

Psychological and socio-political dynamics within the Web;
new and old challenges to information Law and Ethics

Author

Orsola Iermano

Title

Democratic education and new technologies after John Dewey

keywords

education /democracy /new technologies/social control/individual freedom

Abstract

John Dewey was the philosopher who most influenced the educational theory and pedagogy of the twentieth century, he believed that it was possible to get american mass society radically democratic trough education, because he thought that education was the founding istitution of the society and than a better education would have made the society better. So education concerns everyone, is a “social business” as we read, for instance, in *My pedagogical creed*(1897) or in *The school and the society*(1899). But how to get it better? First of all the education should become democratic, because only in a democratic context we can have a truly educational experience. As we can read also in *Democracy and education*(1916) democracy in Dewey's philosophy reaching higher levels of social intelligence and make it possible to develop everyone talents by following his own interests. Education can cancels social inequalities and so trough education democracy has to begin an habit. An educational experience is a special kind of experience that opens up new experiential perspectives in the future. In this kind of experience, as in every experience, the individual and society transform each other, but they do it better: in naturalistic terms a truly educational experience ensures a better adaptation of the individual to society as we can read in one of his most famous writings, *Esperience and education* (1938), considered the most complete synthesis of his educational and pedagogical thought. But the democratic process can start and continue only if individual freedom is guaranteed, both of the intellect and of the body on one side and the other side if the State guarantes to everyone the free access to results of scientific knowledge and make possible to every citizen to use new technologies to improve the individual adaptation to society. But to do this technology must be thought in democratic terms and as an instrument of the democratic process. Therefore in Dewey's philosophy, technology is an important key for democratic education, so important that someone, like Larry Hickman, author of *.John Dewey's pragmatic technology*(1990) has interpreted the entire work of Dewey in terms of a philosophy of technology-This paper wants to invastigate, considering Dewey's philosophy of education in particular, if new products of technologies, like social networks for example, in which we are immersed and which has invested every aspect of our life, actually may be considered tools to improve the individual adaptation to the society, if they can really represent a chance for a democratic education and than for democracy yet or not, specially after the sociological and antropological teories about post-modern and *surmoderne* society(Bauman/Augé), and considering the new face of social control and the consequences it has on individual freedom.

Brief biography

Orsola Iermano is a phd student in Philosophy of education at University of Rome “Tor Vergata”

