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Editors

# The Palgrave Handbook of Leisure Theory

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In Gorz (2013), the right to leisure appears as a right that should be as structuring as the right to work, just as Lafargue (2011) draws attention to the devaluation of human time which is not devoted to work. In contemporary societies, we see ourselves within a logic that continually validates or invalidates human time according to their productivity or non-productivity. One must produce, consume, keep running on the system's wheel.

We must ask whether the Nietzschean rebellion in his refusal of work as a means of subjectivity might not be more fertile in the quest for a humanity beyond the slavery of work, to light an alternative path, perhaps not the path of the superman but the path of a subjectivity constituted without Lords or Slaves.

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## John Dewey: Purposeful Play as Leisure

Mary C. Breunig

The Silver Airways prop plane provided a breathtaking view of crystal-line blue and turquoise waters interspersed with island (keys) as I flew into the small airport on my first visit to Key West in February 2015. A sign welcoming me to the Conch Republic greeted me upon my arrival as I entered the small terminal. I had just landed at the Southernmost point in the United States, situated only 90 miles from the Republic of Cuba. The Conch Republic (República de la Concha) is a micronation declared as a tongue-in-cheek secession (attempt) by the city of Key West, Florida, from the United States on April 23, 1982. Today, the name is predominantly maintained as a boost for tourism with the organization, a "Sovereign State of Mind" continuing to celebrate "Independence Day," seeking to bring more "Humor, Warmth and Respect" to a world in sore need of all three, according to their website. Artists Winslow Homer and Mario Sanchez lived and painted in Key West. James John Audubon

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came to Key West to study the flamingo, discovering 18 new species of birds while there, with the white-crowned pigeon being one of the most notable locally. Well-known writers, such as Tennessee Williams, Shel Silverstein, "Papa" (Ernest) Hemingway, and Robert Frost all lived and wrote in Key West. The poet Elizabeth Bishop also lived in Key West and many of her poems were inspired by this beautiful, quirky city. In her poem "Full Moon," Bishop writes about Key West as a town of paper white and as an island that hums. She describes the sites and sounds as a zither laid upon the glittering Gulf.

The above introductory images and descriptions of Key West contextualizes its reputation today as a tourist destination with three cruise ships lining the port and people meandering up and down Duval Street in the historic Old Town throughout the day and night.

Key West was initially inhabited by the Calusa (Native American) people living on Florida's Southwest coast (Cox 1983). Estuarine fisheries were a prominent resource for the Calusa and for the Spaniards who colonized the land. Cigar, sponge, and salt manufacturing alongside salvaging (and pirateering) were the primary sources of income for the early American inhabitants of Key West (Cox 1983; Kerstein 2012). A naval base was established and Key West continues to serve as an important military outpost. Today, the island's motto is "Key West: Close to Perfect. Far from Normal" (Kerstein 2012).

As I contemplated this history during that first trip in February 2015, I inadvertently found myself standing in front of an inn called the "John Dewey House." Upon enthusiastic investigation, I learned that Elizabeth Bishop and John Dewey were neighbours in Key West and that Bishop and Dewey's physicist daughter Jane were close friends. I cannot help but wonder about Dewey's choice to spend his winters in a city that was built on profiteering and threatened secession from the United States in light of his Democratic ideology but neither that or Elizabeth Bishop are the foci of this chapter.

This chapter's focus is to explore John Dewey's views on leisure. That said, the fact that John Dewey spent work and leisure time in Key West with family and friends is central to this content and provides a backdrop to what follows. Dewey was in fact one of the first present day "snow-birds," leaving his home in New York City to travel to Key West for the

winter months to "simply break free from the big city." Dewey asserted, "The *mañana* mood develops very easily" in Key West (John Dewey House, n.d.). He would often write letters to associates saying that the climate and laid-back attitude was easy to accept and hard to ignore. Dewey frequented the beaches, observed the fishermen bringing in their daily catch, sunbathed, and sat on his porch. He enjoyed the ability to simply be here and write, without anyone bothering him. The healing properties of the good weather and relaxed attitude definitely played a part in his active lifestyle (John Dewey House, n.d.).

