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In Search of the American Dream

David Snelgrove, Oklahoma State University

Introduction

Many, today, refer to "the American Dream." Some say they came to the U.S. to realize this dream; some say they want the dream but have not discovered how to realize it; others declare the dream was never meant for them, and still others that it no longer exists if it ever did. From where did this supposed dream come? For whom was it meant? Has it ever been real and obtainable? Although key thinkers throughout history have examined the relation between individuals and society, theorized, and compiled thought experiments reflecting their conceptions for the ideal or good society, in his 1931 thematic people's history, *Epic of America*, historian James Truslow Adams (1878–1949) first coined the now familiar term, "American Dream," defining the Dream as

> …that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement. … It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of a social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.[1]

Adams wanted his readers to understand that although the American Dream is a society, each generation within that society must struggle to hold onto "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Later that decade, in the newly named John Dewey Society's first yearbook, The Teacher and Society (1937), philosopher John Dewey (1859–1952) applies Adam's term to education, asserting the teacher to be American's dream-keeper: "The American dream has not been of a golden age of the past…but of a better life possible of attainment in the…[not-too-distant] future."[2]

Here, I neither argue an American Dream exists as possibility, is alive and well, or is pie in the sky, nor do I posit a new vision for such a dream, mapping a path toward realizing it. Instead, I take the reader with me on my journey to identify and define the American Dream. I begin my journey highlighting key thinkers in philosophical history who examine society and individuals in society to discover the relation between the two. I then note

when many thinkers began moving away from philosophy to form the new disciplinary category, the social sciences, and how this social science perspective altered how thinkers conceptualized the Dream. I outline this history to underscore the American Dream's roots stretching thousands of years' deep into human history and philosophy—revealing the human desire and goal to achieve freedom, equal opportunities, and equal legal and political rights—before scholars began breaking from philosophy and the doubts philosophical reflection raises. Next, I zoom into colonial America and the early United States. To exemplify commonalities among the nation's founders, I examine Thomas Jefferson's (1743–1826) "dream" for the future United States before turning to early French tourist Alexander de Tocqueville's (1805–1859) wanting to see a utopian dream realizing itself before him or at least glimpse the possibility of its fulfillment on the landscape. I then weigh Josiah Royce's (1855–1916) desire to found and fulfill the Dream in Christian faith, a faith in which all might unite in loyalty, amidst the reality of a citizenry rife with differences: cultural, educational, economic, and religious to name a few. From Royce's faith- and loyalty-based model, I move to a human- and social-psychology-based model with Graham Wallas' (1858–1932) dual-public, Great or Mega Society, Walter Lippmann's (1889–1974) politically based Good Society, built upon the authority of centuries of Greek and European philosophical thought, and John Dewey's (1859–1952) reliance on the mutual influence between individuals and society to create community life, the symbol of his Great Community. Finally, after scattering contemporary political events before the reader, I ask the reader if those in the U.S. are living the American Dream, can see it on the horizon, believe it was or is possible. I ask readers to face the ongoing impact of mass communication, social media, and multiple technologies before asking themselves, "Is Adams' American Dream still viable?" and "What kind of community best serves our needs?"

From Philosophy to the Social Sciences

In *John Dewey, An Intellectual Portrait*, Sidney Hook (1902–1989) asserted:

> In one form or another, all the classic figures in ancient and modern philosophy have devised criteria for their concepts for a good society. The perplexities, fears, and hopes of their time and groups with which they associated themselves entered even into metaphysical constructions whose speculative towers disappeared, lost in the sky.[3]

If Hook was correct, all societies about which we have information have sought the Good Society we know as the "The American Dream," lands where people dream "speculative towers…in the sky." Indeed, since civilization's development after the agricultural revolution more than 10,000 years ago and the subsequent food surplus that made social institutions' creation possible, humans have interested themselves in how kinship groups, communities, societies, and larger social and political organizations function. In the *Republic* Plato (428/427 B.C.E.–348/347 B.C.E.) reports on

the Socratic concept of society. Socrates (384–322 B.C.E.) envisioned an egalitarian state of educated citizens whose happiness depended primarily upon fitting the citizen's nature, appetites, energy, creativeness, spirit, and desire for wisdom to the citizen's position in society.[4] Plato's student, Aristotle (384 B.C.E.–322 B.C.E.), rejected Plato's thought experiment in the *Republic* as utopian and too far removed from peoples' personal experiences to be viable. He desired, instead, a constitutional state where moral political leaders would lead morally equal citizens.[5]

