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Abstract

In the literature on citizenship education, frequent references are made to Dewey. However, educationalists do not always interpret him correctly. To provide some counterbalance, I explain Dewey's views on education and democracy. I base this, not only on 'Democracy and Education', but also on 17 articles that Dewey wrote after 'Democracy and Education', and on his 'Ethics' and two earlier works, frequently cited by educationalists: 'Ethical Principles Underlying Education' and 'School and Society'. According to Dewey, democracy and education are two sides of the same coin. Both involve and foster self-determination, self-development and participating in the common good, enlightened by intelligent understanding and scientific spirit. At the present, it is customary to define democratic citizenship education primarily in terms of social and moral learning, sometimes as though it can be distinguished from academic learning, as something extra besides learning subject matter. When such an approach is attributed to Dewey, as it often is, this is unwarranted.

Keywords

citizenship education, deliberative democracy, Dewey, moral education, service learning

Introduction

In the literature on citizenship education, frequent references are made to Dewey. The way in which this occurs leads me to believe that educationalists do not always interpret Dewey correctly. This especially applies where citizenship education is conceived as something extra, as though it does not coincide with sound education, but requires something specific: a certain school culture, the promotion of certain dispositions and/or the practice of specific procedures (e.g. Berding, 1999; Althof, 2003; Kahne and Sporte, 2008; Veugelers, 2010; Beutel, 2012; Verhoeven, 2012; Quintelier and Hooghe, 2013). At present, this very approach to citizenship education enjoys popularity (Kerr et al., 2010; Eurydice, 2012).

To provide some counterbalance, I outline Dewey's ideas on democracy and education. I base this on Dewey's chapters in the 1932 revision of 'Ethics', originally published in 1908, as well as on his 'Democracy and Education' from 1916 and on the 17 articles he wrote on democracy and education in the 25 years following the publication of 'Democracy and Education', hence between 1916

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and 1941. Building on this, I discuss a text characteristic of the work of those educationalists who miscomprehend Dewey. To do so, I also examine two of Dewey's earlier writings, which are often cited in this context: '*Ethical Principles Underlying Education*' from 1897 and '*School and Society*' from 1899. Finally, I consider how Dewey-friendly two other approaches to citizenship education are, which are often associated with Dewey: service learning and deliberative democracy.

Democracy and ethics

For Dewey, democracy is a regulative ideal that sets the norm for organisations, for instance concerning politics or industry, or a company, an institution or an association. In '*Ethics*' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]), he describes this ideal as follows:

democracy signifies, on one side, that every individual is to share in the duties and rights belonging to control of social affairs, and, on the other side, that social arrangements are to eliminate those external arrangements of status, birth, wealth, sex, etc., which restrict the opportunity of each individual for full development of himself. (p. 348)

The first aspect speaks for itself: in a democracy, every person has a say about the organisation and takes partial responsibility for it. The second aspect requires some explanation. A democracy employs rules, procedures and facilities to ensure that citizens are not hindered in their opportunities to develop themselves fully. Democracy tries to remedy unjust and limiting factors relating to, for instance, social position, social background, circumstance and gender. Two clarifications are necessary. The democratic norm, according to Dewey, does not imply that everyone should be afforded opportunities to make whatever they want of themselves, *everything* they want. Development, full development too, builds on a person's innate potential, his natural abilities. Nor does the democratic norm dictate that everyone should be given unlimited scope to become anything he likes, perhaps regardless to others. Although we are speaking of individual development here, the essence of development is social. 'Selfhood is not something which exists apart from association and intercourse' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 298). Every individual lives and works within communities and is partly formed by these. Social withdrawal and the neglect of social dimensions would lead to flawed self-development. Development, according to Dewey (1985 [1932]), is richer when it is 'faithful to relations with others' and remains constricted if it 'is cultivated in isolation from or in opposition to the purposes and needs of others' (p. 302).

Dewey's ideal of democracy mirrors his ethics. According to Dewey, when judging the moral value of an act, we should look at the consequences of the act for ourselves and for others. Whether our actions are morally right depends on 'the effect ... upon the common welfare, the general well-being' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 344). If they benefit the 'common good', they are morally good. Dewey (1985 [1932]) is cautious in his further explanation of the meaning of 'common good' (or 'general well-being' or 'common welfare') in this context (pp. 344–350). At the very least, it means that everyone has as much scope and opportunity for self-development as possible. Acting morally therefore has to do with an active concern for every person's 'possibilities of growth' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 348). To prevent misunderstandings, Dewey stresses that the connection between morality and the 'common good' does not imply that morality is at odds with (1) self-interest, (2) individuality, (3) diversity and/or (4) freedom:

1. *Morally doing good means contributing to the 'common good'*. This is not at the expense of personal interests, on the contrary: 'Interest in the social whole of which one is a member necessarily carries with it interest in one's own self' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 300). Or as

Dewey (1978 [1908]) puts it in the earlier edition of 'Ethics', 'We cannot think of ourselves save as to some extent *social* beings. Hence, we cannot separate the idea of ourselves and of our own good from our idea of others and their good' (pp. 268, 269).

