: 184.
S3 Solomon, In the Spirit of Hegel, 11.
what is a whole in direct perception as if it were simply a part of a larger whole. 84

Elsewhere, Dewey claimed that, "intellectual growth means constant expansion of horizons and consequent formation of new purposes and new responses." 85

Both philosophers were concerned with learning, rather than knowledge in the traditional sense, because they saw it as a means to growth.

Our discussion of Hegel’s commitment to experience allows us to see why Dewey viewed Hegel as an empiricist, but only if that appellation is carefully qualified. Because Hegel completely rejected mind-body dualism, like Dewey, he could not be a traditional empiricist or hold the correspondence theory of truth. Hegel actually praised British empiricism for teaching that experience is amenable to rational understanding. In this way, empiricism redirected man’s attention to the world, enabling him to feel at home again after the long period of medieval other-worldliness; it also reaffirmed the importance of the testimony of the senses in determining truth. 86

But Hegel is frequently described as a rationalist simply on the misreading of the claim in The Philosophy of Right that "What is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational." 87 We have already seen that Dewey understood the claim to demonstrate that "Hegel was a great actualist," meaning that he

84 Dewey, “Mental Development” (1900), MW 1: 197.
86 As Hegel states, “This principle of Experience [British empiricism] carries with it the unspeakably important condition that, in order to accept and believe any fact, we must be in contact with it; or, in more exact terms, that we must find the fact united and combined with the certainty of our own selves.” Hegel, Hegel’s Logic, §7.
concerned himself only with principles that had actual effects in the world rather than with vain ideals. Dewey is among good company with this reading of Hegel’s claim. Robert Pippin explains that there is nothing in Hegel’s “claim [that] should be taken to deny the possibility of criticism of ‘what exists,’ which may indeed itself be far from its own ‘actuality,’ what it ‘is’ in truth.”

We have a prime example of Hegelians applying this maxim to a fundamental political institution in the St. Louis Hegelians’ belief that, because it protected slavery, the Constitution was not entirely rational, it fell short of “what it ‘is’ in truth.”

Hegel’s empiricism is also evident in the purpose of the *Phenomenology*. Hegel stated that the book was an effort to systematically describe experience with a view toward understanding why it must be the way it is, thus it could not legitimately go beyond or behind experience in order to explain experience. Recognizing this, in 1919 Josiah Royce compared the *Phenomenology* to James’s *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, suggesting that the *Phenomenology* could be understood as a study of the varieties of “individual and social types.”

On Royce’s reading, Hegel sought to be true to what Dewey called “the psychological standpoint.” It is not hard to find contemporary Hegel scholars who agree with Royce’s assessment. Hegel concluded that experience is a unity in which the self encounters opposition, which it posits as an other, defines itself

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88 Dewey, “Hegel’s Philosophy of Spirit: Lectures by John Dewey,” The University of Chicago, 1897 (Southern Illinois University, Morris Library, Special Collections, John Dewey Papers, Collection 102), 6. Cf. Santayana’s criticism of Dewey: He “is not interested in speculation at all, balks at it, and would avoid it if he could,” and “he is very severe against the imagination, and even the intellect, of mankind for having created figments which usurp the place and authority of the mundane sphere in which daily action goes on.” Santayana, “Dewey’s Naturalistic Metaphysics,” in The Philosophy of John Dewey 676, 674-675 (reprinted in LW 3: 370, 369).

89 Royce, *Lectures on Modern Idealism*, 139.
and the other as subject and object (*Verstand*), and seeks to reunite these divisions by altering both the self and the other and bringing them together in an inclusive whole (*Vernunft*). Dewey, of course, explained this in less esoteric language, claiming that experience is a unity in which the self encounters problematic situations and distinguishes subject from object; it then seeks to resolve the problem by proposing and testing hypotheses uniting subject and object in a more inclusive whole which allows the self to continue its activities enriched by past experience.

Hegel's notion of education as growth is expressed in his use of the organic *Bildung* metaphor: Education involves the cultivation of knowledge, experience, and consciousness as organic wholes, through various stages or "moments" in a process that, at any given point, might well seem as if it were complete in itself.