In writing a chapter about Dewey's impact on the field of leisure theory, these details about how Dewey spent his own leisure time and where Dewey spent this time, including that Dewey ever had a "*mañana* mood," are entirely fascinating to me and are likely to others as well. Leisure (as "recreation") is not a word that Dewey would have likely used but purposeful activity, an active lifestyle, and play were all terms he would have employed.

I therefore entitled the chapter "Purposeful Play as Leisure." In this chapter, Dewey's views on labour and leisure will be discussed. Dewey's use of the terms "activity" and "experience" as components of present day experiential education theory will be introduced. The concepts of "play" and "unification" will be explored as components of his broader educational philosophy. The chapter will return to Dewey's time in Key West with a view towards place and leisure. I first begin with a brief biographical sketch of John Dewey prior to these other discussions.

## John Dewey

John Dewey was born in 1859 and grew up in a devout Congregationalist household in Burlington, Vermont (Ryan 1995). He attended the University of Vermont, was a public school teacher and father, and completed his PhD at John Hopkins University at the age of 25. He worked as a professor of philosophy at the University of Michigan and the University of Chicago prior to teaching at Columbia University, where he spent his most productive years. Dewey was a well-known public intellectual and a prolific writer (including authoring major works during his time in Key

West). He was both a pragmatist and a progressivist. His educational philosophy is based on the idea that instruction should commence with practical human problems and should promote a Democratic citizenry. Much of Dewey's writing focuses on the intellectual development of individuals but that development is premised on the presupposition that they live in society and society is most effective when it is lived as a democracy (1916). This view of education is one that nurtures individual students' development while simultaneously preparing them for active participation in Democratic activities.

The educator's task was to sequentially design the "minimum necessary structure" (Dewey 1938) for students to actively pursue curriculum in a manner that would ignite their capacities and interests. While Dewey is often cited as the founding father of experiential education having written *Experience and Education* in 1938, he never used that term himself. To state that Dewey was a proponent of experiential activity or that his approach was student-centred oversimplifies his pedagogy. Dewey was a proponent of activity but not aimless experience, advocating instead for purposeful curricular initiatives that physically and mentally engaged students along an experiential continuum (Dewey 1938). As Seaman (2011) asserts, Dewey "rejected the spectator theory of knowledge, arguing that the only way we can know the world is by interacting in it socially" (p. 7). Knowing the world beyond the classroom walls was central to Dewey's educational ideals. Dewey's many publications extend well beyond his contributions to education and include his views on epistemology, metaphysics, aesthetics, art, logic, social theory, ethics, and human nature (Ryan 1995).

## Labour and Leisure

The term leisure would have been antithetical to the term "labour" for Dewey. In *Democracy and Education* (1916), Dewey introduces the terms "useful labour" and "leisure" suggesting that when used in opposition to one another, they reflect a division within social life. According to Dewey, if the two functions of gaining a livelihood by work and enjoying leisure opportunities were distributed equally, it would not occur

to anyone that there was any conflict of educational agencies and aims involved. It would be self-evident that education could effectively contribute to both. The separation of technical/industrial education from liberal education goes back to the time of the Greeks and was formulated expressly on the basis of a division of classes into those who had to labour for a living and those who were relieved from this necessity, possessing ample leisure time, releasing the mind for leisurely thinking and reflection (Dewey 1916).

According to Dewey (1916), when we confine the education of those who work with their hands to a few years of schooling devoted for the most part to acquiring the use of rudimentary symbols at the expense of training in science, literature, and history, we fail to prepare the minds of workers to take advantage of the opportunity for higher order thinking. More fundamental is the fact that the great majority of workers have no insight into the social aims of their pursuits and no direct personal interest in them. The actual results achieved are not the ends of their actions but only of their employers. Labourers do what they do, not freely and intelligently, but for the sake of the wage earned. This was of deep concern to Dewey's view of a Democratic society. According to Dewey, quality leisure was important for immediate health but also for the positive effects upon habits of mind.