2. *Contributing to the 'common good' does not have to be at the expense of individuality and diversity, according to Dewey.* That people are able to be themselves and differ from others is an important 'common good' in its own right (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 345). In other ways, too, individuality and diversity contribute to the common good: 'Each contributes something distinctive from his own store of knowledge, ability, taste' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 345). Everyone benefits from the subsequent diversity.
3. *Contributions to the 'common good' are also compatible with freedom.* Dewey (1985 [1932]) does not think they would induce submission to the collective or to abstractions:

(T)he conception of common good, of general well-being, is a criterion which demands the full development of individuals in their distinctive individuality, not a sacrifice of them to some alleged vague larger good under the plea that it is social. (p. 348)

Moral action arises in freedom: 'Only when individuals have initiative, independence of judgment, flexibility, fullness of experience, can they act so as to enrich the lives of others and only in this way can a truly common welfare be built up' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 348).

4. *Benefitting from the 'common good' also comes about in freedom.* When good is done to us without our having any kind of say about what we consider good for ourselves and without our being responsible for the realisation of this good, we are being patronised. This is charity, not a 'common good': 'Without active coöperation both in forming aims and in carrying them out there is no possibility of a common good' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 347).

The correspondence between ethics and the democratic ideal is evident in Dewey's work: in both cases, it is all about creating optimal conditions for everyone's self-development and that means ensuring that everyone has their say and that there is shared responsibility. Democracy is organisational ethics.

Deliberation, reflection and insight

Action is morally correct when it is conducive to 'common good', according to Dewey. This requires careful deliberation: consideration of which actions are the best to take, consideration of the consequences of different options, deciding how to act. Dewey (1985 [1932]) calls this 'deliberation' (pp. 272–275). It 'involves doubt, hesitation, the need of making up one's mind, of arriving at a decisive choice' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 274). It is 'a mental trial'. We imagine alternative action pathways and follow them through in our mind (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 275). Morality presupposes reflection and insight. We need to examine and evaluate the consequences of our actions for the 'common good'. Under uncomplicated and unambiguous circumstances, this is often an almost effortless and routinely occurrence; however, under more complex and equivocal circumstances, it generally demands a certain intellectual effort and attention.

Dewey (1985 [1932]) shows just how complex society has become, due to social differentiation, technological developments, industrialisation, urbanisation, migration and globalisation (pp. 176–178). As individuals, we form part of an increasing number of different groups. And many of these groups are ever increasing in size. Within each group, we rely on one another. However long the chains of mutual dependence can sometimes be, every group has a 'common good'. Furthermore,

many groups are, in turn, mutually dependent: group level 'common goods' touch those of other groups and not seldom compete with one another. As a consequence, it becomes increasingly less simple to judge which actions are morally better and which are morally inferior. There is a call for increasingly more, more profound, richer and more refined insight.

For Dewey, morality is dependent on deliberation, reflection and insight. This means that morality relies on communication and cooperation. For an adequate assessment of the moral value of my actions, I need others' contributions. Given that common good has to do with the conditions underlying the self-development of everyone, and so those of others as well, I require insight into others' beliefs and wishes in order to contribute. The only way to acquire this is by interaction and communication. In addition, my inquiry and reflection can benefit from cooperation with others, for instance inquiring together, reflecting together, benefiting from one another's expertise, sharing knowledge, insight and experience and having discussions.

As is the case with morality, democracy cannot exist without deliberation, reflection and insight – given that for Dewey, democracy is organisational ethics. That is the main reason why Dewey believes that democracy goes hand in hand with education. This idea is advanced in his book *'Democracy and Education'*, first published in 1916, and in the 17 articles that Dewey wrote on democracy and education in the following 25 years.

'Democracy and Education'

The characterisation of the democratic ideal in *'Democracy and Education'* (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 92–94) harmonises with that in *'Ethics'* (Dewey, 1985 [1932]). Here, democracy is at odds with hierarchy and rigidity. Democracy is the opposite of power relations in which certain categories of people lay down the law and behave as though they are not dependent on other groups, and as though the interests and contributions of other groups are not important. And democracy is incompatible with a kind of society comprising introverted and conservative groups, unwilling to learn from other groups and reducing mutual contact to a minimum. Democracy, Dewey (1980 [1916a]) states, is the other extreme: 'reliance upon the recognition of mutual interests as a factor in social control' and 'continuous readjustment through meeting the new situations produced by varied intercourse ... between social groups' (p. 92); the opposite of hierarchy and rigidity. The first feature, no hierarchy, is consistent with the norm in *'Ethics'* that requires for every person to have a say and to share responsibility. The second feature, innovation thanks to free interchange among the various different groups, is, according to Dewey (1980 [1916a]), a condition of equal opportunity for 'continued capacity for growth' (p. 107). And so it is condition of the second norm of democracy in *'Ethics'*: 'the opportunity of each individual for full development of himself' (Dewey, 1985 [1932]: 387).

