

Chapter 3

Pragmatism and the Cultivation of Digital Democracies

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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1991, Tim Berners-Lee brought the first websites online at CERN to share code for a project that “aims to allow links to be made to any information anywhere.”¹ Although there were many technical developments that preceded the creation of the World Wide Web, it would not be hyperbole to point to this advancement as marking a qualitative leap in the history of human communication.² That same summer, I began my graduate education in philosophy at the New School for Social Research. As the world of human communication decisively shifted, I found myself moving into a tiny Manhattan apartment on 33rd Street and 3rd Avenue in no small part because Richard Bernstein is, as his father was, an excellent salesman.³

I first met Dick Bernstein at a recruitment visit to the New School for Social Research in the spring of 1991. When I introduced myself, he immediately recognized me as the author of a paper on “Friendship in Aristotle,” which I had submitted as a writing sample with my application. He said he really liked the paper, but he didn’t think I had the account of a friend as a second self quite right. Although I do not recall the details of his critique—memory, happily, being selective—I remember well feeling at once affirmed in my work and challenged to improve it. That was the moment I decided to attend the New School for graduate training. Although I did not yet have the vocabulary for it, what I experienced that spring for the first time was the transformative power of a particular way of practicing philosophy, philosophy itself being, at its best, a practice capable of deepening and enriching our relationships with the world and those we encounter in it. More than any determinate philosophical content, what I learned from Bernstein was a way of doing philosophy rooted in an unwavering commitment to pluralism, a deep recognition of

human fallibility, and an assiduous, indeed, an erotic desire to pursue truth in community with others. If on a global scale the summer of 1991 marks a qualitative shift in the history of human literacy and communication, at a personal level, it marked the beginning of an education in the practices of philosophy informed and animated by the “engaged fallibilistic pluralism” articulated in the work and embodied in the person of Richard Bernstein.⁴

Weaving these events together into a single narrative here at the beginning suggests the direction of the present investigation. As technology enables us to communicate with one another in unpredictable ways that allow for an unprecedented public exchange of diverse ideas, cultivating the philosophical habits of an engaged fallibilistic pluralism gains in urgency.

The emergence of the World Wide Web calls us to consider how an ethics of philosophy might enable us to cultivate practices of communication capable of creating enriching communities in a digital age.

PART I: CRISIS AND TECHNOLOGY

The rhetoric of “crisis” has become hackneyed and is too often invoked to evoke a destructive kind of reactionary fear, but it is nonetheless appropriate to speak of a crisis of human communicative transaction in the wake of the appearance of the World Wide Web on the human scene.⁵ Never has it been easier to publish ideas widely, yet never more difficult to integrate them into enriching and creative publics; as information becomes increasingly accessible, meaningful community remains elusive. If we attend, as Bernstein suggests, to its roots in the ancient Greek word *krinein* which means to separate, discern, and decide, we can hear in the word “crisis,” an invitation to critique. For Bernstein, critique “lives in the unstable gap” that “highlights the disparity between what is taken as given and what should be. Critique always presupposes some ideal in the name of which we engage in critique.”⁶ Taking up such a critical ideal, perhaps we might hear in all our talk of “crisis” an attempt to discern the intellectual and ethical habits that will enable us to live well in the networked public the World Wide Web opens to us.⁷

Ours, of course, is not the first nor will it be the last crisis brought on by the emergence of a new technology. Already in the *Phaedrus*, Socrates gives voice to the anxiety that the technology of writing might damage our human capacities to remember. There Socrates asks Phaedrus to reflect upon a story in which Theuth, inventor of the art of writing, boasts to Thamus, the king of Egypt, that he had “discovered a drug [*pharmakon*] for memory and wisdom.”⁸ As usual, Plato chooses Socrates’s words carefully; for a *pharmakon* can have felicitous or deleterious effects depending on the conditions under which it is administered. To speak of the technology of writing

as a *pharmakon* is to emphasize at once the affordances and the limitations endemic to the potencies of technology. Our contemporary talk of “crisis” is similarly inflected, though the anxiety it evokes suggests an impoverished ideal of what should be and a lack of confidence in our ability to cultivate capacities of human flourishing in a networked digital age.