Dichotomizing labour and leisure is one example of the type of either/or thinking that Dewey consistently rejected throughout his career, viewing bifurcations as unnecessarily artificial and overly simplistic. Dewey believed that one of the greatest failings of the Progressive education movement is rooted in the dichotomous fallacy that education is either "traditional" or progressive, failing to recognize intermediate possibilities (Dewey 1938). Dewey rejected the notion that any activity falls neatly into a category, believing that there is no singular "one way" to educate and no pure work or pure play (1916). According to Wu and Simpson (2011), Dewey believed that it was insufficient to simply recognize that people cannot spend all their waking hours on the job. Dewey recognized the monotony of assembly line jobs, referring to factories as workplaces that deadened creativity and the imagination. Dewey believed that boring jobs dull the human mind and that this numbing carried over into other aspects of life leading individuals

to seek stimulation in the forms of gambling and drinking rather than pursuing quality leisure pursuits. In thinking back upon the ideals of Democracy, the labour/leisure dichotomy points to a worrisome class distinction. "As long as labour and leisure remain separate, leisure is primarily the purview of the elite and labour the burden of the underclass" (Simpson 2011, p. 124). Dewey worried that the working class may lack not only the time but the energy and skills for quality leisure, opting for idle amusement instead. On the other hand, the elite may benefit from time, privilege, and power but may lack the personal drive and work ethic needed to elevate the quality of their leisure pursuits (Wu and Simpson 2011). Dewey was concerned that the elite would not pursue the virtuous ideals of leisure as introduced by the Greeks (i.e., music, art, service, physical activity) but may instead choose capricious, self-indulgent activities (i.e., big game safari and polo).

As was so often the case with Dewey, purposeful education that was neither the liberal/intellectual education of the elite or the technical/practical education or the working class (as previously mentioned), but a combination of the two would be the most effective leisure education. He asserts that the leisure educator must engage students in activities such as outdoor excursions, gardening, and sewing in ways that promote manual skill, technical efficiency, socialization, and fun but also provide immediate satisfaction (Dewey 1916). As with so much of Dewey's teachings, leisure too must be teleological, having an end goal and intentionality.

## Activity and Experience

One of Dewey's greatest concerns was that of aimless activity (Dewey 1938). Activity for the sake of having an experience without purpose and structure may lead to miseducative experiences, those that arrest or distort learning and growth. Experience and activity must be purposeful and of a high quality. I spoke earlier of quality leisure. For Dewey, a quality experience is comprised of two aspects: (1) there is an immediate aspect of agreeableness or disagreeableness and (2) there is influence upon later

experiences (what Dewey refers to as the experiential continuum). Dewey reminds educators that students have experiences in traditional schools, the trouble with these experiences is that they are not often sufficiently connected along an experiential continuum, taking into account students' previous experiences and offering educative experiences that build upon them. The same critique can be made about the field of experiential education.

John Dewey is often cited as the "founding father" of experiential education. Dewey did propose a philosophy of education based on a philosophy of experience (Dewey 1938) but never applied the term "experiential education" in his writing. According to the Association for Experiential Education (2016), experiential education is a philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities. Experiential learning and experiential education are buzzwords within many educational circles and these terms are often used interchangeably (Breunig 2008). In 1984, David Kolb introduced the experiential learning cycle (see Fig. 1).