Democracy goes hand in hand with education for two reasons. First, co-determination and co-responsibility for all presupposes 'that intellectual opportunities are accessible to all on equable and easy terms' (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 93). And second, the dynamics of continuous development presupposes that citizens 'are educated to personal initiative and adaptability' (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 94, also 105). In *'Democracy and Education'*, the democratic function of education is elaborated further in two respects: education should develop thinking abilities and should also prepare for vocation; in working towards these two goals, intellectual learning, self-initiative and flexibility are core aspects.

At school, learning to think is crucial: 'All which the school can or need to do for pupils, so far as their minds are concerned, is to develop their ability to think' (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 159). For Dewey (1980 [1916a]), the ability to think is the reflective dimension of experience. It coincides with inquiry: 'Thinking is a process of inquiry, of looking into things, of investigating. ... (A)ll

thinking is research' (p. 155). The inquiring nature of thinking becomes all the more apparent where Dewey (1980 [1916a]) describes the role of thinking in 'reflective experience' (p. 157). He distinguishes between the 'reflective experience' and 'trial and error'—like learning. Both kinds of experience follow three steps: a problem emerges during an activity; an image emerges as to how the problem might be solved; the activity is adapted in accordance with this image. In 'reflective experience', the second step is more complex than in 'trial and error'—learning. It goes further than a spontaneous or associative image, involving critical thinking, the application of knowledge, careful judgment concerning how best to (proceed to) act:

(iii) a careful survey (examination, inspection, exploration, analysis) of all attainable consideration which will define and clarify the problem at hand; (iv) a consequent elaboration of the tentative hypothesis to make it more precise and more consistent, because squaring with a wider range of facts. (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 157)

This resembles the 'deliberation' in Dewey's 'Ethics', the moral 'mental trial' in which alternative actions are tried out. The school develops such thinking abilities.

In addition, schools in a democracy have yet another elementary function: vocational preparation. On this subject, Dewey (1980 [1916a]) agrees with Plato:

We cannot better Plato's conviction that an individual is happy and society well organized when each individual engages in those activities for which he has a natural equipment, nor his conviction that it is the primary office of education to discover this equipment to its possessor and train him for its effective use. (p. 96, see also pp. 121, 125, 318, 319)

Adequate education brings out the best in everyone and addresses children's natural aptitudes. Dewey believes, education should not identify children's aptitudes with their social origins. Children's natural abilities, although it might sometimes seem otherwise, are not dependent on their parents' wealth or social status. It is the task of education to correct 'unfair privilege and unfair deprivation' (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 126), to break with the status quo, instead of perpetuating it. Democratic schooling remediates the effects of unjust and restrictive aspects of society on opportunities for self-development.

Furthermore, education should not predetermine students' future vocational activities by teaching and training specific vocational knowledge and vocation skills. Technology and industry are forever changing so that 'an attempt to train for too specific a mode of efficiency defeats its own purpose' (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 126). Education should guard against restrictive development and promote personal initiative and adaptability, also in the realm of work. The fact that labour is subject of change is not the only reason for this. Another reason is that persons should not be (made) subordinate to their work. Democracy means, among other things, that everyone manages his own work. Democratic education helps 'to develop capacity to the point of competency to choose and make its own career' (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 126).

In one of the last chapters of '*Democracy and Education*', Dewey (1980 [1916a]) states that vocation or career should be interpreted broadly: 'each individual has ... a variety of callings, in each of which he should be intelligently effective' (p. 317). Important activities besides work can be understood in terms of a calling, for instance fatherhood, friendship, membership of a church or a political party. Ideally, education ensures that every person is also able to choose such callings for themselves and to make them their own by practising them in their own way. And that everyone adopts an open attitude towards new possibilities, because an important objective of education is 'to enable individuals to continue their education' (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 107). For this reason, Dewey (1980 [1916a]) believes that even the ability to spend one's leisure time in a useful way

should be an objective of citizenship education (p. 127). In education and democracy, it is ultimately all about ‘continued capacity for growth’ (Dewey, 1980 [1916a]: 107).

In summary, democratic education ensures that everyone is intellectually educated, full of initiative and adaptable and that everyone uses these qualities to investigate and settle problems and to do his work and lead his life as he sees fit.