The *Bildung* metaphor also sheds light on what Hegel meant by "contradiction." As a philosopher who emphasized process and becoming, Hegel was concerned about the enduring metaphysical question of how something can change through time and yet remain the same thing. Hegel's response to this issue draws upon the organic *Bildung* metaphor. A human being is not an embryo or infant or adult at the same time, but it is all three of these "moments" in its becoming. None of these moments are entirely true or false descriptions of a human; they are simply partial descriptions of a human as a whole. In the *Science of Logic*, Hegel explained that "in the proposition: the rose is fragrant, the

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predicate enunciates only one of the many properties of the rose”; that judgment may be correct, but it is not the truth of the rose because the rose is many other things besides fragrant, and it is not always fragrant. “The True is the whole.”

Truth and falsity, where philosophical viewpoints are concerned, are not opposites; a philosophical doctrine is not literally false, because it is not an attempt to describe a state of affairs to which it does or does not actually correspond. Rather, it is a representation of the whole of reality, and its inadequacy is more likely to be that of being one-sided or not well thought out. Hegel also combined the Bildung metaphor with the theme of systematicity. Bildung connoted an “inner necessity” for the scientific system of truth, an urge which lies in the very nature of consciousness itself for total comprehension. The only ultimately satisfying philosophy would be one which is systematic, all comprehending, and in effect, a unification of the truths of all past philosophies.

Furthermore, Hegel was more interested in practical contradictions than the purely logical ones of mutually exclusive propositions. He believed practical and moral dilemmas frequently arise because we hold one-sided, inadequate conceptions of ourselves and our world. Contradictions were important to Hegel precisely because they demand resolution; one cannot tolerate incoherent conceptions of self that make our actions and decisions pointless. Logical and practical contradictions were important to Hegel because, like Dewey, he believed that to know is to be engaged in an activity. To arrive at a contradiction

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is to frustrate the realization of a practical goal. Josiah Royce clearly explained this aspect of Hegel’s sense of contradiction.

What in the logical philosophy appears as a conflict of categories, of points of view, of theses and antitheses, will appear in human life as a conflict of moral and of social tendencies, of opinions for which men make sacrifices, upon which they stake their fortunes. The conflicts of philosophical ideas will thus appear as a kind of shadowy repetition, or representation, of the struggles of humanity for life and for light.

As Royce read Hegel, contra Trendelenberg, Hegel’s rejection of Cartesian dualism, and of the form/content distinction exemplified in Kant’s theory of categories, made his logic necessarily a logic of life. For that reason, Hegel could not view logical contradictions as mere puzzles for philosophers to solve, as did Reichenbach; for Hegel, logical contradictions became apparent, and were problematic, when they were impediments to the realization of practical goals. The contradictions Hegel was most concerned about in his writings were, to him, manifestations of deep-seated problems in Western culture.

The Historical Fallacy

We have already examined Dewey’s understanding of Hegel’s theory of causation, and in that examination argued that Dewey did not find that Hegel’s theory committed the historical fallacy. That is to say, Dewey believed Hegel avoided the error of assuming that one part, the beginning or the end, of the temporal process of causation was somehow more real than the other. As Dewey read Hegel, he believed that cause and effect, means and ends, are not ontologically distinct but are dialectally related within a larger process. Dewey also argued that Hegel effectively rejected Fichte’s subjective idealism which elevated the subjective above the objective in the process of experience, and thus

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92 Solomon, In the Spirit of Hegel, 317.
that Hegel, unlike Fichte, avoided the historical fallacy once more. According to Dewey, Hegel’s philosophy made spirit and nature, mind and world, equally real. Further, Dewey argued that Hegel’s rejection of Schelling’s identity philosophy avoided the error of collapsing spirit and nature into a primordial whole that effaced the differences of “subject and object, man and nature.”\textsuperscript{93} As Dewey understood Hegel’s absolute, it was not a Schellingean unity, but a unity in difference. Hegel resolved the problem of deriving a multiplicity from a unity that dates back to the Pre-Socratics by claiming that the unity is a multiplicity, a system of particulars. On Dewey’s reading, Hegel did not view existing things as products, either ontological or logical, of an absolute source, but as members in a system.