This cycle (Kolb 1984) helps illustrate how experience, reflection, new knowledge, and application can be employed as a way of teaching experientially. I have added preparation to this, which helps to incorporate Dewey's focus on intentionality and purpose. Many experiential educational initiatives are based on this learning cycle but do not prescribe an intended learning outcome or aim. In essence, employing the experiential

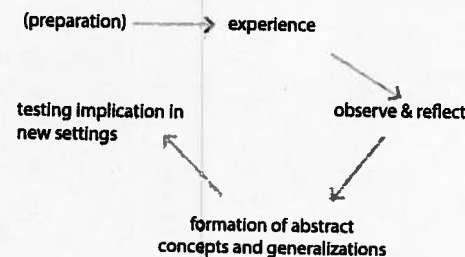


Fig. 1 Experiential learning cycle (Figure made by the author)



learning cycle without an intended educational aim represents experiential learning as methodology, implying that there is a certain way of teaching that makes the learning experiential. Experiential education as philosophy employs both methodology (experiential way of teaching) and philosophy as part of the educative process (Breunig 2008). Experiential education as philosophy implies that there is an intended aim towards which the experiential learning process is directed. In this sense, experiential learning which combines experience and reflection may not be educationally purposeful but the intent of experiential education is just that, an intentional, purposeful approach to teaching and learning, resonant with Dewey's ideals.

As mentioned above, some educators hold concerns about the miseducative potential of experiential education if activities are disconnected or lacking aim/purpose. Ritzer (1996) has written about what he refers to as the McDonaldization of experience in education, stating:

McDonaldization can be defined as the process by which the principles of the fast food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world. McDonaldization affects not only the restaurant business but also education, work, health care, travel, leisure, dieting, politics, the family and virtually every other aspect of society. McDonaldization has shown every sign of being an inexorable process by sweeping through seemingly impervious institutions and parts of the world.

(p. 198)

Chris Loynes (1998) refers to this type of leisure as "adventure in a bun" or what Roberts (2005) calls the Disneyfication of experience and its potential to sanitize and trivialize transformative pedagogies. "The experiential construction of experience functions to amplify its commodification and it makes the broader pedagogy more vulnerable to co-optation and criticism," according to Roberts (2005, p. 24). Gone from this construction is the Deweyan legacy of placing intentional, well-facilitated, and connected experiences at the centre of any endeavour. Clearly, Dewey placed an uncontested emphasis on aim and purpose when designing experiences and leisure activities.

## Play and Unification

Dewey argues for the integration (unification) of leisure and labour, in the same manner that he promotes the connection between liberal and technical/practical education (Simpson 2011) as mentioned above. In *How We Think* (1910), Dewey refers to the intellectual harm that can accrue from the divorce of work and play. Dewey believes that to be playful and serious at the same time is possible, and, in fact, defines the ideal mental condition. For Dewey, this ideal mental condition consists of an absence of prejudice and the presence of intellectual curiosity and flexibility manifest in free play. This type of purposeful free play can include engagement in art, keeping active and healthy, cooking, and planting, and cultivating a garden, according to examples that Dewey provides. For children, the construction of play and "play things" is limitless. Dewey asserts that, in fact, "The more unfitted the physical object for its imagined purpose, such as a cube for a boat, the greater is the supposed appeal to the imagination" (p. 166). Children exist in a "wonderful world" full of mystery and promise, one that allows for the imaginative activity of constructing (and making) meaning from play experiences, according to Dewey. For children, there is no difference between doing things for utility and for fun. Dewey suggests there is nothing mysterious or mystical in Plato's discovery that play is the chief and almost only mode of education for the child in the years of later infancy.

The adult, on the contrary, is "acquainted with responsible labour upon which serious financial results depend" (Dewey 1910, p. 167). An adult, thus burdened, seeks relief, relaxation, and amusement, leading too often to less quality leisure pursuits and ones that further bifurcate the labour/leisure (play) divide. Dewey believes that adult play and leisure should be less about the activity and more about the attitude, summarizing, "Not the thing done but the quality of mind that goes into the doing settles what is utilitarian and what is unconstrained and educative" (p. 167).