Service to community and scientific spirit

Shortly after the publication of *Democracy and Education*, Dewey (1980 [1916c]) writes four articles, specifically dealing with democracy and education: ‘The Need of an Industrial Education in an Industrial Democracy’, ‘The Schools and Social Preparedness’ (Dewey, 1980 [1916d]), ‘Nationalizing Education’ (Dewey, 1980 [1916b]) and ‘Learning to Earn: The Place of Vocational Education in a Comprehensive Scheme of Public Education’ (Dewey, 1980 [1917]). These articles confirm the views put forward in *Democracy and Education*. They do, however, shed a different light on the democratic importance of learning to think.

In three of the four (Dewey, 1980 [1916b], 1980 [1916c], 1980 [1917]), the focus is on the democratic significance of vocational preparation, vocational preparation meaning the promotion of self-development, following from natural abilities and with an eye to the ‘common good’, including one’s own interests. Democratic education stands for ‘the equipment of every individual to serve the community by his own best powers in his own best way’ (Dewey, 1980 [1916b]: 210). It provides ‘equal opportunity’ (Dewey, 1980 [1916c]: 138, 1980 [1916b]: 208) so that every individual’s future depends on his own effort: ‘the schools make it their active serious business to enable all alike to become masters of their own industrial fate’ (Dewey, 1980 [1916b]: 208). Personal fate, according to Dewey (1980 [1917]), is intimately bound up with that of the community. Therefore,

(Vocational) education aims at preparing every individual to render service of a useful sort to the community, while at the same time it equips him to secure by his own initiative whatever place his natural capacities fit him for. (p. 149)

In a democracy, vocational preparation must not prepare students for mind-dulling work (‘mechanical and servile ... soulless monotony’). It should cultivate ‘initiative, intellectual independence, and inventiveness’ (Dewey, 1980 [1916c]: 140):

(S)ince the worker is to be an integral part of a self-managing society, pains must be taken at every turn to see that in stead of being prepared for a special, exclusive, practical service ... he is educated into ability to recognize and apply his own abilities – is given self-command, intellectual as well as moral. (p. 141)

Dewey (1980 [1916b]) believes, democratic vocational education coincides with education in general, as an instrument ‘in developing initiative, courage, power and personal ability in each individual’ (p. 209).

In connection with this, as Dewey argues in the four articles published in 1916 and 1917, education should teach students to investigate and to think. Students should practice ‘reflective experience’, as he calls it in *Democracy and Education* – or ‘deliberation’, as it is referred to in *Ethics*. Dewey (1980 [1916c]) hopes that, thanks to education, ‘the scientific spirit’ will become ‘a part of the working mental disposition of the masses’ (pp. 142, 143). Compared to *Democracy and Education* what is striking about these four articles is the focus on research and reflection. Students are required to gain an understanding of societal relations, processes, conflicts and problems.

Dewey believes that democracy cannot do without this. Society has become so complex and differentiated that it is difficult to grasp what and who are dependent on whom and what, and what benefits the ‘common good’:

(Only education ... can guarantee widespread community of interest and aim. In a complex society, ability to understand and sympathize with the operations and lot of others is a condition of common purpose which only education can procure. The external differences of pursuit and experience are so very great, in our complicated industrial civilization, that men will not see across and through the walls which separate them, unless they have been trained to do so. (Dewey, 1980 [1916c]: 139)

Furthermore, everyone needs an understanding of the conditions and the consequences of the way he leads his life and his actions. Even specialised vocational education should encourage this, for instance,

‘understanding the scientific facts and principles or the social bearings of what is done’ and ‘industrial intelligence – a knowledge of the conditions and processes of present manufacturing, transportation and commerce – so that the individual may be able to make his own choices and his own adjustments, and be master, so far as in him lies, of his own economic fate’. (Dewey, 1980 [1917]: 148, 149; see also 1980 [1916c]: 139)

Conflicts and problems deserve extensive attention. In ‘The Schools and Social Preparedness’, Dewey (1980 [1916d]) argues that schools, as a rule, make society seem more harmonious and unproblematic than it really is: ‘The whitewash of indiscriminate eulogistic language cover the things which make social life difficult, uncertain – and interesting’ (p. 194). When controversy and problems are discussed, these are attributed to personal vice. This ought to change, Dewey (1980 [1916d]) writes:

A nation habituated to think in terms of problems and of the struggle to remedy them before it is actually in the grip of the forces which create the problems, would have an equipment for public life. (p. 194)

Citizenship education means education ‘into an intellectual familiarity with the weak places, the dark places, the unsettled difficulties of our society’. As far as Dewey (1980 [1916d]) is concerned, ‘(we) make our schools the home of serious thought on social difficulties and conflicts’ (p. 195).