Later writers often examined social life, writing utopian or dystopian literature and investigating the human condition via religious and philosophical texts.[6] After the Romans no longer dominated the British Isles (410 C.E.) and Europe (476 C.E.; 1453 C.E. for Eastern Roman Empire), Roman civilization's history, its development from kingdom to republic and from oligarchy to empire alongside Christianity's rise, created a blueprint for a successful society others could follow.[7] That blueprint did not deter thinkers living after Rome's decline from reconceptualizing the meaning and value of a good or ideal society. Renaissance political philosopher Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1597) not only critiqued society but suggested how to improve social order.[8] As bases for "the universal reform of human society," John Amos Comenius (1592–1657) introduced ideas of churches' ecumenical cooperation and governments' cooperation toward achieving international peace and equal, universal education for all children.[9] Unsurprisingly, Enlightenment thinkers also reconceptualized the ideal society. John Locke (1632–1704) argued for natural rights;[10] Montesquieu (1689–1755) advocated for distributing governmental powers;[11] Voltaire (1694–1778) criticized oppressive authority, intolerance, and the problems inherent in state religion;[12] Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) broke the "common man's" social, political, and economic chains to position individual liberty within a society with a social contract.[13] Immanuel Kant (1722–1804), emphasized the role of reason, the good will, the categorical imperative, and duty.[14] Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) asserted sex-segregated education denies boys practice for their adult reality living in a dual-sex society and denies women their educational, political, social, and economic rights, negatively affecting the whole society.[15] G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831) contended one can only be free in a society of others within a state minimizing lordship and bondage.[16] These philosophers repeatedly analyzed and critiqued society and the individual in society, theorizing how society and its individuals would function best while enjoying the most contentment. This repeated emphasis on society and the individual in society evolved into the subfield of social philosophy to which such early social philosophers as David Ricardo (1722–1823), Adam Smith (1723–1790), Johann Herbart (1776–1841), Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), Tomas Masaryk (1850–1937), and Emile Durkheim (1858–1917) contributed. Although such thinkers as Karl Marx (1818–1883), Friedrich Engles (1820–1895), Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936), and Max Weber (1864–1920) maintained strong connections to philosophy, they

supported a new analysis of society manifested in positivism's rise and the social and political revolutions of their times.[17] Signaling an even stronger shift to the social within philosophy, the 1908 International Conference for Philosophy in Heidelberg included seven disciplinary sections, the social-science sections of philosophy, "Psychology" and "Ethics and Sociology" among them.[18] As social analysis took new forms, these forms evolved into psychology, sociology, economics, and anthropology, forever separating from philosophy to become the new field of social science.[19]

Whether Plato, reporting on Socrates or speaking for himself, Aristotle, disagreeing with his teacher, the Renaissance Machiavelli, known for his unflattering assessment of his own society, the many Enlightenment idealists and pioneers, or those 19th- and 20th-century philosophers moving toward something not quite philosophy, thinkers throughout history have analyzed and critiqued society and the individual in society, always envisioning the good society, a society varying according to social and political circumstances, a society and individuals in that society who nevertheless would want to strive to realize their "American Dream."

Colonial American, Early U.S. Society, and the American Dream

When considering colonial America and the early U.S. in the context of a "good society," one turns first to Thomas Jefferson who conceptualized the new nation, the United States of America, as a good society, a society realizing many people's American Dream even in forming these United States. Just as Jefferson embraced such English and French political philosophers' ideals as John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's when drafting the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson continued to draw from these thinkers when conceptualizing and translating his own ideas into the new nation's plan for expansion, governing the new territories, and opening the land for individuals' purchase. When assembling this governing and land-ownership plan for the nation's expansion, Jefferson also drew from less-lofty sources, listening attentively to French revolutionaries' ideas and impressions and information the French press disseminated about the fledgling nation, some of which first appeared in his *Notes on Virginia*.[20] He then carefully considered them alongside Locke and Rousseau's political philosophies when planning the good society he envisioned for the Western Territories.[21] Jefferson wanted to shape the new nation's future as a good society by creating pre-planned communities easily organized as the republic expanded west, communities where all have opportunities, communities that would educate all at the public's expense because democracy relies upon it, and communities with a militia, government infrastructure, freedom from slavery, and statehood opportunities as the territory's population increased.[22]

Zooming in more closely, the ideas contributing to Jefferson's envisioning this good society, this dream, blur and recede as slavery comes into full view. How can one have