Though advocates of the historicist interpretation of Hegel do not speak of the historical fallacy, they agree with Dewey’s exoneration of Hegel from that error. This is apparent in repeated efforts by Hegel scholars to demonstrate that he did not believe in an end of history, and that the view that he did is one of the many Hegel “myths and legends” that continue to be propagated by the uninformed. This particular myth was recently resurrected by Francis Fukuyama, first in his article, “The End of History?” and in his subsequent book, \textit{The End of History and the Last Man}.\textsuperscript{94} Though Hegel scholars were quick to refute Fukuyama’s claim that he advocated an Hegelian notion of the end of history,

their refutations were too academic to receive as much attention in the popular press as Fukuyama. Thus the myth endures.

There are several reasons to doubt the claim that Hegel believed in an end of history. First, in the preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel argued that philosophy cannot tell us what ought to be because “it always comes too late to perform this function.” In a famous passage Hegel wrote,

> When philosophy paints its grey in grey, a shape of life has grown old, and it cannot be rejuvenated, but only recognized, by the grey in grey of philosophy; the owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the onset of dusk.

Advocates of the historicist reading of Hegel place a great deal of emphasis on the preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, claiming that Hegel made it clear that he believed that the task of philosophy is to understand what has been, not to predict what will be. For example, Terry Pinkard writes that, for Hegel, “Philosophy comes on the scene when very basic beliefs, all of which seem to be true, also seem to contradict or to be somehow incompatible with each other. It is the task of philosophy to offer up alternative explanations for how these beliefs can be possible.” Thus, on the historicist reading, the dialectic is a method for the testing and examination of concepts, which assumes that all concepts are contingent, internally unstable, and subject to revision. This understanding of the dialectic leads Lewis Hinchman to assert that “The great lesson...that one learns from Hegel is humility and self-criticism.” Hegel “makes us sensitive to the one-

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96 Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, 23.

sidedness and blindness of [our] world-views, their tendency to inspire us to act on a flawed understanding of man and his situation." The historicist reading depicts Hegel’s philosophy as a philosophy of cultural criticism that advocates immanent critique in the sense of criticism of a culture and its world-view on its own terms, not as a philosophy that attempts to predict the future. Just as concepts contain their contradictions, cultures contain tensions that philosophers can and should be able to articulate.

Another myth generally accompanies the one we have been discussing, that is that Hegel believed history had properly culminated in the creation of the conservative Prussian state of the 1820s. Though this second myth may still be bandied about, it is easily refuted. In the Philosophy of World History, Hegel claimed that

it is up to America to abandon the ground on which world history has hitherto been enacted. What has taken place there up to now has been but an echo of the Old World and the expression of an alien life; and as a country of the future, it is of no interest to us here, for prophesy is not the business of the philosopher.

And in the Philosophy of History, Hegel wrote that “America is...the land of the future,” but philosophers “have to do with that which (strictly speaking) is neither past nor future, but with that which is...” It is clear from these passages that Hegel did not believe that history came to a halt in the maturity of the Prussian state.

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98 Hinchman, Hegel's Critique of the Enlightenment, x.
Hegel's Ethics and Political Philosophy

In his lecture, Dewey criticized Hegel for not advocating democracy, but he rejected the view that Hegel advocated acceptance of the conservative Prussian state. And the recent biographies upon which we have relied maintain that Hegel's political thought was motivated by his commitment to the ideals of the French Revolution. The most fully developed account of his political philosophy, Elements of the Philosophy of Right, was published in 1821, and is probably his most controversial book. Once more, the historical context of the book is crucial to understanding it and the controversy that has surrounded it.