Dewey thus believes that playfulness is a more important construct than play. Play or leisure, in his view, are merely passing outward manifestations of a playful attitude. The playful attitude is one of freedom, according to Dewey (1910) and an attitude that children automatically

possess. Dewey provides the example of a child playing horse with a broom and chairs. The fact that the broom does not really represent a horse, or a chair a locomotive, is of no account. The imaginary attitude of mind and the deliberate construction of experience are what matter. Dewey is not talking about arbitrary fancifulness or the building up of an imaginary world but the actual ways in which a play attitude can gradually pass into a work attitude, both requiring an attitude of mind that promotes meaning-making and value.

Over time, children find make believe play inadequate. They begin to take part in "real" activities. If the attitude is one of playfulness, the school or work project can be one that takes advantage of the meanings and activities built up in their early free play experiences. Dewey talks about children and play in *Experience and Education* (1938). One illustration that reflects his thinking about this is captured in the following example. Consider the ways in which children play with a ball. A child with a ball arrives amidst a group of children. Before long, a child in the group will have an idea that they should all play a game together, inviting the child with the ball into the fold. Ideas begin to be shared amongst the children about what to play and how to play. A free play game begins and as the activity progresses, the ideas about how to play may get refined and improved upon, depending upon the game's success and level of inclusivity. The children themselves create rules and order so as to optimize on both the fun and full and fair participation. For Dewey, rules and order in play (and work) create social order and freedom. As mentioned above without "minimum necessary structure," chaos is likely to ensue. Children and adults engaged in free play (and work) benefit from rules, order, and structure, particularly when these are co-created. The rhythm, the competition, and cooperation involved in most play introduce organization (Dewey 1910) and with order and structure comes freedom (1938). As Dewey summarizes, "The 'freest' plays observe some principles of coherence and unification" (p. 162). And the same can (and should be said) for work, translating the knowledge gained in play by young children into their work/school projects, further unifying labour and leisure.

This concept of unification is rooted in Dewey's pragmatic and progressivist views on education (and life). Dewey formulated many of his ideals on leisure and labour based on what he describes as the failings of

the progressive education movement itself to not adopt a more unified view of education. Dewey criticizes the reification of progressive ideals over "traditional" ones, which only lend themselves to an unnecessary bifurcation of either/or thinking. Dewey reminds us that Froebel (1826) purported for child-centred, student-initiated play as the best method for learning social and intellectual skills that might serve as a foundation for their whole life, further emphasizing the importance of unification.

Is this perhaps what Dewey was doing in Key West—unifying his own labour with leisure?

## Back to Dewey in Key West

Despite Dewey's self-proclaimed "mañana (leisure-oriented) mood," his time in Key West was a productive period. Was Dewey's own leisure time integrated with his writing labour? He wrote four of his books during the winters he spent there, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), *Freedom and Culture* (1939), *Problems of Men* (1946), and *Knowing and the Known* (1949). I like to imagine Dewey as he appears below in archive photographs available to inspect at Key West library, writing from his front porch at his home in Key West.

On a return trip in winter 2016, I decided to head to the local branch of the Monroe County Library to learn more; while there, I encountered Tom Lambright, curator of the archives for Key West. I (and William Gaudelli) who wrote a compelling paper entitled, "Locating John Dewey: Place Theory and Dewey's Retirement in Key West," agree that there are too few literature-based insights about Dewey's time in Key West. Tom and some of the archived photos, alongside a bit of historical information from select websites, provided some insights. Lambright wasted no time informing me that Dewey was regarded as a snowbird and not as a true community member as I began my investigations.

Gaudelli, who also visited Tom Lambright and the library archives, conducted a content analysis of the local paper, the *Key West Citizen*, and uncovered original correspondences that Dewey wrote during his time in Key West. One of the key goals was to uncover references to Dewey's time in Key West. According to Gaudelli, Dewey's early correspondences

focused on the weather, the town, and the natural environment. Dewey's home, which was actually owned by his second wife, is now an upscale inn and the site that sparked my original curiosity for this chapter as stated in the introduction (see Fig. 2).