Intelligent understanding

In the course of the following 25 years, Dewey writes a further 13 articles dealing with democracy and education: ‘Education as Politics’ (1983 [1922]), ‘The School as a Means of Developing a Social Consciousness and Social Ideals in Children’ (1983 [1923b]), ‘Social Purposes in Education’ (1983 [1923a]), ‘The Social-Economic Situation and Education’ (1986 [1933b]), ‘Education for a Changing Social Order’ (1986 [1934c]), ‘Education and the Social Order’ (1986 [1934b]), ‘Can Education Share in Social Reconstruction?’ (1986 [1934a]), ‘The Need for Orientation’ (1987 [1935b]), ‘The Crucial Role of Intelligence’ (1987 [1935a]), ‘The Challenge of Democracy to Education’ (1987 [1937c]), ‘Education, the Foundation for Social Organization’ (1987 [1937b]), ‘Education and Social Change’ (1937a) and ‘Investigating Education’ (1988 [1940]). The views on democracy remain unchanged, just as ‘*Ethics*’ from 1932 contains more or less the same ideas on democracy as ‘*Democracy and Education*’ from 1916. However, a marked shift in the way Dewey discusses democratic education is apparent; vocational education as a component part of democratic education has faded into the background (it only features prominently in ‘Social Purposes in

Education' from 1923) whereas the importance of learning to explore, investigate and to fathom societal relations, processes, conflicts and problems has become more prominent in these writings. This is the main theme of all 13 articles. We shall reconstruct the line of reasoning.

Society has become so complex and extensive (Dewey, 1983 [1922], 1983 [1923b], 1987 [1937b], 1987 [1937c]) that democratically normed participation and co-responsibility would be inconceivable without specific schooling:

Only as the coming generation learns in the schools to understand the social forces that are at work, the directions and the cross-directions in which they are moving, the consequences that they are producing, the consequences that they might produce if they were understood and managed with intelligence – only as the schools provide this understanding, have we any assurance that they are meeting the challenge which is put to them by democracy. (Dewey, 1987 [1937c]: 183)

This is clearly not about transmitting information or presenting opinions and judgments; it is obviously about gaining insight:

What we need ... is an intelligent understanding of actual conditions that will stimulate individual inquiry and enable the minds of students ... to think in a straightforward and competent way and to reach their own conclusions. (Dewey, 1986 [1934c]: 176)

Only when schools are successfully able, also regarding social themes, 'to cultivate the habit of suspended judgement, of scepticism, of desire for evidence, of appeal to observation rather than sentiment, discussion rather than bias, inquiry rather than conventional idealizations' will 'intelligent management of social affairs' come within reach (Dewey, 1983 [1922]: 334). Education should approach social practice scientifically. Without this connection between societal and scientific practice, 'students are certainly getting very little intelligent understanding of the forces that are now making human society and that might remake it' (Dewey, 1987 [1937c]: 187). For Dewey (1987 [1937c]), this is an essential condition of democracy:

If for a single generation psychology and physical sciences were related systematically and organically to understanding not merely how society is going, but how it might be intelligently directed, then I should have no fear about the future of democracy. (p. 187)

In Dewey's opinion, the current education does not suffice. Often the focus on society and politics is limited to an introduction to the 'machinery of government' (Dewey, 1983 [1923a]: 159). Even for citizenship education in a narrow sense, that is too limited and too superficial: '(O)ur youth cannot possibly understand the problems and forces of political life unless they understand its background in industry, trade, and finance' (Dewey, 1986 [1934c]: 164). Even when the focus is broader, realism, critical insight and 'intellectual honesty' are often lacking (Dewey, 1987 [1937b]: 233, 234; Dewey, 1983 [1923b]: 156). And even then, education often exhibits 'the tendency to develop closed minds' (Dewey, 1986 [1934c]: 160). Dewey's (1983 [1922]) verdict is strict:

Our schooling does not educate, if by education is meant a trained habit of discriminating inquiry and discriminating belief, the ability to look beneath the floating surface to detect the conditions that fix the contour of the surface, and the forces which create its waves and drifts. (pp. 331, 332)

If everything is left up to current education, young people are entirely unwary when they enter society:

(T)hey would enter upon the responsibilities of social membership in complete ignorance that there are any social problems, any political evils, any industrial defects. ... The school is even more indurated from a frank acknowledgement of social ills than the pulpit – which is saying a good deal. And like the pulpit it compensates for its avoidance of discussion of social difficulties by a sentimental dwelling upon personal vices. (Dewey, 1983 [1922]: 333)

Education should therefore become more investigative, more critical, more realistic.