The tumult of Hegel's lifetime did not end with the Reign of Terror. Throughout the years 1793-1815 various political entities—the Holy Roman Empire, Prussia, Austria, Great Britain, etc.—were almost constantly at war with France; until Hegel's death in 1831, various localities in which he lived—Jena, Bamberg, Nuremberg, Heidelberg, and Berlin—experienced radical swings in which it seemed at one moment that liberal reform was imminent only to be crushed at the next moment by reactionary forces. The Philosophy of Right was published at the height of a conservative backlash against liberal reforms in Prussia. In 1819, the Karlsbad decrees had been issued by German rulers, imposing censorship on academic publications and providing guidelines for the removal of subversives from the universities. In the Preface to the book, Hegel indiscreetly continued his longtime professional and philosophical rivalry with Jakob Friedrich Fries, who had been recently dismissed from his university post

102 The Elements of the Philosophy of Right is a development of the section on objective spirit in the initial version of the Encyclopedia. For a detailed discussion of the political climate in which
at Jena as a subversive. Though a number of Hegel’s students and assistants were also arrested as subversives, his critics, some of whom must not have read beyond the Preface, raised suspicions about his political thought immediately after the book was published. Hegel’s claim in the Preface that “what is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational,” was immediately interpreted as bestowing an unqualified blessing on the political status quo.\textsuperscript{103}

During this time of far-reaching geopolitical and cultural change, Hegel’s political sentiments were surprisingly constant. He was consistently critical of German nationalism, championing Enlightenment cosmopolitanism instead, and when he opposed social and political reforms, including liberal reforms, it was because he was averse to bureaucratic reform from above as the imposition of one group’s will upon the citizenry. Freedom of the press and public dialogue, he believed, would provide for transformation of local Sittlichkeit so that reforms would be meaningful; the press was to serve as a mediating institution. Dewey was correct to note that Hegel never embraced democracy, but he feared democracy for liberal reasons. He believed democracy could not protect the rights of minorities and advocated a constitutional, representative, monarchical government instead.\textsuperscript{104} Today, many commentators contend that Hegel’s

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Hegel published \textit{The Philosophy of Right}, and the way it was received, see Pinkard, \textit{Hegel: A Biography}, 418–468.

\textsuperscript{103} Hegel, \textit{Elements of the Philosophy of Right}, 15, 20. Of Hegel’s students and assistants, Gustav Asverus, Friedrich Wilhelm Carové, Friedrich Christoph Förster, and Leopold Von Henning, were arrested. Hegel attempted to intervene on his students’ behalf, even posting almost three months pay for Asverus’s bail, who was nevertheless held for seven years. Hegel had a great deal of concern for his own position and for the fate of \textit{The Philosophy of Right} at the hands of the censors, thus he may have hoped that the perpetuation of his vendetta against Fries in the Preface would reassure censors that the book was not subversive.

liberalism can be seen in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right*, and if one goes beyond the Preface, his liberalism is abundantly clear.\(^{105}\)

We have seen that recognition played a crucial role in Hegel's analysis of human experience, so it should come as no surprise that in his political thought it is central to his conception of the relation of individuals to each other and to society as a whole. As an example, Hegel argued that a contractual exchange of commodities between two individuals requires each person's recognition that the other is a proprietor of inalienable value which is attached to their alienable possessions. If and when this proprietorship is denied the resulting exchange is fraud or theft. The difference between property and mere possession is that the former is grounded in a relation of reciprocal recognition between two willing subjects. In reciprocal recognition individual subjects share a common will. But whereas Rousseau believed that the common will exists *despite* the fact that particular wills have different ends in mind, Hegel argued that the common will exists *because* particular wills have different ends in mind. Individuals enter into contracts, which require mutual recognition, precisely because they want something different from the exchange. Identity of will is achieved because of co-existing difference.\(^{106}\) This is how Hegel avoided what he was so often accused of, the absorption of the individual into the larger whole.

As we have seen, Hegel believed modern subjectivity had created a destructive dichotomy between "universality" and "particularity," the

\(^{105}\) Allen Wood claims that "a list of prominent Hegel scholars since the 1950s who share the basic view of [Hegel's political thought as centrist-reformist] would have to include virtually every responsible scholar of Hegel's thought in the past two generations." Wood, Editor's Introduction to *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, xxvi, note 10.

\(^{106}\) Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, §§73-78, 82.
community and the individual. For this reason he sought to articulate an ethical and political theory that preserved modern subjectivity without undermining community. He based his theory upon a concept of the human good as self-actualization of the human spirit, and a belief that the essence of the human spirit is freedom. As Dewey did in his *Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics*, Hegel rejected the notion that freedom is merely the ability to act without constraints, articulating a theory of positive freedom, according to which freedom is the ability to act rationally. According to Hegel, a free act is not arbitrary; rather, a free act is one that is determined solely by the self, on the basis of reasons, to be one that rises above particularity to the universal.  

