

THE UNCIVIL SOCIETY



*The John Dewey
Experience*

Track List:

- 1) Traditions v. Progressions
- 2) The Need for a Theory
- 3) Criteria of Experience
- 4) Social Control
- 5) Nature of Freedom
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*“Education is not preparation
for life; education is life itself.”*

— John Dewey

Traditions v. Progressions

We think in terms of opposition

Beliefs are formed

as either-or propositions

This extreme intrinsic duality

eliminates possibility from reality

When forced to compromise

Extremes are difficult to exercise

Yet, when it comes to practical matters

When paradigms are in tatters

And circumstance compels

us to find common ground

We retreat to the safety of theory

Where any query can be argued as truth

Traditions impose ideas

from above and outside

Progression comes

from expressions

Aligned by heart and mind

Need for a Theory

 Education is a process designed
to suppress our natural inclinations

The subjects and matters

Derived from bodies of information

Seemingly assembled without relation

The knowledge and skills

you will understand is how to follow rules

Conform to standards, obey time and

Meet deadlines

 Regurgitate Schemes

Identify patterns of organization

In the twelve year course of mandatory

education you will be shaped

by time and schedule

So we can replicate and perpetuate

the rules of order

 That are already in place

Criteria of Experience

Culture creates conditions
That assume our future
will be much like the past
Through Instruction and Discipline
We are taught skills, conduct and
ideas from previous eras
Transmitted in the now
with intent to last

The praxis of this interaction
Forms factions in our minds
Knowledge is Assimilated
from surroundings
Learning is gleamed
through acquisition
Of what is already understood

This criteria of Experience
Lies in opposition to cultivating an
individuals identity and experience

Social Control

How many have learned to hate learning?

How many acquired skills through drills?

How many came to associate
discovery with boredom?

How many found their experience so
foreign to their life they quit caring?

How many simply acquiesced control?

What if we learn to identify the factors
that create containment?

What if we learn to take self control?

What if we cultivate learning that
rejects established patterns?

What if we created our own social controls?

How many have accepted the necessary
of levels docility, receptivity and obedience

To be determined for survival?

What if we let go of this social control?

Nature of Freedom

We play games and games have rules

Without rules there is no game

Without the game there are
no winners (or losers)

If rules are part of the game

And no rules, means no game

Can we construct different rules
to play a different game?

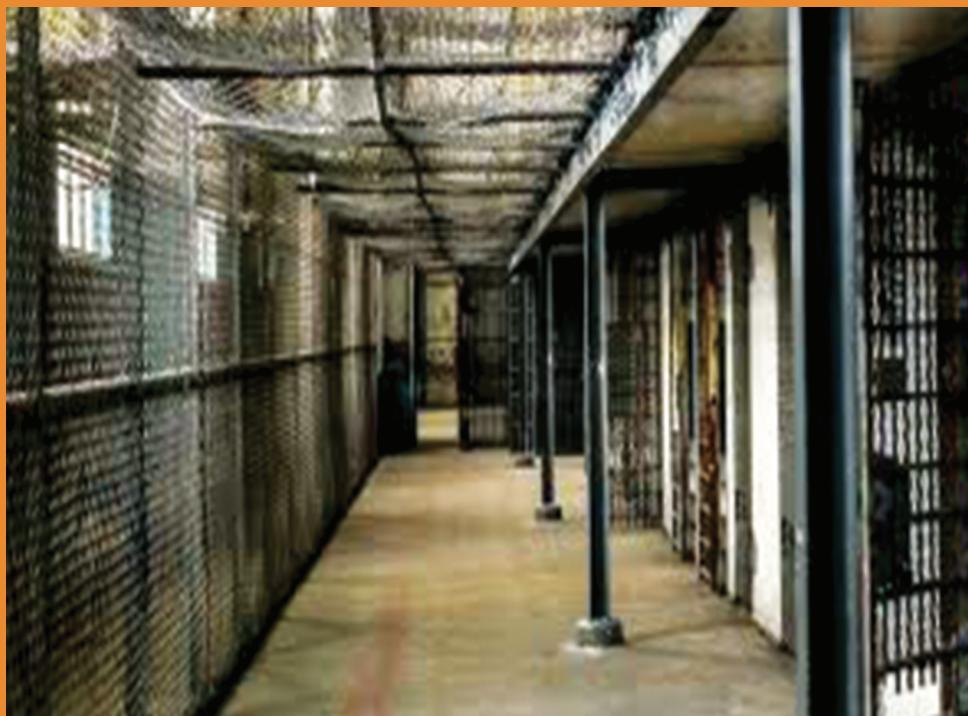
You see, revolt only occurs when
someone on the other side is perceived
as being unfair and the individual who
is imposing their will makes the game
unfair to play