> …that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement…[?] … a dream of a social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position…[when slavery exists, excluding so many from this better, richer, fuller life, indeed imprisoning many in the institution, blocking them from the dream?][23]

The slavery reality indeed stared the founding fathers in the face, the obliteration of which all would not agree, its eradication pushed aside in favor of union against the British.[24] Nevertheless, it was as ever-present then as are its haunting shadows today. Jefferson worked to end this institution first in colonial America, then in the newly formed United States of America. In addition to speaking against slavery, Jefferson made anti-slavery provisions in "A Summary View of the Rights of British America" (1774), his draft of the Constitution of Virginia (1776), the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America (1776), and his book, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1785).[25] His fellows rejected each provision. Inconsistent and flawed as he was, Jefferson nevertheless repeatedly tried to effect slavery's end, only for powerful Southern landowners to thwart and cut him and his proposals back until finally silencing him. Slavery would block the nation's becoming a good society, prevent the American Dream, for, as Fredrick Douglas maintained, if even one person remains enslaved, all humankind are in shackles.[26] Passing the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 banning slavery west of the Ohio river was a rare win, though others, not Jefferson, received the credit.

Fifty years later, French historian, political philosopher, and diplomat, Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859), drew particularly from Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia* (1787) when structuring and composing his two-volume *Democracy in America* (1835; 1840).[27] Familiar with Jefferson's writing from an 1833, two-volume, French-published anthology,[28] de Tocqueville, like Jefferson, tried to describe the newly formed United States but with the additional task of explaining the various social organizations and economic provisions in place during Andrew Jackson's presidency (1829–1837). In the first volume (1835), writing an America which largely mirrored Jefferson and the nation's other founders' visions, an America in which "the equality of conditions is the fundamental fact which from all others seem to be derived, and the central point at which all…[his] observations constantly terminated,"[29] de Tocqueville tried to write an unbiased view of the new United States. In the second volume (1840), he expressed his views on democratic, egalitarian, and libertarian thinking's impact on social institutions, arts, literature, sciences, technology, and education, venting his feelings about U.S. democracy and its influences on its citizens'

lifestyles and world views. When defining U.S. philosophy early in *Volume II*, de Tocqueville even anticipated what became Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), William James (1842–1910), and John Dewey's (1859–1952) Pragmatism.

> The Americans have no philosophical school of their own; and they care but little for all the schools into which Europe is divided, the very names of which are scarcely known to them…. I discover, that in most of the operations of the mind, each American appeals to the individual exercise of his own understanding alone. America is therefore one of the countries in the world where philosophy is least studied, and where the precepts of Descartes are best applied. Nor is this surprising. The Americans do not read the works of Descartes, because their social condition deters them from speculative studies; but they follow his maxims, because this very social condition naturally disposes their understanding to adopt them.[30]

In subsequent chapters of *Volume II*, de Tocqueville analyzes the impact of the American ethos on personal feelings, manners, and political participation in U.S. society.

To his credit, de Tocqueville looked to learn if injustices perpetuated in Europe continued in the newly proclaimed democracy, or if, as aimed for, the new nation had eradicated injustices or was in the process of dissolving them. He specifically addresses women's, African slaves', indigenous peoples', and the minority's plight in the new nation. For example, de Tocqueville reveals himself a forward-thinking, "liberated" man (for 1835) as he views women's position in U.S. society:

> I do not hesitate to avow, that, although the women of the United States are confined within the narrow circle of domestic life, and their situation is in some respects one of extreme dependence, I have nowhere seen women occupying a loftier position.[31]

Looking further into the nation's social conditions, de Tocqueville noted the new nation's "superior" European majority's tyrannizing both the African slaves and the indigenous population: "Both of them occupy an inferior rank in the country they inhabit; both suffer from tyranny; and if their wrongs are not the same, they originate at any rate with the same authors."[32] Because this tyrannical behavior did not align with the nation's proclaimed democratic values, de Tocqueville agreed with Jefferson when identifying slavery as the most divisive, dangerous issue for the new, growing nation. Slaveholders remained unwilling to evolve their farms and businesses into a wage-labor economy; even many abolitionists maintained Black Africans to be intellectually inferior to Europeans; and John Dryden's (1672), and more contemporaneously, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1754), François-René de Chateaubriand (1801), James Fenimore Cooper (1826), Herman Melville (1851), and painter George Catlin's (1832) "noble savage" lived not in the everyday American's mind.