The 17 articles published in the 25 years between 1916 and 1941 confirm the views set forth in *‘Democracy and Education’*. Education should ensure that everyone, irrespective of social background or class, is intellectually educated, demonstrates personal initiative and is adaptable, and can utilise these qualities in researching and resolving problems, and doing his work and leading his life as he thinks fit. Over the years, the emphasis has gravitated more towards the importance of learning to inquire into the conditions and consequences of working and living, and learning to critically judge and improve these conditions and consequences. The guiding norm for this evaluation and improvement is service to the community, the democratic common good. Our work and life should contribute to social relations that do justice to the self-determination and self-development of ourselves and others.

‘Miniature community, embryonic society’

At the present, democratic citizenship is often linked to social and moral learning, and interpreted in terms of the promotion of participation and solidarity, sometimes limited to involvement, social cohesion, willingness to help others and tolerance or friendliness. It is set apart from academic learning, either entirely or in part, and considered to be something extra besides learning subject matter (Kerr et al., 2010; Eurydice, 2012). It is often identified with Dewey (e.g. Berding, 1999; Kahne and Sporte, 2008; Veugelers, 2010; Beutel, 2012; Verhoeven, 2012; Quintelier and Hooghe, 2013). I believe this to be a misinterpretation. Illustrative is a text by Althof (2003): ‘Implementing “Just and Caring Communities” in Elementary Schools: A Deweyan Perspective’.

For Althof (2003), ‘educating future citizens’ requires the reform of schools and education in four respects: (1) ‘Participation of students’ in the school organisation, ‘including them in decision making processes’; (2) ‘Co-operative learning’; (3) ‘Social understanding and moral reasoning’ through specific lessons (‘dilemma discussions’) and specific conventions (‘interpersonal negotiations and processes of conflict solving and mediation’); (4) Cultivating ‘prosocial values’; teachers are ‘very unequivocal in classifying caring attitudes and considerateness as desirable and ... anti-social behaviour like recklessness and violence as undesirable’ (p. 158). Althof (2003) calls this the ‘Just community approach to democratic schooling’ and claims that it is a Deweyan approach. It is supposedly derived from Dewey’s idea of the school as an ‘embryonic community’ (pp. 157, 158). This is notable, because, as we have already explained, in Dewey’s work, although democratic citizenship education coincides with social and moral learning and the promotion of participation and solidarity, it is inseparable from learning to think, inquire and judge, and this, in turn, is inseparable from acquiring factual knowledge, knowledge on a broad array of subjects including matters of a social nature, and therefore is an integral aspect of education as such. Citizenship education goes hand in hand with learning subject matter (arithmetic, languages, geography, history, etc.). For Dewey, it is not something extra; it is not dependent on processes and procedures extrinsic to learning subject matter.

Althof seems to misread Dewey’s intentions. In the first chapter of *‘School and Society’*, Dewey (1976 [1899]) does argue that a school should be a ‘miniature community, an embryonic society’ (p. 12), but not in the way Althof envisages. I shall reconstruct Dewey’s argument. In the chapter

in question, Dewey discusses the function of schools in the context of social progress. Schools should be social. In a democracy, this means, first and foremost, that education should be available to all children, regardless of their social origins and class:

What the wisest parent wants for his own child, that must community want for all of its children. Any other ideal for our schools is narrow and unlovely; acted upon, it destroys democracy. All that society has accomplished for itself is put, through the agency of the school, at the disposal of its future members. (Dewey, 1976 [1899]: 5)

That schools should be social, means, second, that education does not withdraw from developing society, but participates in ‘the whole social evolution’ (Dewey, 1976 [1899]: 6). For this reason, it is positive that the content of education changes at the end of the 19th century and that it becomes more practical. One of the reforms is the introduction of manual work and domestic skills, such as woodwork, gardening, needlework, housekeeping and cookery. This is a good thing, Dewey (1976 [1899]) explains, because children then become familiar with ‘forms of industrial occupation’ (p. 7). As a result of urbanisation and industrialisation, most work is no longer carried out in and around the house. Children no longer come into contact with it naturally and no longer learn, over the course of time, to take part in it. This is a loss, because of the educative value of growing up around labour and gradually participating in it:

The children as they gained in strength and capacity, were gradually initiated into the mysteries of the several processes. ... We cannot overlook the factors of discipline and of character-building involved in this kind of life: training in habits of order and of industry, and in the idea of responsibility, of obligation, to do something, to produce something, in the world. There was always something really needed to be done, and a real necessity that each member of the household should do his own part faithfully and in co-operation with others. (Dewey, 1976 [1899]: 7, 8)