If Heidegger is right that “technology is a mode of revealing,” the space it opens is infused with potencies enabling and debilitating at once.⁹ Theuth’s “*pharmakon*” gestures to just such a site; but the medical language points also to a distinction between the potencies of a drug and the effective habits of its application. If technology is a *pharmakon*, its power depends as much on the experience, habits, and character of the doctor and patient as it does on the material properties of the drug itself. This distinction opens a space in which to think the dynamic interaction between the materiality of a technology and the effective capacities associated with it.

A second story from the Platonic dialogues offers us some purchase on the dynamics of this interaction. In the dialogue that bears his name, Protagoras introduces the story of Prometheus who came to the aid of his brother, Epimetheus, when he had run out of abilities to distribute among the animals once he finally came to humans. Concerned for the very survival of the species, Prometheus contrived to steal “technical wisdom [*entechnon sophian*] from Hephaestus and Athena, along with fire.”¹⁰ As Protagoras tells it: “in this way, humans at that time acquired wisdom enough to stay alive, but yet still did not have the art of politics [*politikē*].”¹¹ If technical wisdom enabled humans to survive, it alone was insufficient to ensure human flourishing. Without the virtues associated with the art of politics, humans were soon devoured by wild beasts, and when they sought to form communities, they injured one another. Seeing this, Zeus dispatched Hermes to the mortal world bearing the gifts of justice [*dikē*] and respect for others [*aidōs*], political virtues that enable humans to “create bonds of friendship.”¹² If a certain technical skill secures survival, these virtues, a sense of justice, and a concern for how one appears before others, empowers humans to live well together and to flourish. Zeus, for his part, instructs Hermes to “give every single one” of us humans a share of this capacity to discern justice and cultivate respect for others.¹³

The story suggests that technology emerges as a response to human finitude; it arises from a need to redress the incapacities endemic to our human nature. But even as it opens new possibilities of connection and meaning, it can never wholly surmount the finite conditions from which it arises. Freud eloquently understates the point when he writes: “Man has, as it were, become a kind of prosthetic God. When he puts on all his auxiliary organs he is truly magnificent; but those organs have not grown on to him and they still give him much trouble at times.”¹⁴ The version of the founding myth of technology Protagoras tells emphasizes both the terrible trouble and the magnificent

opportunity by separating the gifts of technical wisdom Prometheus delivers from the gifts of political wisdom Zeus bestows. The allure of technology has always been rooted in the Promethean promise that our finitude might ultimately be overcome, that we might, in fact, become prosthetic gods. But the story too is a cautionary tale of the debilitating effects of technology untempered by the cultivated habits of human political life.

These early myths of technology point already to a crisis that opens a space of practice long associated with the activity of philosophy. Bernstein identifies this opening as public space:

“When individuals sense that they are living through a period of crisis, when foundations seem to be cracking and orthodoxies breaking up, then a public space is created in which basic questions about the human condition can be raised anew.”¹⁵ This public space is a site of philosophical practice not simply because it raises the question of the human condition anew, but also because it is a gathering site of human community. Although philosophy has, over the past century, been widely understood primarily as an academic discipline, a deeper history points to philosophy as an active and collaborative response to the crisis endemic to human finitude itself.¹⁶ At least since Socrates took up the practice of philosophy as a response to the Delphic injunction to “Know Thyself,” philosophy has been a kind of ethics which, when practiced in and with a public, becomes politics.¹⁷ Philosophy has always been an ethico-political practice. In *The New Constellation*, Bernstein deploys this hyphenated formulation to invoke and amplify the ancient understanding of the “symbiotic relation between ethics and politics.” He goes on then to articulate the meaning of ethics and politics that informs our consideration here of the ethics of philosophy in a digital age.