Despite the new nation's deficiencies, de Tocqueville comprehensively described the new nation, offering a model for societies' trying to build democratic social, political, legal, and economic systems in Europe while having to overcome centuries of aristocratic, social stratification under monarchic rule, similar to the French system with which he was most familiar.[33] The United States did not have centuries of class divisions, monarchic rule, and the same kind of political, legal, social, and economic inequities persisting in Europe, but the new nation did have its own tyrannies to overcome to realize the good society it imagined for itself, for it stratified its people by gender, race, economics, religion, and majority vs. minority opinions, among others. In the decades following publication of de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, the United States continued to expand west, even as slavery and attempts to exterminate the indigenous peoples persisted. After the 1860 election, the secession of states whose populations embraced slavery, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and segregation violently disrupted the Dream for democracy from flowering into a good society.

Loyalty to a Cause-Based Community, Universal Community, and the Unrealizable

As early as the 1880s, Josiah Royce (1855–1916) had attentively examined the nexus of religion and philosophy, for he steadfastly strove to identify and reconcile the relations between faith and reason, theology and philosophy.[34] In his *Religious Aspect of Philosophy* (1885), for example, Royce applied philosophical principles to religious problems, thereby recognizing doubt as necessary within one's philosophical reflections.[35] Reviewing Royce's book, Charles Sanders Peirce noted that while Royce recognized doubt as necessary to philosophic inquiry, he failed to realize that working to locate religion's origins is abductive, fallible act-seeking.

> Dr. Royce admits in words that belief is what a man will act from, but does not seem to have taken the truth of this proposition home to him, or else he would see that the whole end of inquiry is the settlement of belief.[36]

Later Royce contrasted various conceptions of Truth's source. He argued personal experience to be the source of human knowledge, a source and outcome that cannot approach the universal, absolute, or ideal—the "real" or "absolute" Truth.[37]

Although Royce could never fully divest himself from religious Truth's superseding his philosophical studies with its doubts and problems, he conceived his version of the good society[38] at the point he studied for years, at the problematic crossroads where religion and philosophy meet: community as personal loyalty to a cause.[39] Recognizing theories about communities rely upon unity, that many people from many different backgrounds comprise the United States, and that a society of such varied members tends to limit unity, forcing individuals to confront themselves, their stances, and their society's social units, Royce acknowledged and accepted that many selves constitute community, allowing for such community

variations as the political, geographic, religious, and ethnic.[40] Thus, Royce's community, emerging from personal loyalty to a cause, evolved into the universal community which depends upon the "metaphysical interpretation and foundation of the community," a universal community of mankind:[41] his version of the American Dream.

To educate children for personal loyalty to a cause, this superordinate goal that unites people in community, Royce proposed schools systematically include studies of heroes and adventures that would exemplify the kind of community that would emerge from personal loyalty to a cause.[42]

> First, our loyalty is trained and kept alive by the influence of personal leaders. Secondly, the higher forms of training for loyalty involve a momentous process which I shall call the Idealizing of the Cause. Thirdly, loyalty is especially perfected through great strains, labors, and sacrifices in the service of the cause.[43]

In his *Philosophy of Loyalty* (1914), Royce further developed the underpinnings for this concept of community, relating his concept of community to religion, affirming "devotion to God is inseparably bound up with his loyalty to the mystic union of the faithful in the church."[44] Anticipating Max Weber's (1864–1920) description of charismatic leaders and their importance, Royce expanded his notion that those sharing personal loyalty to a cause unite in community to include personal loyalty to a leader. Noteworthy, neither Royce nor Weber anticipated blind loyalty to leaders and their causes or accounted for charismatic organizations' doom when these organizations failed to integrate into society.[45] Surely unexamined loyalty might be noticeable as an eighth deadly sin, for even in 1914, lost causes and misplaced trust in leaders abounded!

Although the West teetered on the cusp of WWI when Royce published *The Problem of Christianity* (1913), by mid-1915, WWI was reality. Germany patrolled the Atlantic and torpedoed the Lusitania (May 7, 1915), virtually assuring the United States would enter the war. Having lost several friends and students on the Lusitania, a disheartened Royce defined the war as a fight for the "community of mankind" to achieve victory against the "enemy of mankind."[46] Royce nevertheless rallied in his vision for community, claiming "The hope of the community lies in trying to keep before us a vision of what the community of mankind may yet become despite this tragic calamity,"[47] noting with chagrin, "there seems to be some opposition between the political power of a nation and its power to contribute to the ideal goods of the community of mankind."[48] Indeed, blind leadership to such powerful nations' charismatic leaders and their causes weighed heavily toward the religion side of Royce's philosophy–religion nexus. Despite his acknowledging and accepting that many selves comprise community and despite his allowing for such community variations as the political, geographic, religious, and ethnic, Royce ultimately grounded his American Dream for all in faith, specifically Christian faith. Thus, his concept of community united in loyalty toward a cause could