Hegel’s notion of the universal was founded upon Kant’s postulate that we should seek to follow universal moral principles, principles that all rational agents would endorse and follow, but whereas Kant’s universals were abstract, Hegel believed they must be concrete. If morality was founded upon abstract, and seemingly “interior,” or subjective, principles, it would be easily undermined by philosophers like Hume who could assert that the standards were arbitrary because they were not objectively (externally) real. Though it may seem that Hegel’s refusal to rigidly separate the is from the ought, fact from value, left him vulnerable to criticisms like Reichenbach’s, he believed that any philosophy that did rigidly separate the two would undermine morality and

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community by depicting value as less real than fact. Hegel was convinced that universal moral principles must be based on the concrete practices of a community; values must be based on facts.

Hegel’s concept of freedom also countered atomistic individualism because he argued that, although humans are free to renounce their society, such an act is merely “abstract” or “negative freedom,” a one-sided conception of freedom erroneously elevated by the understanding “to supreme status.” Those who adhere to the concept of negative freedom alone are prone to fanaticism because they find all that is different from them to be incompatible with their goals. “This is why,” Hegel explained, “the people during the French Revolution, destroyed once more the institutions they had themselves created, because all institutions are incompatible with the abstract self-consciousness of equality.”

Concrete freedom, on the other hand, is realized not by fleeing from the other but by relating to it in such a way that the other becomes integrated into one’s projects. The other serves to complete and fulfill one’s projects when the self successfully includes it as part of its action rather than opposing it. Hegel argued that this requires us to act so that the objects of our action are in harmony with our reason. The most important object of our action is harmonization with the social order, the sphere of “objective spirit.” Hegel concluded that freedom can only be actual, or concrete, in a Sittlichkeit, a rational society in which social institutions are felt and known by the people to be rationally consistent with their needs and desires. In a Sittlichkeit, the demands of social life do not conflict with one’s needs and desires, rather they fulfill individuality. Self-interest is not

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108 Ibid., §5.
at odds with the good of the whole, and rather than limiting freedom, the fulfillment of social duties actualizes it. If we are aware of this harmony, we come to be "with ourselves," that is, individually liberated by our duties to others.\textsuperscript{109}

Though we have referred to Hegel as a liberal, liberalism that is based on atomistic individualism is at odds with his notion of freedom because it defines freedom as the ability to do as we please, regardless of the advisability of our actions. Although Hegel's theory is not based on that conception of freedom, it is not hostile to it. In \textit{The Philosophy of Right}, Hegel argued that social institutions must provide considerable scope for arbitrary freedom. Modern man can only achieve actualization, claimed Hegel, if he has "abstract rights," rights that are defined in abstraction from the particular use a person may make of them. Because he is a "subject," modern man derives self-satisfaction from determining his own particular good or happiness. Modern man can only achieve actualization by leading a reflective life shaped by his own actions. Specifically, Hegel argued that the modern state must enable people to shape their own identity and direct their own life. The state must honor individual moral conscience and can only hold people responsible for actions that are expressions of their subjectivity, that is, actions that are based on free, rational choice.\textsuperscript{110} Hegel's concept of freedom assumes that people should have the unhindered ability to do as they please, but that the ability to do as we please is only valuable when the actions we choose are conducive to self-satisfaction or actualization; otherwise, such freedom is worthless, and possibly harmful.

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid., §268.
Hegel believed that personal rights can only be understood within a system of law, and many have taken this as evidence for his advocacy of acquiescence to the status quo. If our rights do not transcend the laws of our society, it is believed, then we cannot make claims against society. Yet, in agreement with the natural law tradition, Hegel argued that we are not required to obey unjust laws, and he provided examples of such laws in *The Philosophy of Right*. For example, Hegel claimed that slavery and the denial of private property were unjust in the context of any system of law.\footnote{Ibid., §§105-106, 115-120, 121-123, 137, 185-206.} He did not reject individual rights, he simply believed that they are empty abstractions in need of content that can only be provided by a rational social order. Hegel had less fear of the state than he had of atomistic individualism because he believed that a state that violated individual rights was self-destructive, at odds with the source of its own power, and thus would not long endure. But if people insisted too stubbornly on their individual rights, withdrawing into their subjectivity, they would become alienated from the common social life. Outside of the common social life, Hegel believed, a person may have vast options, but they are empty and meaningless.