The loss of these traditional socialisation processes ought to be compensated by schools – given that they are to be social, in the sense of contributing to social evolution. That is why Dewey assigns a central role to labour in schools. Not only because practical and useful work motivates and activates children, which were the usual reasons for introducing labour and domestic skills into the curriculum. Dewey goes a step further. He proposes to make labour the organisational basis of education, the pivot for didactics and the curriculum: ‘occupations which exact personal responsibilities and which train the child in relation to the physical realities of life’ should become ‘the articulating centres of school life’ (Dewey, 1976 [1899]: 9, 10). In practice, this means that everything learned at school is learned through, and in conjunction with, manifestly useful activities, for the students themselves perceivably useful activities (cf. Van der Ploeg, 2013: 76–88). This calls for fundamental didactical and curricular reform. Dewey (1972 [1895], 1972 [1896]) developed such ideas for the Laboratory School in Chicago and also tried them out there. And *this* is Dewey’s idea of the school as a mini-society: ‘The introduction into the school of various forms of active occupation’ gives schools the opportunity ‘to be a miniature community, an embryonic society’ (Dewey, 1976 [1899]: 15; comparable 27).

Dewey wishes to base education on ‘occupations’, work-like activities, allowing moral and social learning to develop in conjunction with all ‘other’ learning. This is a far cry from Althof’s ‘Just and Caring Communities’. In fact, Althof advocates something Dewey opposes. For Dewey, moral and social learning are fully integrated in academic learning, in learning subject matter. In Althof’s case, they depend on *extra* aspects, such as student involvement in school affairs (1), discussing moral dilemmas and practising resolving mutual conflicts (3) and admonition (4). Only Althof’s co-operative learning (2) coincides with Dewey’s views to a certain degree.

'To prepare for social life is to engage in social life'

As well as *'School and Society'*, Althof seems to interpret Dewey's (1972 [1897]) *'Ethical Principles Underlying Education'* incorrectly. Althof suggests that his idea of the school as 'Just and Caring Community' corresponds to Dewey's idea that 'the only way to prepare for social life is to engage in social life' (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 62; quoted in Althof, 2003: 154). Once again, Dewey means something different to what Althof believes he does. In *'Ethical Principles Underlying Education'*, Dewey attempts to show that education for democracy is significantly broader than 'training for citizenship' taken in the limited sense of preparation for political participation and adherence to the law. The school has to ensure that children are capable of adequately fulfilling their social tasks: as a voter, a neighbour, a family member, a parent, a breadwinner, an employee, a customer, as a neighbourhood or village resident and so on. For instance, 'He is to be a worker, engaged in some occupation which will be of use to society, and which will maintain his own independence and self-respect' (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 58). The school should equip students for self-determination in this and in all other tasks in society:

give him such possession of himself that he may take charge of himself; may not only adapt himself to the changes which are going on, but to have the power to shape and direct those changes. (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 60)

Education, as a whole, contributes to this; apart from this, 'the school has no end or aim' (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 60):

For the child properly to take his place with reference to these various functions means training in science, in art, in history; command of the fundamental methods of inquiry and the fundamental tools of intercourse and communication; it means a trained and sound body, skilful eye and hand; habits of industry, perseverance, and, above all, habits of serviceableness. (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 59)

Developing the latter, serviceableness, is an integral part of education. Dewey (1972 [1897]) does not think much of 'teaching about ... particular virtues or ... instilling certain sentiments with regard to them'; he disqualifies them as being 'too goody-goody' (p. 75). Moral and social learning and citizenship education coincide with intellectual and academic learning when the school functions properly as a 'vital social institution' (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 61):

The school cannot be a preparation for social life excepting as it reproduces, within itself, the typical conditions of social life. (pp. 61, 62)

Dewey explains in detail what this means for both the form of education ('methods', 1972 [1897]: 63–66) as the content ('subject-matter', 1972 [1897]: 66–75). For didactics, this entails providing opportunities for cooperation, but in particular it means meeting and using 'the child's active powers, ... his capacities in construction, production, and creation' (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 65). For the content, it means selecting and organising subject matter in such a way that

it brings the pupil to consciousness of his social environment, and confers upon him the ability to interpret his own powers from the standpoint of their possibilities in social use. (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 67)

In this way, education provides 'social intelligence' and 'social power' enabling students to eventually contribute to society, in accordance with their own critical insight and as they see fit (Dewey, 1972 [1897]: 75).

Just as in *'School and Society'*, in *'Ethical Principles Underlying Education'*, Dewey describes the function of the school, regarding social and moral learning and citizenship education, in terms of education as such, which means acquiring knowledge, including knowledge of society and the economy, and developing skills, including thinking skills and skills of judgment. It is notable that Dewey, even before 1900, apparently initially associated democratic education with education for all and with education as such. This differs strongly from views and practices as supported by Althof and others, who see the school as a place to practice participation and solidarity, while at the same time making a clear distinction between practising participation and solidarity and learning subject matter – despite this, they still refer to Dewey.