not become the universal community he idealized, for his ideal was loyalty to a monistic—not pluralistic—community of humankind grounded in Christian faith whose single, charismatic-leader's good was probably the only reliable one he could imagine. Royce had created an American Dream doomed to failure because the country for which he envisioned it had never been monistic and, if adhering to the nation's constitutional foundations, never should be.

The Great Society

At Harvard in 1910, Graham Wallas (1858–1932) taught a seminar in politics. In this seminar sat Walter Lippmann (1889–1974) who found disquieting Wallas' defining politics as neither rational nor thoughtful but entrapped in personal prejudice, habit, and instinct.[49] Not unlike Ferdinand Tönnies (1855–1936) and Max Weber (1864–1920), Wallas surveyed modern industrial society in light of the social sciences. Interested in applying psychological constructs previously focused on individuals to the early-20th-century's changing societies, Wallas investigated the relation between human nature and political processes, concluding the relation to be more than "intellectual inferences" but also human memory, habit, and thought.[50] For Wallas, memory, habit, and thought modified humans' instinctive and impulsive behaviors that in turn interacted with political processes: human behaviors—human nature—in relation to the political.[51]

Concerned human socialization before the industrial revolution poorly prepared society for modernizing conditions, Wallas called modern life, in all its scientific and technological complexity and all its international interdependence and communication, a Great Society.[52] Wallas conceptualized this Great Society, this American Dream, as requiring thoughtful, reliable, and continuous leadership without which its future would be unsafe.[53] Wallas contended social psychology could guide human action based on "simple" and "complex" dispositions.[54] His simple dispositions included "Habit, Fear, Pleasure–Pain, Thought, and the intricate psychological facts covered by the terms Imitation, Sympathy, and Love and Hatred."[55] His complex dispositions included instinct and intelligence and dispositions "normally if not invariably" requiring intelligence: thought and language.[56] Apparently emerging from the scientific method, particularly positivism, Wallas' Great Society was less ideal than a predictable means of anticipating masses of humans' behaviors, and, based on their predictable behaviors, how to herd those humans into manageable groups.[57] Wallas perceived these manageable groups' developing by increasing disciplinary specialization: intellectual, religious, social, scientific, and technological.[58] Specialists compartmentalize, communicate with others like them who share the same knowledge base and communication patterns. To thwart these limiting tendencies, Wallas proposed a robust "science of social psychology [which] aims at discovering and arranging the knowledge which will enable us to forecast, and therefore to influence, the conduct of large numbers of human beings organised in societies."[59] Although this social

psychology's positivism, this removing philosophy and therefore doubt accompanying philosophical reflection from the equation for the Dream, would disturb Royce in his idealism, Wallas' positivism-steeped Dream seems no less doomed to failure than Royce's monistic society.

The Good Society

Because Walter Lippmann (1889–1974) caught William James' (1842–1910) attention through an article in which Lippmann questioned elitism in contemporary society, James located Lippmann, congratulated him on his writing, and instigated what became a lasting friendship.[60] Perhaps because of his friendship with James and Wallas, Lippmann, having helped found Harvard's Socialist Club in 1908, ultimately moved from his socialist worldview toward a democratic one.[61]

> [James]…was tolerant; he was willing to listen to what seems preposterous, and to consider what might, though queer, be true. And he showed that this democratic attitude of mind is every bit as fruitful as the aristocratic determination to ignore new and strange-looking ideas. James was a democrat. He gave all men and all creeds, any idea, any theory, any superstition, a respectful hearing.[62]

While James influenced Lippmann's tolerance and pragmatic attitude, George Santayana (1863–1952) kept him grounded in Greek and European philosophy's moralism: "our current statements of morality have their basis in authority rather than in human nature, and their goal in salvation rather than in happiness."[63] Built from centuries of Greek and European philosophical thought, this grounding in moralism and philosophical authority alongside the social climate of the 20th-century's first decade formed Lippmann's worldview.[64]