Hegel held that “civil society” made the modern state decisively distinct from earlier and less developed social orders. He defined civil society as the realm of the market economy, the realm in which individuals exist as owners and disposers of private property, and as agents who chose their own life-activity. In modern society, Hegel claimed, individuals can achieve actualization only when they depend on themselves for their own livelihood, thus he viewed a collectivized or state-run economy as a pre-modern institution incompatible with
modern subjectivity. But Hegel’s study of the Scottish economists convinced him that civil society requires more than self-interest because collective market behavior displays a collective, though unintended, rationality. According to this collective rationality individuals are best able to support themselves through endeavors that benefit the whole. Hegel argued that this fact of the market economy entails that society has a responsibility to prevent its members from falling into poverty; to be poor in a civil society is to be socially wronged whether poverty is caused by lack of education or the contingencies of the marketplace. Ultimately, Hegel believed that civil society required a middle course between a state-run economy and laissez-faire liberalism, and the responsibility of overseeing the economy fell under the purview of the state’s police power.\footnote{Ibid., §§209-213.}

Beyond economic security, however, Hegel believed modern man needs a determinate, concrete social identity, or social estate, which he viewed as a specific trade or profession. As a member of an estate, the individual receives needed recognition from peers and his economic activity rises above mere economic self-seeking because he contributes to an estate that exists in order to make a determinate contribution to the whole. Hegel argued that civil society should be organized into “corporations,” meaning professional associations or guilds. Members of guilds have a collective responsibility to properly train new workers, set standards for the work done, and to look out for the welfare of members, providing assistance to those out of work without undermining their dignity in the way that private charity or public assistance tends to do. Hegel
also believed that political representation should be based on these corporations rather than geographical districts. He was unconcerned about the fact that wage laborers were not eligible for corporation membership, and believed that the unreflective spirit of the rural population was unsuited to such organization. In essence, representation in Hegel's rational society was restricted to the male urban middle class. In the final analysis, Hegel wanted power to rest neither in the monarch nor the people, but in a class of educated, professional civil servants who would serve as the king's ministers. But Hegel insisted that the ministers must be bound to represent the majority decision of the legislature.\textsuperscript{113}

In spite of his limited egalitarianism, Hegel saw the extremes of wealth in modern civil society as a contradiction in the social order, but he offered no solution to the problem. In a competitive market economy, he explained, the wealthy believe it is in their interest to have a dependent working class so that they can keep wages low and profits high. Rather than blame the wealthy or the poor for this situation, Hegel viewed it as a shortcoming of modern society that tended to produce a discontented rabble among the poor. "Despite an excess of wealth, civil society is not wealthy enough—i.e. its own distinct resources are not sufficient—to prevent an excess of poverty and the formation of a rabble." The rabble, justifiably outraged by their exclusion from the benefits of society, loses self-respect, respect for the rights of others, and thus produces a criminal element. Like Dewey, Hegel did not claim that the status quo is ever completely free of contradictions, and his concerns about the maldistribution of wealth in capitalist economies indicates that he did not expect any society to achieve

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., §§158, 182-184, 189-190, 231, 235-236, 238-240.
complete consistency with its ideals. Hegel also shared the view Dewey expressed in his critique of Maine's political thought that political instability could result from the exclusion of some citizens from the benefits of society, but did not share Dewey's commitment to the enfranchisement of all citizens. Whereas Dewey was ready for popular democracy in the late-nineteenth-century United States, Hegel believed that in the early-nineteenth-century German states only university educated professionals were ready to have a voice in their government.  

Hegel also contended that civil society changed the nature of the family because it no longer serves an economic function. The purpose of the family in the modern state is to provide a haven for individuals from the harsh realities of civil society. Hegel believed property should be held in common within the family, but it should only be administered by the husband and father because he alone exercises rights in civil society. The wife and mother is limited to the sphere of the family, and she and the children only exercise personal rights if the family is dissolved in divorce, the children leave to found new families or the father dies.