Ethics is concerned with *ēthos*, with those habits, customs and modes of response that shape and define our *praxis*. Politics is concerned with our public lives in the *polis*—with the communal bonds that at once unite and separate us as citizens. The essential link between *ēthos* and *polis* is *nomos*. Although we can distinguish ethics and politics, they are inseparable. For we cannot understand ethics without thinking through our political commitments and responsibilities.¹⁸

In the wake of the technological crisis that opens with the emergence of a world-wide networked public, a consideration of our political commitments and responsibilities invites us to articulate the nomological contours of our public practices so we might be better able to cultivate in and with the public, habits of communicative transaction that enrich rather than impoverish “the communal bonds that at once unite and separate us as citizens.”

If, as Bernstein suggests, the essential link between the ethical and the political is a certain *nomos*, a cultivated collection of embodied habits, and if, as he suggests elsewhere, “the task of philosophy today is to elicit in us the type of questioning that can become a counterforce against the contemporary deformation of *praxis*,” then the task this crisis of communicative technology sets before us, both philosophically and politically, is to cultivate those intellectual and ethical habits of inquiry and communicative transaction capable of enriching the public lives we share.¹⁹

To discern something of the intellectual and ethical habits of inquiry and thus of communicative transaction capable of resisting the deformation of *praxis* in a digital age, it will be helpful to return to Peirce, and specifically to his early essay, published in 1868 in the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, entitled “Some Consequences of Four Incapacities.” Bernstein has pointed to this essay and its sister, published in the same journal earlier that year, “Questions Concerning Certain Faculties Claimed for Man,” as two texts that are “essential for understanding pragmatism.”²⁰ This is in part because they so eloquently articulate Peirce’s critique of Cartesianism, at the heart of which is an attempt to wean philosophy from its obsession with foundational certainties and reductive methods of inquiry.²¹ For Bernstein, this obsession is connected with what he calls the “Cartesian Anxiety” that colors our attempts to come to terms with human finitude.²² For Bernstein, “Cartesian Anxiety” is not limited to Descartes; rather it names the broad human desire for certainty in an uncertain world. Bernstein calls it a “construct” that enables us to identify, analyze, and cultivate productive responses to an anxiety that arises from deep human desire for secure foundations in a finite life in which such stability is denied to us. Philosophy is at root a response to the world in which we find our finite selves. It lives at the unsettled site of crisis in which our human critical capacities engage our finitude most deeply. The crisis of technology is but a symptom of this deeper, existential crisis to which the practice of philosophy is a powerful and potentially transformative response.

The transformative effects of the practices of philosophy can only be enriching if they are not overdetermined by Cartesian anxiety in their response to the finite condition under which they always operate. When such anxiety animates our philosophical practices, the rich and diverse possibilities opened by the life of philosophy become severely constricted. Bernstein puts it this way: “Philosophers—especially since the beginnings of modern philosophy—have been plagued by the anxiety that unless we can discover fixed, indubitable foundations, we are confronted with intellectual and moral chaos, radical skepticism, and self-defeating relativism.”²³ Peirce charts a philosophical response to Cartesian anxiety that refuses this restrictive dichotomy between rigid foundationalism and fluid relativism by outlining the contours of what Bernstein will later call “engaged fallibilistic pluralism.” For Peirce,

however, this philosophical response is at its core a mode of inquiry, while for Bernstein, who draws deeply upon the thinking of John Dewey in this regard, engaged fallibilistic pluralism is a cultivated mode of communicative transaction capable of nurturing responsive publics and cultivating the habits of responsible communities. With engagement comes the public practices of dialogue, with fallibilism, a hopeful humility, and with pluralism, a graceful generosity that together gesture to an ethics of philosophy capable of enriching the diverse communities of a networked public. Yet ultimately what animates engaged fallibilistic pluralism as a philosophical response to the finite condition in which we find ourselves is a powerful and peculiar sort of idealism capable of disrupting the impoverishing habits of a misshapen reality by opening us to new possibilities of more humane, and more candidly human, relationships with one another. Here too Peirce's essay on "Four Incapacities" proves an instructive guide.