Thus, focusing on developing new ways to investigate and new ways to understand,[65] Lippmann conceptualized his Good Society by focusing on political rather than psychological themes, wielding the authority of centuries of Greek and European philosophical thought rather than brandishing the new social science of fickle human nature to drive political decisions.[66] As the fulcrum of power, politicians serve government, "a body of officials, some elected, some appointed, who handle professionally, and in the first instance, problems which come to public opinion spasmodically and on appeal."[67] Not statesmen *per se*, most such officials, familiar with government's workings, know how to compromise and locate the common good in new rules and laws. Indeed, Lippmann held no illusions about the efficacy of public opinion on public affairs. He observed ordinary citizens had little interest in government's larger concerns if those affairs did not directly interest or involve them. Therefore, Lippmann devised tests for aligning public opinion with action on governmental issues, the test for government's success being the public's assent and willing conformity. When

lacking the public's assent and conformity, politicians must investigate the rule or law's particulars to explicate to citizens its strengths and weaknesses before trying again to win their assent and conformity.[68]

Because he observed ordinary citizens took little interest in government affairs, Lippmann left little to chance when structuring his Good Society. Dividing citizens' responsibilities between government officials and the public at large, Lippmann delegated four tasks to politicians and three tasks to the public. He assigned politicians responsibility for 1) executive actions, 2) knowing an issue's intrinsic merits, 3) anticipating, analyzing, and solving a problem or an issue, and 4) identifying an issue's specific, technical, and intimate details. He charged the public with responsibility for 1) judging politicians' actions as self-interested or for the common good, 2) generating criteria for analyzing the government's actions, and 3) determining if the government's making, enforcing, or amending a rule reflects reasonable behavior.[69] Noting Lippmann's argument "turns essentially upon a distinction between the few insiders and the many outsiders, the insiders being the active forces, the outsiders being spectators, bystanders," John Dewey found Lippmann's analysis wanting.[70] He agreed with Lippmann's view of pluralistic tendencies, supported the idea that intelligence works to relieve conflicts and surmount difficulties while doubting Lippman's supposition that the many publics in the nation appeared only when they needed to hold political, social, and economic leaders accountable.[71] Lippman's supposition did not align with democracy as Dewey conceived it. Dewey underscored that Lippmann's 1925, *The Phantom Public*,

> expresses a revolt not against democracy but against a theory of democracy which…has distracted the understanding and inflamed the passions, and thereby enormously increased the difficulties of democratic government. For to be workable[,] democracy demands allayed passions and clarified understanding.[72]

Dewey perceived such an analysis as constructive, even though it resulted in Lippmann's truncated view of the public's role in a democracy:[73] "Executive action is not for the public. The intrinsic merits of a question are not for it."[74] Instead, Lippmann considered the public remote and "not…a fixed body of individuals. It is merely those persons who are interested in an affair and can affect it only by supporting or opposing the actors."[75] For Dewey, neither Wallas' conception of social psychology nor Lippmann's view of plural publics could adequately assuage the Great or Good Society's inherent causal problems and dangers to democracy.[76]

Responding to authoritarian and totalitarian states' rise in 1937, Lippmann analyzed the Industrial Revolution's impact and organizational requirements for social change. Inciting movement from small-scale, rural communities and self-sufficient lifestyles toward large-scale, interdependent communities in cities, the Industrial Revolution significantly altered U.S.

society into a Good Society where "the increasing division of labor in ever-widening markets; the machine, the corporation, the concentration of economic control and mass production" dominated.[77] Asserting Liberalism to be the philosophy of the Industrial Revolution, Lippmann was concerned modern,

> …latter-day liberalism had changed from the historic liberalism of Adam Smith (1723–1790) [whose] basic insight into the division of labor was a genuine and a momentous scientific generalization which cannot be obsolete until some radically new mode of production comes into being…. The purpose of liberal reform is to accommodate the social order to the new economy; that end can be achieved only by continual and far-reaching reform of the social order.[78]

The tenets of modern liberalism consisted of free-market enterprise with a robust division of labor, democracy, the inviolability of individuals, personal equality before the law, protection of individual rights, access to education, and equal opportunity.[79] He found most modern liberals to be "collectivists in their conception of the economy, authoritarians in their conception of the state, totalitarians in their conception of society."[80] For Lippmann, the Industrial Revolution caused the reaction to the social change, stirred collectivism's emergence.[81] This collectivism consisted of differently based ideas of the state.[82] Although the gradual collectives might be the corporate structures of private enterprises, workers' unions, or political movements that worked legally to change the economy's structure,[83] authoritarian collectivism dominated societies' employing it, "abolish[ed] the diversity and contrariness of human purposes,"[84] taking control of society's every aspect. In contrast, recognizing "all men are persons, and are not to be treated as things"[85] meant