Hegel distinguished between the political state and the state in a broader sense, the community as a whole. Though he wrote that it is the "highest duty" of the individual to be a member of the state in the latter sense, he denied that patriotism, "the political disposition," consists in self sacrifice for one's country. According to Hegel, patriotism is simply the habit of trusting the institutions of

113 Ibid., §§250-255, 301-303, 310-311.
one's society.\textsuperscript{116} Hegel viewed the state, understood as our broader community, as our universal end because he sought to avoid the abstract universals of Kant. The state is a concrete universal in which we can truly find actualization. Hegel also viewed the state as the vehicle of world history because he rejected theories that depicted history as driven by some abstract or supernatural force. For Hegel, we do not become cosmopolitan by committing ourselves to abstract universals, but by recognizing that our actions are historically and culturally situated, and thus that our deeds are expressions of the spirit of our time and state.

We should examine Hegel's thoughts on war because Alan Ryan has recently argued that Dewey was always adamantly opposed to Hegel on this issue. According to Ryan, Hegel believed "all good sprang from evil" and that "philosophy must not...flinch from the rough spectacle of war and death."\textsuperscript{117} Regardless of the other virtues of his book, Ryan's characterization of Hegel on this and other issues is singularly inaccurate. While it is true that Hegel claimed that war is not an "absolute evil," that some war is inevitable, and that it may preserve "the ethical health of nations," he wrote that war has the nature of something "which ought to come to an end." War should "entail the determination of international law" and "preserve the possibility of peace."\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{115} Hegel, \textit{Elements of the Philosophy of Right}, §§166, 170-178.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., §§258, 267-268.
\textsuperscript{118} Hegel, \textit{Elements of the Philosophy of Right}, §§331, 338, 344.
Finally, we should acknowledge an important difference between Dewey and Hegel. Like Marx, Dewey wanted philosophy to not only understand the world, but also to change it. Whereas Hegel was driven toward a systematic comprehension of the present categories according to which the world presents itself to thought, Dewey displayed no interest whatsoever in that project because he believed it went beyond our abilities. In 1929 Dewey claimed that “The Hegelian system is somewhat too grandiose for present taste. Even his followers find it necessary to temper the claims made for his logical method.”\(^{119}\) But Dewey also believed that philosophy should do more than comprehend the world; it must be proactive. Especially in his later writings, when the prospects of liberal reform in Prussia looked bleak, Hegel focused on understanding, rather than changing, our culture through the dialectic, but Dewey believed he articulated a method that would facilitate human progress. In Dewey’s words, intelligence gained through philosophy must be used “as an organ or instrument of social direction.”\(^{120}\)

It is no accident that during World War I, as many authors sought to identify sources of German imperialism in German philosophy, including

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Dewey, that his perception of his relationship to Hegel changed. In 1917 Dewey wrote that,

The identification of force—military, economic, and administrative—with moral necessity and moral culture is, however, a phenomenon not likely to exhibit itself on a wide scale except where intelligence has already been suborned by an idealism which identifies "the actual with the rational," and thus finds the measure of reason in the brute event determined by superior force. If we are to have a philosophy which will intervene between attachment to rule of thumb muddling and devotion to a systematized subordination of intelligence to preexistent ends, it can be found only in a philosophy which finds the ultimate measure of intelligence in consideration of a desirable future and in search for the means of bringing it progressively into existence. When professed idealism turns out to be a narrow pragmatism—narrow because taking for granted the finality of ends determined by historic conditions—the time has arrived for a pragmatism which shall be empirically idealistic, proclaiming the essential connexion of intelligence with the unachieved future—with possibilities involving a transfiguration.\textsuperscript{121}