Without the game what do we really
have?

The deck is stacked, the dice is loaded

The field is slanted and the sides
are mis-matched





Meaning of Purpose

The aims and methods of instruction

Is to prepare the young for future responsibility and success in life

Rules, Order and Patterns

Forced organization overrides concerns

Through learning the Discipline of acquisition is reinforced

Through navigating organized bodies of information

Forms the skills

Which in turn become evidence of comprehension

Multiplied actions

Of manifested conformity

Through standards

That prescribe normality

Progressive Organization of Subject Matter



Organization and relations are defined through interactions

Both principles are abstract only concrete in consequences

Which result from application

Objective Conditions

Experience promotes growth

By implication these conditions

Of observation, of memory of information

Have been procured from others imagination

Anything can be called a study

Arithmetic, history, geography or science

Are all derived from materials

which at the outset fall within the scope of ordinary life experience

Yet are abstractions at their core



Experience: Means and Goals

To accomplish ends for individuals and society experience must be controlled

Find possibility in the ordinary

Celebrate the failure you will experience

Be bold to walk your own path

Do not be afraid of the danger

you may find that resides in the

dark corners of your mind

See through artificial created

fear of the unknown

Embrace your inner other

Experience! Experiment!!

Develop your own direction

React against the standards

Reject others aims

Modify the prescribed methods

Celebrate your own gains

Create the rules for your own game!!!

Liner Notes

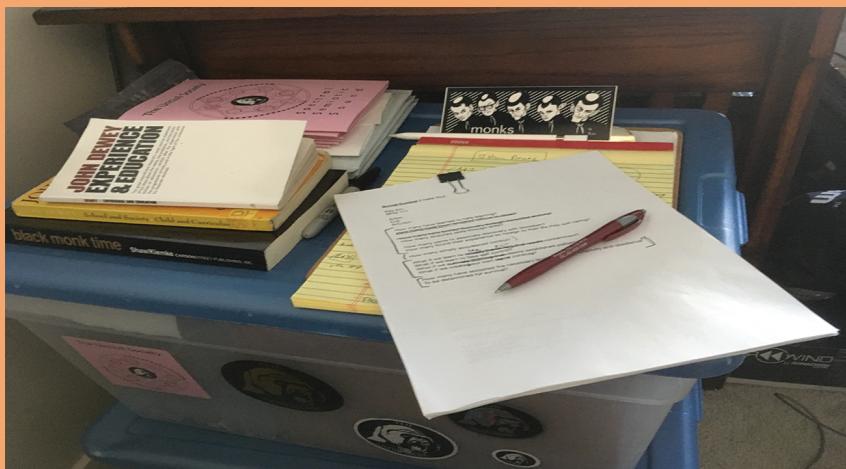
One morning last fall, at my son's school he showed me a mushroom patch that had grown near the entrance. The next day we brought a mushroom guide to school to identify what was growing. Once he was able to identify what he was experiencing he excitedly ran in to show his school friends pictures. The children then ran outside to look at the mushrooms and connect their experience in nature to the knowledge presented in the pictures. To see first hand how the children were excited and naturally curious. I realized that learning through discovery is easy and dare say fun. My question is why do we make learning hard by having it conform to standards and be prescribed by rules rote and repetition. For me, to see the rapid embrace of artificial intelligence to gain experience to be deeply troubling. This disconnect is manifesting through youth - heck my own children are more happy interacting with their screens than experiencing life in analogue.