> [T]he liberal state is not to be conceived as an earthly providence administering civilization. That is the essence of the matter. To the liberal mind the notion that men can authoritatively plan and impose a good life upon a great society is ignorant, impertinent, and pretentious.[86]

Therefore, Lippmann's liberal state's task was to protect rights and dispense justice among individuals and enterprises.[87] Unlike Wallas, who focused on the social sciences to inform the development of society,[88] Lippmann's American Dream, the Good Society, required recognizing social institutions, government, corporate enterprises, and individuals' roles in making society more equitable and humane than it currently was. He suggested one avenue for achieving this Dream to be charting citizens' place in democratic society by focusing civics education on society's structural components.[89]

From Great Society to Great Community

In *Human Nature and Conduct* (1922), John Dewey posited the key to social psychology lies not in the operation of instincts but in understanding the importance of habit: "seemingly instinctive, feeling of the direction and end of various lines of behavior is in reality the feeling of habits working below direct consciousness."[90] Indeed, "the experience upon which…[our ideas and sensations] depend is the operation of habits—originally of instincts."[91] Thus, for Dewey, social psychology should focus on collective habits and customs and their impact upon individuals they affect.[92] Although human nature, its instinct, impulse, and intelligence work secondarily to habits and customs, understanding human nature remained vital to that understanding, inciting Dewey to examine its modifiability, role in social arrangements, and relation to cultural behaviors.[93] Because Dewey also wrestled with the distinction between "democracy as a social idea and political democracy as a system of government,"[94] he kept democracy before him during his investigation into social psychology and human nature, for he contended effective democracy must "affect all modes of human association, the family, the school, industry, religion."[95] To investigate social psychology and human nature, Dewey identified four questions: 1) How does human nature affect social arrangements? 2) How modifiable is human nature? 3) Does a fixed range of human natures among individuals or groups exist? 4) Are some individuals or groups' natures superior or inferior to others?[96] Significant to understanding the American Dream Dewey ultimately constructed, Dewey's four questions touch upon the relation between the individual and society, for social contacts and associations influence an individual's habits, and "All…actions of an individual bear the stamp of his community."[97] In Dewey's American Dream,

> The life of the community in which we live and have our being is the fit symbol of this [symbolic] relationship. The acts in which we express our perception of the ties which bind us to others are its only rites and ceremonies.[98]

Dewey proposed community life as his alternative to Wallas' Good and Lippmann's Great Society, conceptualizing the Great Community as missing from the Good and Great Societies that "invaded and partially disintegrated the small communities of former times without generating a Great Community" to replace them.[99] Perhaps it was in the neighborhoods and boroughs of New York City that Dewey found his optimism for the Great Community. Those neighborhoods served the same function as former rural communities with formal and informal local associations and interactions, social and economic functions, religious and moral ideas, and institutional and political functions. What are the conditions "under which the Great Society may become the Great Community[?]"[100]

Individual involvements in social groups and those groups' responses to individuals' needs created the conditions for Dewey's concept of community life, life in which "genuinely shared interest in the consequences of interdependent activities may inform desire and effort"[101] thereby directing action. Dewey found "association itself is physical and organic, while communal life is moral, that is emotionally, intellectually, consciously sustained."[102]

> We are born organic beings associated with others, but we are not born members of a community. The young have to be brought within the traditions, outlook and interests which characterize a community by means of education: by unremitting instruction and by learning in connection with the phenomena of overt association. Everything which is distinctively human is learned, not native.[103]

For Dewey one derives knowledge through lived experience, social interaction, and education.

Continuing by expanding upon education's role in forming and sustaining the Good Community, Dewey identified formal and informal education as localized activities, responsive to social relations and dependent upon the social and intellectual environments' communication to the young.[104] He saw improving communication in the social and intellectual environments as essential, especially for the young, for he observed a "state of imbalance, of profoundly disturbed equilibrium between our physical knowledge and our social–moral knowledge" existed.[105]