PART II. THE CULTIVATED PRACTICES OF A COMMUNITY OF INQUIRERS

In "Some Consequences of Four Incapacities," Peirce, like Prometheus, begins with a recognition of certain mortal incapacities. Specifically, for Peirce, we humans have no capacity to intuit or introspect that would provide certainty, and no capacity to think without signs, or to conceive the uncognizable.²⁴ But unlike Prometheus, Peirce seeks not to transcend these incapacities, but rather to integrate them into an account of inquiry properly attuned to the finite nature of human being.

This can be discerned most clearly in the stance Peirce takes against Cartesianism at the start of the essay; for here he delineates four dimensions of a philosophical disposition at home in the finite world of human communicative transaction. Bernstein calls this philosophical disposition a "pragmatic *ethos*" and goes on to identify it with engaged fallibilistic pluralism.²⁵ In these initial passages of the "Four Incapacities" essay, we find then the inchoate seeds of an ethics of philosophy at once attuned to human finitude and alive to the transformative possibilities that emerge when human communicative transaction is informed by the cultivated habits of engaged fallibilistic pluralism.

First, Peirce affirms human historicity by denying the promise of Cartesian doubt to uncover a "certain and unshakeable" Archimedian point upon which to rest our experience of the world.²⁶ In a striking anticipation of both Heidegger and Gadamer, Peirce writes: "we must begin with all the prejudices which we actually have when we enter upon the study of philosophy."²⁷

Gadamer, drawing explicitly on Heidegger's articulation of the fore-structure of Dasein in *Being and Time*, puts it in these provocative terms: "it is not so much our judgments as it is our prejudices that constitute our being."²⁸ "Prejudices," Gadamer continues,

are not necessarily unjustified and erroneous, so that they inevitably distort the truth. In fact, the historicity of our existence entails that prejudices, in the literal sense of the word, constitute the initial directedness of our whole ability to experience. Prejudices are biases of our openness to the world.²⁹

Drawing Peirce into dialogue with Gadamer, Bernstein emphasizes the important distinction between "blind" and "enabling" prejudices to which this passage gestures.³⁰ When Peirce insists that philosophy must begin with prejudices, he not only criticizes the self-deception of Cartesian doubt, but he also anticipates the enabling prejudices Gadamer later called the "justified prejudices productive of knowledge."³¹ Our openness to the world is situated, conditioned by intellectual and ethical habits that are better recognized and conscientiously addressed than repressed and delusionally denied.

But, to recognize the enabling and blind prejudices endemic to all human experience is not only to affirm human situated historicity, it also enjoins the cultivation of habits of inquiry attuned to human fallibility. This fallibility, the reality that no individual can claim truth with absolute assurance, is further amplified by the second denial of the spirit of Cartesianism to which Peirce appeals.

Rejecting the conceit that only "clear and distinct" ideas are true, Peirce affirms our incapacity to approach the truth in isolation from a community of inquirers.³² If the Cartesian attempt to dispel prejudice is delusional, for Peirce, its attempt "to make single individuals absolute judges of truth is most pernicious."³³ There is here an unacknowledged Xenophanean theme at work, for Xenophanes insists: "But from the beginning the gods did not reveal all things to mortals, but by seeking they discover better in time."³⁴ For Peirce, as for Xenophanes, the pursuit of truth is animated by a desire to discover better over time, not by the delusion that truth reveals itself fully in clear and distinct ideas conceived by individuals in isolation from one another, divorced by doubt from the finite world we inhabit. However, for Peirce, to discover better in time, we must seek together in community and with discipline and candor. Thus he writes:

We individually cannot reasonably hope to attain the ultimate philosophy which we pursue; we can only seek it, therefore, for the *community* of philosophers. Hence, if disciplined and candid minds carefully examine a theory and refuse to accept it, this ought to create doubts in the mind of the author of the theory itself.³⁵

Here the recognition of fallibilism becomes a call to community. Peirce is led to this appeal to community not by political considerations, but by a concern for the practices of a philosophy at peace with its own finitude.