John Dewey's philosophy is about learning by doing through play. This project explores the notions that Dewey espoused - of learning through experience and play. In researching the lyrics for this record I read a wide range of John Dewey books, including: "Experience and Education", "Art As Experience", "Democracy and Education", "School and Society" and "Child and Curriculum". Although his writing is a bit windy and overtly gendered, many of his core ideas ring true to this day.

Musically this project draws deeply from the Monks a quintessential band from the 1960's. The first time I heard of the Monks I was about ten years ago. In performing my duties as a student teacher, I felt obligated to encourage all students to succeed. While I admonishing a high school student for having a low grade in my class. She patiently feigned attention through my barrage of incessant questions about missing assignments and tests. After I was done, she held out a CD and said "honestly I could care less about any of that stuff that you are talking about, but this music is literally going to change your life." She put the disk on my desk and went back to her seat. True to her word, I didn't get any work from this student for the rest of the year. Because she had reversed the power dynamic on me in such a profound manner that I didn't listen to the disk out of spite for the rest of the school year. When I did finally listen to it, she was right, it did change my life, and dare I say, I cared a little bit less about missing work and quizzes.

In researching the music this project I read Thomas Shaw and Anna Klemke's biography "Black Monk Time". It was interesting to learn about the band's formation, growth, evolution and break through of discovering feedback and how they transmuted into a new revolutionary sound. From their experience and discovery they became liberated from being a cover band and found their own voice and identity. In many ways their experience validates the process of art and experience that John Dewey describes. Were they flawed? Absolutely! Has their lyrical ideas aged well? The protest songs? Yes! The rapey tinged ditties? Not so much. But does the idea of discovering a truly unique artistic expression through experience resonate deeply with me? Completely!!!

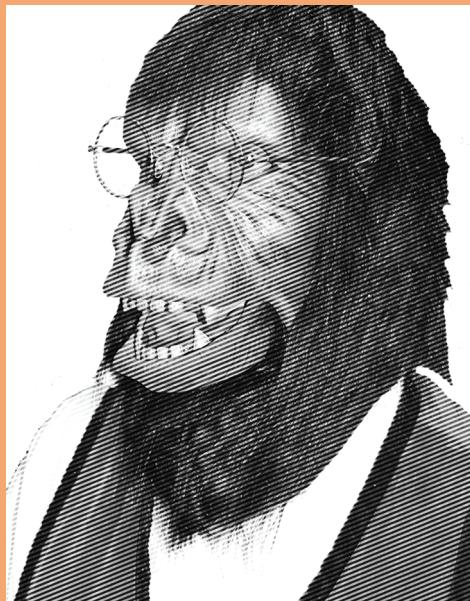
This notion manifested when in laying down my initial test tracks I overtightened my D string on the banjo and it popped. Embodying the spirit of Gary Monk, when swinging my banjo back and forth I discovered the loose string added a clink and clank counterstrike to the feedback. While creating this project I included adding a tube preamp for the vocals. It was interesting to learning how to adjust to a sound that you knew was warmer yet having to accept it because I was not accustomed to the smoother frequencies. This project also encountered the limits of GarageBand, while working on several songs a message informing me that I was at the processing limits of the program appeared. This made me accept that I may need to seek a more robust platform for not only recording, but also mastering future work. I exported the project to Adobe Audition and attempted to try my hand at mastering the project. As a life long learner, I am excited to learn the next step in the production process.



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*This Project was Arranged,
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Enjoy! . . .(or not)

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-John Dewey

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