The American Dream Today

Thomas Jefferson envisioned a growing, agricultural United States with workers and tradespeople organized in townships with their own schools for all children paid at the public's expense, their own militia, and their own governments designed equally to serve, protect, and support their citizens. Increasing industrialization, big business, sectionalism, and, as he foresaw, slavery's debilitating stronghold soon made the specifics of his vision unviable while its democratic underpinnings remained.[106] Adding his observations to Jefferson's, de Tocqueville noted the new nation had indeed freed itself from European aristocratic and monarchic structures, endowing all citizens with political power while still remarking obstacles to the nation's achieving its declared democratic goal—legal and political equality, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" for all people on U.S. soil—an unrealizable dream as long as slavery and indigenous peoples' oppression remained intact.[107] Josiah Royce conceived community as quasi-religious, absolutist, and united in loyalty to a common cause and then to a leader for that cause. Given the many differences across U.S. society, he could not fathom how so many people with so many differences could or would sustainably unite in loyalty to both cause and leader, especially

once he realized he could not separate his vision from his Christian morals and beliefs. Graham Wallas constructed his Great Society to embody the Industrial Era's ever-increasing emphasis on specialization that social psychology not only informed but drove. Walter Lippmann extended Wallas' analysis of the Industrial Revolution (1790s–early 1900s) and the division of labor through specialization to the political sector. When dividing public responsibilities into politicians' and the general public's duties, Lippmann assigned politicians an exalted place, something Dewey could not rationally align with democracy. Instead, Dewey emphasized the mutual exchange between individuals and community that created community life, conceptualizing that Great Community as "a society in which the ever-expanding and intricately ramifying consequences of associated activities shall be known in the full sense of that word, so that an organized, articulate Public comes into being."[108] Leaping the approximately 75 years since Dewey's death, I ask, "What of the American Dream today? Is Adams' American Dream still viable? What kind of community best serves our needs?"

Today, the latest desire within U.S. government seems to be to create a new, monistic and authoritarian society. The constitutional mandate for separation of powers—not Lippmann's dual publics—into executive, legislative, and judicial now exists in print only, not practice. Loyalist Republicans dominate Congress, and the U.S. Supreme Court justices, in conservative majority, impede the executive unwillingly and neither much nor often. The Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation increasingly investigate the executive branch's political rivals, drawing attention away from their public obligations to solve such nationally occurring crimes as human trafficking, child exploitation, and drug-cartel activities. Seemingly, only the most conservative members of the deteriorating two-party system feel free seriously to challenge their less-conservative conservatives with the so-called liberals, the Democrats, offering little organized resistance. Under the guise of efficiency and economy, a *blitzkrieg* of executive orders overwhelms political opponents and government professionals, force dismantling governmental infrastructure, and replace civil servants with loyal cronies.[109] Consolidating government departments and eliminating unprofitable or unwanted international and domestic programs create a government format in which the unchecked Chief Executive curtails or eliminates unprofitable, if compassionate and "nation-healthy," social services and public health care while revoking or cutting research funding after a "word search" for, I would argue, democratic language, investigates private speech, arrests participants peacefully assembling, revokes and restricts students and tourists' visas, revokes rights and denies care for the gender different, all repeatedly underscoring the Compassionless Society, the For-Profit Society, the society honoring the most vulnerable with the least compassion, care, and vision for the nation's future.

Federal administrators turn away emigrants and systematically remove immigrants. Having created an offshore gulag for expatriating undesirable and/or unwanted immigrants without due process, the government authorizes immigration arrests by quota, encouraging officers to neglect cartel, human trafficking, and child exploitation investigations, instead detaining and deporting most anyone within their reach.[110] This Executive-designed and -instigated process negates immigrants' desires and opportunities for a better, safer life even at the bottom of U.S. society. As part of editing and rewriting history, not-so-anonymous powers are erasing women's and minorities' accomplishments and contributions and eliminating uncomfortable truths from the record. Government forbids Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in language and action along with limiting or crushing verbalized opinions in discord with those it authorizes, often punishing such institutions as public schools and universities by withholding funding, representation, and recognition should they fail to comply. Although as a social institution, public education has always been at the public's service, it has also been subject to the needs and desires of governing representatives. That subjugation now noticeably extends beyond public common schools and public higher education institutions to private schools, universities, and career-tech centers. The federal government increasingly supports private and home schooling and controls public schools, long considered a state and local province granted in the U.S. Constitution, mandating their philosophies, curricula, and teaching methods and strategies.[111] Thus is the new American Dream.[112] If teachers remain America's dream-keepers, not-so-anonymous powers are forcing them to keep it to themselves, killing the dreams, killing the dreamers, killing the dream-keepers. Do you have a dream, an American Dream? Is it a dream cast within democracy or one democracy cannot recognize? Critically, is your American Dream a society welcoming "we the people" to come together in legal and political equality, justice, and in life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

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