In this passage, Peirce mentions without emphasizing two important habits the community ought to embody in its collective practices of inquiry: discipline and candor. Philosophy is a communal activity, assiduous and sober at once, disciplined in its tenacious pursuit of truth, candid in its recognition of the provisional nature of its discoveries. Cultivating the intellectual and ethical habits of discipline and candor enables the community of philosophers to steal itself against the more disheartening dimensions of the finite condition under which it knowingly operates.

If there is already here a certain pluralism at work in Peirce's insistence upon an engaged community of disciplined and candid inquirers, it is amplified and deepened by the third denial of Cartesianism to which Peirce points. In contrast to the multiple forms of argumentation embraced during the middle ages, the spirit of Cartesianism seeks to reduce argumentation to a "single thread of inference" that depends upon certain incontrovertible premises.³⁶ For Peirce, this reductive strategy has impoverishing effects. Our inability to intuit, introspect, and think without signs require us to rely upon a plurality not only of people, but also of arguments. Here Peirce introduces a powerful metaphor of philosophical reasoning, which, he says, "should not form a chain which is no stronger than its weakest link, but a cable whose fibers may be ever so slender, provided they are sufficiently numerous and intimately connected."³⁷

Like traditional foundationalism, the cable metaphor is architectural, but it seeks stability in a much more dynamic way. The cable is strengthened by a plurality of intimately connected fibers woven together to bear whatever load it can by distributing the tension between them. The larger the number and the more tightly interwoven the individual fibers, the more load it is able to bear. If Cartesian foundationalism is built upon the certainty of clear and distinct ideas independently intuited by individuals isolated from one another and the world they inhabit, Peircean fallibilism settles into the finite world of contested truth, finding what stability it can in the community of inquirers and strength in the fibers woven together in shared pursuit of truth. For the community of inquirers, then, truth functions as a kind of regulative ideal, the search for which tightens the tension of the ties that bind the community and enables it "to discover better in time."

An initial articulation of Peirce's regulative idealism can be heard in the fourth and final point he brings to bear against the spirit of Cartesianism. Here his criticism is that Cartesianism leaves many facts unexplained or, what for Peirce amounts to the same thing, simply posits God as the explanation. The result is that Cartesianism renders many facts "absolutely inexplicable."³⁸

This, for Peirce, is a sure sign that it is an unidealistic philosophy: “Every unidealistic philosophy supposes some absolutely inexplicable, unanalyzable ultimate; in short, something resulting from mediation itself not susceptible of mediation.”³⁹ Cartesianism, of course, would not itself admit of an unanalyzable ultimate insofar as it presumes to have access through intuition and introspection to a clear and distinct idea of God capable of serving as the foundational principle of explanation. This is, for Peirce, simply a delusion; it amounts to a resignation of the pursuit of explanation, and is anathema: “To suppose the fact absolutely inexplicable, is not to explain it, and hence this supposition is never allowable.”⁴⁰ The vehemence with which he rejects this supposition testifies to the central importance a certain idealism has for Peirce. Yet it is an idealism with deep realist roots; indeed, it is an idealism that roots the community in the real.

Peirce turns his attention to this issue toward the end of the essay, when again he rejects the conceivability of what is absolutely incognizable and insists that if “the real” is to have any meaning at all, it must be cognizable in some way.⁴¹ He then traces our cognition of the real “back to the ideal first, which is quite singular, and quite out of consciousness.” He goes on in an identifiably Kantian vein: “This ideal first is the particular thing-in-itself. It does not exist *as such*. That is, there is no thing which is in-itself in the sense of not being relative to the mind, though things which are relative to the mind doubtless are, apart from that relation.”⁴² The reference to the “thing-in-itself” evokes Kantian thinking, and lends credibility to calling the ideal to which Peirce here gestures “regulative” in the Kantian sense. Kant, for his part, makes a distinction between constitutive and regulative principles. The former are the necessary conditions under which objects are cognized at all, while the latter are rules governing experience in general. Kant introduces the idea of a regulative principle as a rule “prescribing a regress in the series of conditions for given appearances, in which regress it is never allowed to stop with an absolutely unconditioned.”⁴³ Later he expands upon this to emphasize the capacity of regulative principles to *cultivate* and *correct* empirical cognition in general.⁴⁴