Service learning and deliberative democracy

In the literature on citizenship education, Dewey is also associated with service learning and deliberative democracy. The basic assumption of service learning is that pupils learn participation and solidarity most effectively by putting them into practice, 'by doing'. There is nothing against referring to Dewey regarding the learning-by-doing principle (as in Battistoni, 1997; Schuitema et al., 2008; Hildreth, 2012), as long as they don't give the impression that Dewey himself believed service learning to be the ideal form of citizenship education. Dewey does not claim this anywhere. Furthermore, in the line of Dewey's reasoning, it would be a potential aspect of citizenship education at the most, and only when adequately embedded in a curriculum giving adequate attention to content knowledge, critical thinking, research and judgment.

Something similar applies to class discussions as a way to practice citizenship. This is a common implementation of citizenship education (Hess, 2009; Youniss, 2011), well suited to the modern notion of deliberative democracy (Rosenberg, 2007; Dryzek, 2010). When only referring to Dewey's didactical principle of 'learning-by-doing' (practising citizenship by practising discussion) or when it is only maintained that Dewey's notion of democracy has some similarities with deliberative democracy, there is not much to object to (such as in Kosnoski, 2005; Englund, 2006). It is only a problem when it is claimed that Dewey himself believed class discussion to be the ideal form for citizenship education. For Dewey, class discussion is a possible aspect of citizenship, at least when it is an integral part of learning subject matter. A fine illustration is the didactical implementation found in *'How we think'* (Dewey, 1986 [1933a]). This book is about the nature of thinking and how thinking works. It is partly (Dewey, 1986 [1933a]: 125–167 and 326–341) intended to offer guidance to teachers regarding this subject. Dewey gives several detailed and concrete recommendations, for instance how the teacher might encourage and direct an inquiring attitude in students, how he might structure the student's thinking, how he can prevent his own personality from standing in the way of the students' subject matter learning and their learning to think, how to select subject matter, how to organise and guide assignments and how he might prepare and manage whole class instruction. In the case of the latter, 'recitation and training thought', Dewey explains the points of concern in class discussions on subject matter. The teacher should ensure, among other things, that the students keep the objective of the discussion in mind and do not go off at a tangent:

There is no doubt of the danger thus suggested. But if the young are to be prepared when they leave school to take an effective part in a democratic society, the danger must be faced and conquered. Many of the failures of democratic government ... are due to the fact that adults are unable to share in joint conference and consultation on social questions and issues. They can neither contribute intelligently, nor can they follow and judge the contributions of others. The habits set up in their earlier schooling have not fitted them for this enterprise. (Dewey, 1986 [1933a]: 334, 335)

The quotation confirms the kinship between Dewey's idea of democracy and deliberative democracy, and it shows that Dewey does believe that class discussion can contribute to citizenship education, as a possible working method among other methods. At the same time, the context shows just how much citizenship education is interwoven with learning subject matter for Dewey, just how strongly it coincides with adequate education as such.

Conclusion

Books and articles of Dewey present an unequivocal image of the relationship between democracy and education. Democracy and education are two sides of the same coin, according to Dewey. Education, like democracy, involves and fosters self-determination and self-development, not only those of one person or a privileged group, but everyone's. In a democracy, everyone has a voice and takes responsibility; rules, procedures and provisions guarantee that no one's opportunities to fully develop themselves are impeded. The school must ensure that everyone is intellectually educated, because of the importance of thinking, knowledge and understanding. And that everyone demonstrates personal initiative and is adaptable, because of the importance of the ongoing development of society. And that one can use these qualities (intelligent understanding and personal initiative and adaptability) when investigating and resolving problems and in the course of one's work and living one's life, working and living according to one's own ideas and as one sees fit. From 1916 onwards, the emphasis shifts towards the importance of critical reflection: getting to know and learning to inquire into the conditions and consequences of one's working and living, and learning to critically judge these conditions and consequences and to improve on them, with the democratic common good as the norm, hence with concern for societal relations that do justice to the self-determination and self-development of ourselves and others.

At the present, it is customary to conceive democratic citizenship education in terms of social and moral learning and the promotion and practising of participation and solidarity. Sometimes this is distinguished from academic learning by imagining it as something extra besides learning subject matter. Those who attribute such a perspective to Dewey are mistaken. In Dewey's ideas on education and democracy, social and moral learning and the promotion or practice of participation and solidarity, although important, cannot be separated from education as such, which means acquiring knowledge including knowledge about society and the economy, and developing skills, including thinking skills and judgment skills. All teaching, including and particularly teaching academic subjects, *is* citizenship education – provided, of course, that it is proper teaching, Deweyan teaching.

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