In this passage Dewey did not explicitly accuse Hegel of advocating acquiescence to the status quo, but his allusion to Hegel is clear. Nor did he claim that idealism \textit{per se} falls into the error of doing so, rather he claimed to be describing "professed idealism" that "turns out to be a narrow pragmatism." We have seen that Dewey did not understand Hegel as endorsing the status quo, but he was well aware of the Anglo-American propensity to do so, and distanced himself from this potential misreading of Hegel and his own thought by resolutely associating pragmatism with the realization of future possibilities. We should also note that in \textit{German Philosophy and Politics}, Dewey laid the blame for German imperialism at the feet of Kantian dualism, and articulated a Hegelian critique of Kant. Kant's error, according to Dewey, was to delineate "a dual legislation of reason by which are marked off two distinct realms—that of science and that of morals." The former realm is governed by the law of cause and effect;
the latter is the realm of universals, including moral ideals. Kant’s dualism enabled heedless German patriotism and jingoism because it promoted both obedience and an unwavering commitment to transcendent moral ideals by separating fact from value.

Obedience, definite subjection and control, detailed organization is the lesson enforced by the rule of causal necessity in the outer world of space and time in which action takes place. Unlimited freedom, the heightening of consciousness for its own sake, sheer reveling in noble ideals, the law of the inner world.¹²²

Unfortunately for Dewey’s argument, as Sidney Hook notes, although the characteristics of “the German mind” that Dewey described are “logically compatible with Kantian dualism...they are just as compatible with Cartesian dualism.”¹²³ Dewey failed to establish an empirical connection between Kantian dualism and German imperialism, but his criticism of Kant demonstrates that he believed the separation of fact and value that Reichenbach advocated was fraught with danger.

In summary, we have argued that Dewey’s Hegelianism should be understood in the context of an American Hegelian tradition that tended toward center Hegelianism and viewed Hegel as a practical and politically liberal philosopher. We refrained from trying to characterize the two essays Dewey published in the JSP in 1882, but have argued that from 1883 to 1891 he can properly be called a neo-Hegelian philosopher because of his acceptance of a transcendent absolute. By 1891, however, Dewey rejected all transcendent realities as he moved away from organized religion and sought to articulate a

philosophy of social involvement by firmly situating mind in the world rather than a separate metaphysical realm. Although other scholars have concluded that this rejection of the transcendent entailed the beginning of Dewey’s rejection of Hegel, if not the decisive point of rejection, we have shown that it was a rejection of British neo-Hegelianism and an embrace of a humanistic/historicist reading of Hegel. Through comparison of Dewey’s post-1891 interpretation of Hegel to recent readings of Hegel, we have shown that he anticipated the reading that dominates current Hegel scholarship. Finally, we have shown that, according to the humanistic/historicist reading of Hegel, his absolute, his theory of truth, the dialectic, his theory of learning, his philosophy of religion, and his ethics and political thought are far more similar to Dewey’s instrumentalism than has been previously imagined.

Hegel’s absolute standpoint is analogous to Dewey’s psychological standpoint in that both are implicit in the natural, ordinary viewpoint and neither assume a metaphysical divide between mind and world. Consequently, Hegel and Dewey were both committed to phenomenological analysis of experience, and both rejected the notion that there is anything behind or beyond experience. They embraced functional psychology because of their rejection of the reification of the mind’s abilities and their socialization of the mind, as well as the romantic critique of the Enlightenment in that they viewed human experience as much more than cognitive and analytical. Both philosophers espoused a theory of truth which included the notion of logical coherence of our beliefs, but that also included an existential requirement; truth provides

resolution of practical problems and hence a certain sense of satisfaction, unification or comfort in the world. Dewey was convinced that his theory of inquiry was a restatement of Hegel’s dialectic, in which ideas are always subject to revision and are means to action, in more current scientific terminology. Both philosophers supported a humanistic religion that would promote community and moral responsibility in this world by emphasizing moral behavior rather than doctrine. And although Dewey was much more egalitarian than Hegel in his political thought, depicting democracy as a religion, both philosophers viewed learning, in the sense of knowledge but also self-knowledge, and growth as means to the human good which they defined as self-actualization. Self-actualization for both philosophers meant a realization of one’s potential, but it also included liberation, or self-sufficiency through commitment to one’s social responsibilities, and recognition of our equality with our peers. Dewey was particularly impressed with Hegel’s dialectic because he believed Hegel had resolved the enduring problem of the one and the many by depicting reality, and human society, as a system that required diversity in order to achieve harmony.
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