Peirce appeals to the ideal thing-in-itself in order to hold human reasoning accountable to what is real. The search for truth is here rooted in the attempt to cognize the real. As to the real, however, Peirce puts it provocatively: “The real, then, is that which, sooner or later, information and reasoning would finally result in, and which is therefore independent of the vagaries of me and you.”⁴⁵ The ideal first, the singular thing-in-itself, serves as a regulative principle capable at once of cultivating in us a desire for the real and of correcting us when we fall short of it, as we inevitably must. For Peirce, this inevitability, itself ineluctably connected with human finitude, is not a source of despair, but an impetus for hope. The disciplined and candid attempt to

conceive the real roots the reality of community in the search for truth itself. Thus, he goes on to write: “the very origin of the conception of reality shows that this conception essentially involves the notion of a COMMUNITY, without definite limits, and capable of an indefinite increase in knowledge.”⁴⁶ Cartesian anxiety dissolves here where a finite community of inquirers cultivates among its members a disciplined and candid desire for the real animated by a regulative ideal capable of holding them accountable to one another and to the truth they together seek.

In a remarkable 1908 letter to Lady Welby, Peirce reaffirms his commitment to fallibilism even as he suggests the extent to which the truth functions for the community as a regulative ideal: “I do not say that it is infallibly true that there is any belief to which a person would come if he were to carry his inquiries far enough. I only say that that alone is what I call Truth. I cannot infallibly know that there *is* any Truth.”⁴⁷ Peirce’s realism is rooted in a regulative idealism in which the truth erotically informs all our attempts to get at the reality of things. The shift from the Kantian to the Platonic vocabulary here is designed to amplify the alluring dimension of truth as a regulative ideal. Perhaps it can be said that a certain erotic idealism must animate any sober realism intent on affirming finitude even as it seeks to mobilize a community in pursuit of the truth.

At work in this conception of community and the truth it seeks is what Catherine Legg has called “regulative hope,” a position rooted in the hypothesis that if the community pursues a question with discipline, candor, and tenacity, it will converge upon the truth.⁴⁸ This hope for a convergence upon the truth is regulative insofar as the aspirational endeavor to discern and articulate the truth, when carried out with discipline and candor, cultivates in the community practices of inquiry and habits of communicative transaction that hold its members accountable to one another and to the ideal they seek. As a regulative ideal, truth has a transformative ethico-political effect. The regulative function of this ideal is thus not only, as Colapietro rightly suggests, “to project an other against which our present understanding and knowledge will in all likelihood prove deficient,” but also to enable the community to weave a common concern for truth into our relationships with one another. Regulative hope has an empowering capacity. Through it, the pursuit of truth that has so long been associated with the practice of philosophy becomes a powerful political activity.⁴⁹

This can be heard already earlier in that 1908 letter to Lady Welby when Peirce insists that the truth must be “recognized as *public*—as that of which any person would come to be convinced if he carried his inquiry, his sincere search for immovable belief far enough.”⁵⁰ Here now, a certain sincerity is added to the habits of discipline and candor Peirce had associated with the practice of inquiry in the “Four Incapacities” essay. To be sincere in one’s

public pursuit of truth is to be honest with oneself and with those with whom one inquires when one's beliefs and commitments show themselves to be inadequate in the face of unconsidered arguments, insights, or information. If discipline points to the committed pursuit of truth and candor to the cultivated attitude toward finitude through which the community of inquirers weave a concern for truth into their relationships with one another, sincerity points to ways of inquiring free from pretense and deceit. Taken together, these habits of inquiry—discipline, candor, and sincerity—characterize a philosophical disposition capable of cultivating more responsive, responsible, and enriching public practices of communicative transaction.

