

In this paper, I would like to examine briefly the structure of creativity and the structure of the educational system. More particularly, I would like to investigate the extent to which developing creative persons might be an aim of education within the context of national educational systems. Within the more romantic and existential literature on education, many writers and thinkers have observed, and some have argued, that the educational system serves mainly to crush youthful creativity, originality, and imagination. Friedrich Nietzsche (1872/1964), for example, is scathing in his denunciation of “education” for the masses and sees them mainly as bastions for instilling the herd mentality. He argues that the only way to avoid crippling budding overmen is to provide them with special schools and education to ensure that their spirited and passionate Dionysian urge is blended to the right proportions with the Apollonian restraint and harmony so that their creative powers are fully realized. Education for the masses destroys the potential genius of budding overmen either by turning them into desiccated Apollonian such as Socrates who turn out to be propagators of slave morality or else, in full rebellion, wild Dionysians who destroy all before them rather than create in accordance with nature, persons such as Nero or Hitler (Nietzsche, 1964). Clearly, for Nietzsche, the structure of creativity cannot fit within the structure of a mass educational system.

But must this be the case? The American philosopher, John Dewey, for one, held a very different view of the matter. While in agreement with Nietzsche that the traditional form of schooling found throughout the educational system of his time was deadening to the natural spirits of the young, and was explicitly “miseducative”, he argued that the quality of the experience found throughout the system could be radically transformed in

a way to truly develop creative and democratic citizens who would change the world around them. Indeed, this sets Dewey apart from Nietzsche in important ways. While Nietzsche believed that only a select few had the potential for becoming truly creative, Dewey's optimistic philosophy would create extend something like the education of the overman to the vast masses that Nietzsche derisively ignored. In that sense, Dewey is the philosopher of the educational system, and not merely a philosopher of education.

How might this be done? While Dewey clearly recognized differences in educational ability no less than Nietzsche, his stress on the requirements for life in a democracy dictated that no child be left behind. Life in a democracy was all-inclusive, and so education had to be fashioned in a way that would create sustain, preserve, and enhance democratic living. And the only way to do that would be to ensure that the schooling through the mass educational system prepared the young to confront the problems of democracy with the habits of a critical and creative disciplined intelligence. Though Dewey, of course, did not adopt Nietzsche's language of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, there are some interesting parallels to be found in his thinking about the educational system in general. In his book for the mass market, *Experience and Education*, Dewey (1938) is quite explicit in rejecting both "traditional" education in the schools and its polar opposite that he found in some progressive schools of the time: a license for completely free and unguided activity on the part of the students. In deploring dualistic thinking here as elsewhere, Dewey argued that while the restrictive and deadening environment of the traditional school had the effect of destroying the natural curiosity and creative impulse of the young, "free schools" let impulse run rampant to no educational effect. Dewey argued for a marriage between