Gaudelli's (2005) content analysis revealed five primary themes about Dewey's Key West experiences: Relaxation and laziness, social awareness, warm climate and appreciation of nature, isolation, and health and old age. Dewey was very self-critical about his lack of work ethic and productivity despite the four books he wrote during his time here. He did block off time for writing each day but he was also drawn into a self-described lazy vacation mode due to the climate. Dewey was drawn to the natural beauty of Key West, spending leisure time exploring the birds and plants and visiting the fishing docks, where he surveyed the hauls (Gaudelli). Dewey spent some of his leisure time at the Naval Base to try and better understand World War II (WWII). In another photograph in the Key West library archives, and with what appears to be a developing tan, we see Dewey entertaining his associates Max Eastman, a poet and a political activist and Alexander Barmine, an officer in the Soviet Army and later a journalist.

I believe that Dewey did live a life replete with leisure experiences, particularly given the themes that arose in Dewey's own correspondences when writing about his time in Key West. There are also indicators that Dewey unified his leisure time with his writing labour, including his wife's remarks that Key West served as a place of solitude and reflection that prompted his writing (Gaudelli 2005).

As we know from above, however, Dewey expressed concerns about being lazy and unproductive. He further worried that he was becoming dull and mundane because so many of his personal correspondences to associates commenced with reports about the fine weather (Gaudelli 2005). I believe that Dewey would have been particularly bothered by his self-prescribed lax attitude given his own strong work ethic and the Democratic ideals of work as a societal good. That said, Dewey also spent the later years of his life in Key West and "Key West's laid-back atmosphere seemed both a comfort and annoyance to Dewey, as the warmth helped soothe the aches of old age and Key West's isolation contributed to his growing sense of intellectual deterioration" (Gaudelli, p. 32).