PART III: PUBLIC PRACTICES OF COMMUNICATIVE TRANSACTION

In a final passage from his 1908 letter to Lady Welby, one that at once harkens back to the Socratic practice of philosophy, anticipates Dewey on democracy, and dovetails with Bernstein's emphasis on the transformative practices of philosophy, Peirce ties the public pursuit of truth to personal conduct and insists that every rational individual is capable of being transformed by it: "But if Truth be something public, it must mean that to the acceptance of which as a basis of conduct any person you please would ultimately come if he pursued his inquiries far enough—yes, every rational being, however prejudiced."⁵¹ In seeking to allay Lady Welby's anticipated skepticism of the rational capacities of the common person, Peirce articulates a regulative hope in the power of the public pursuit of truth to inform the habits of individuals. There is here the inchoate kernel of a radical idea that can already be discerned in the political philosophy of Socrates, an idea that comes to poignant articulation in the thinking of John Dewey on democracy and is amplified eloquently in Bernstein's "democratic personality."

In a short essay written in 1950 entitled "Creative Democracy: The Task Before Us," Dewey advocates for democracy not as a form of government, but as a task that can only be accomplished through personal effort and imaginative creativity.⁵² We must recognize, he says, "that democracy is a *personal* way of individual life; that it signifies the possession and continual use of certain attitudes, forming personal character and determining desire and purpose in all the relations of life."⁵³ The manner in which Dewey roots the political in the attitudes, character, and desires of individuals is at its heart Socratic. Although Socrates doesn't couch the idea explicitly in terms of democracy, he practiced philosophy as a kind of politics, attending to each individual he encountered and attempting through inquiry to instill in each an erotic desire for the truth capable of transforming the life of the community.⁵⁴ In refusing

to practice institutional politics, it is as if the Socratic practice of philosophical politics was informed and animated by Dewey's insistence that "instead of thinking of our own dispositions and habits as accommodated to certain institutions we have to learn to think of the latter as expressions, projections and extensions of habitually dominant personal attitudes."⁵⁵ Yet, if Dewey is at pains here to emphasize the Socratic idea that personal habits, attitudes, and desires inform and thus can transform the political institutions that shape the life of a community, his own understanding of communicative transaction requires us to recognize the reciprocal relationship between the cultivated habits and practices of individuals and institutions. Each influences the other, and both have powerful disciplining effects.

The two dimensions of creative democracy Bernstein emphasizes in his interpretation of Dewey's essay suggest the importance both of the personal habits of individual life and the institutional habits of democratic practice. For Bernstein, democracy is creative because it presupposes and fosters creative individuals and because it must continually create and re-create itself.⁵⁶ Attending to these two dimensions of democratic creativity will lend further determination to the ethics of philosophy as itself a political activity that might enable us to respond in enriching ways to the technological crisis in which we find ourselves.

First, democracy depends upon and is capable of cultivating creative individuals. Drawing on Dewey's understanding of situated creativity, Bernstein outlines the contours of a "democratic personality" that is "flexible, fallible, experimental, and imaginative."⁵⁷ He goes on to flesh out the virtues endemic to this sort of creativity, emphasizing that they must be cultivated through practice:

Without creative imagination and intelligence, individuals lack the resources to deal with novel situations. Ultimately this type of creativity involves a number of virtues: the courage to experiment, to change opinions in the light of experience. It also requires a genuine respect for one's fellow citizens—a respect and an openness that is not simply professed by concretely exemplified in one's practices. These practices do not arise without the careful cultivation of the habits, skills, and dispositions required for creative activity.⁵⁸

This articulation of the virtues of the democratic personality can be heard not only as an interpretation of Dewey on democracy, but now also as an amplification and further development of the discipline, candor, and sincerity endemic to Peirce's community of inquirers. Discipline here becomes the courage to experiment and change in the wake of what is discovered; candor becomes a respect for one's fellow citizens rooted in a recognition of our shared fallibility; and sincerity becomes the commitment to translate a professed openness to otherness into honest practice.