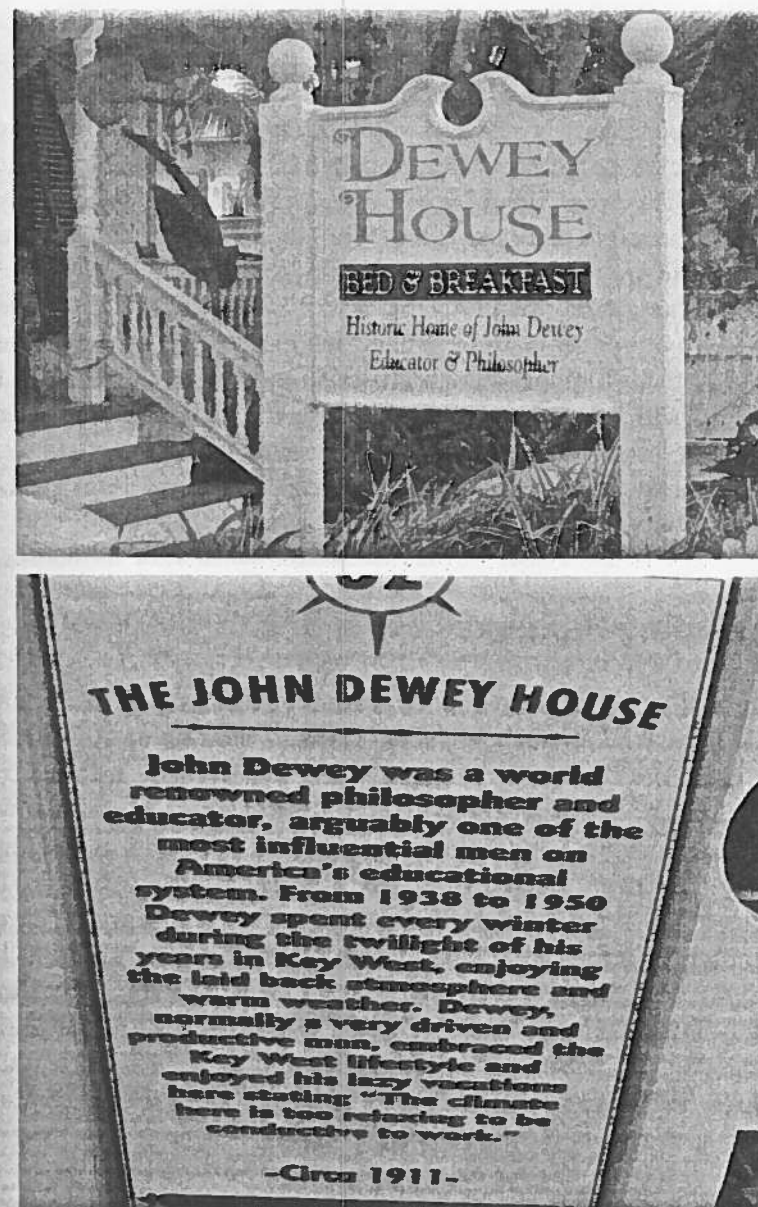


Fig. 2 The Dewey House and Placard on South Street (Taken by the author)



I imagine that Dewey believed for himself (and others) that too much leisure time poses a threat to Democracy, further augmenting his own concerns about being "too leisurely" in Key West.

I also believe that Dewey was contemplating the ideals of Democracy as he visited the naval base in Key West. While he wanted to better understand WWII and the United States involvement, he also grew increasingly critical of the navy's presence in Key West, citing the ways in which they impacted the property values and observing the men's ill behaviour. As a pacifist, Dewey was dismayed by this as well as the attention that the base received from presidents Roosevelt and Truman. Dewey's observations of these visits made him increasingly critical of the Democratic Party and its leadership, which Dewey generally viewed as too moderate and beholden to capitalist interests (Gaudelli 2005). Dewey further commented on the weakness of the local city council and the failure of the local media to criticize public actions but Dewey himself never took action.

## Concluding Remarks

Dewey was highly self-critical about being too lazy in Key West and was critical in general about how people invested their leisure time in Key West given the climate and context were less conducive to intellectual pursuit. I wonder what Dewey would think about present day Key West and leisure pursuits? We now know he would likely be critical of the infamous Duval Crawl, which involves paying a visit to the 60+ bars that line the street. What would Dewey think about the ongoing Navy presence—continuing to impact the socio-political and economic terrain in Key West? Would Dewey have evolved further in his thinking about leisure time and socio-economic status? There is too little mention in Dewey's writing about issues of race, class, gender, and an acknowledgement of privilege. For Dewey to have the time, resources, and societal acceptance to easily spend the latter years of his life in Key West engaged in contemplative reflection and leisure is an indication of his own privilege.

From a theoretical viewpoint, Dewey would wish to have leisure be easily accessible and available to everyone in a fair and equitable manner. He would wish for people's leisure to be unified with their labour and

he would wish for people to enter into leisure experiences with a playful attitude and purposefulness. These views are the same as those he holds for education and growth generally. To learn that Dewey's views on education extend into his views on leisure provides broadened insights into his educational philosophy. As I left the Monroe County Library, having wrapped up my research about this, Tom Lambright looked up from his desk bidding me goodbye stating: "You know, there are consistent comings and goings of people like you, asking questions about Dewey. People seem to still be pretty interested in him. He really did have an impact, didn't he?"

I certainly think so...

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## Durkheim and Leisure

Stratos Georgoulas

### Introduction

It is important, when you try to feel a scientist's contribution—who has rightly been considered as the founding father of a specialized field of knowledge, that was established after his generation—that you should present even briefly, as an introduction, some elements of his life, the historical period he lived in and the wider scientific climate of the specific era. Besides, Emile Durkheim had a clear social integration and political expression; he lived in very interesting times from a historical and scientific point of view, whereas he did not stop interacting with relevant scientific movements of other countries and schools, thus creating a personal and scientific course that was full of continuous ruptures and contradictions as well as discontinuities, and he certainly exerted

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