If Peirce was able to identify these practices with a “community of philosophers” in 1868, by the time Bernstein gave his 1988 presidential address to the American Philosophical Association, they had been largely eclipsed by the professional practices of a loosely associated collective of philosophy professors. Over the course of a 120 years, the community of inquirers Peirce envisioned in his essay on “Four Incapacities,” and the practices of a public philosophy capable of vitalizing and revitalizing a creative democracy, had given way in the 1950s to robust attempts to professionalize philosophy, define it in terms of natural science, and set it up as an autonomous technical discipline. The result, as Rorty has emphasized, was that philosophy withdrew “from the rest of the academy and from culture.”⁵⁹

Reiner Schürmann has argued that this withdrawal was itself precipitated by the politics of the McCarthy era when the more critical and engaged dimensions of philosophy were felt as a genuine threat to the stability of American culture and hegemony.⁶⁰ In this political context, the ideology of analytic philosophy came to dominate the practices of philosophy in America.⁶¹ That philosophy thrived which did not reach out critically to the social world, but remained focused on a specifiable number of abstruse problems associated with language and the formal aspects of argumentation. The rich practices and cultivated habits of a philosophy rooted in the tradition of pragmatism were reduced to the anemic intellectual abilities to construct good arguments and spot flaws in bad ones.⁶² The withdrawal of philosophy from the world and the impoverishment of its practices reduced the diversity of modes by which philosophical work could find legitimate public expression. What Schürmann has called the “pleading style,” became the paradigm of philosophical engagement, itself a mode of litigation:

Today, the most widespread philosophical style in the United States is that of litigation, and the most outstanding trait of how it is stated is sallying forth, standing out in the sense of attacking.

A good paper is one in which one chooses a topic to plead or argue for and an opponent to unseat.⁶³

This agonistic style of litigation further impoverishes the practices of philosophy by cultivating in each new generation of philosophers a debilitating allergy to fallibility in general, and public failings in particular. However true it may be, as Bernstein suggests, that conflict is important in dialogical encounters “because understanding does not entail agreement,” when conflict becomes the only mode of philosophical communication, when, as Nozick has put it, “philosophy is carried out as a coercive activity,” then there is no room for genuine dialogue, and philosophy loses its capacity to open new possibilities of more enriching social and political relationships.⁶⁴

The pleading style gives rise to what Schürmann has provocatively called an “extreme conception of truth as consensus” in which what is true is “what your colleagues are willing to let you say.”⁶⁵ However hyperbolic, the formulation captures something of the truth about the coercive consensus endemic to the agonistic mode scholarly communication in professional philosophy that has constricted the wide diversity of intellectual and ethical habits philosophy might otherwise be capable of cultivating. It also contrasts vividly with the public convergent conception of truth rooted in the habits of discipline, candor, sincerity for which Peirce argues. Thus, it is perhaps no surprise to find Bernstein in 1988 returning to the *ethos* of pragmatism in an attempt to heal philosophy of the wounds wrought by years of traumatic litigation.

Drawing explicitly on Peirce’s “Four Incapacities” essay, Bernstein calls philosophers to “nurture the type of community and solidarity where there is an engaged fallibilistic pluralism—one that is based upon mutual respect, where we are willing to risk our own prejudgments, are open to listening and learning from others, and we respond to others with responsiveness and responsibility.”⁶⁶ To nurture such a community, however, we must put the habits of an engaged fallibilistic pluralism into concrete communicative practice. And here, Peirce, Dewey, and Bernstein have much to teach a world transformed by the new possibilities of scholarly and human communication opened by the creation of the World Wide Web.

Here too it is perhaps wise to return to the second dimension of creativity Bernstein identifies with Dewey’s account of creative democracy; for it may serve as a kind of milestone at once marking the distance we have traveled and the crisis through which we are living. It thus offers us an opportunity to consider the ethical and intellectual habits capable of cultivating the responsive abilities Bernstein associates with engaged fallibilistic pluralism.

Democracy for Dewey, following Bernstein, is not only creative insofar as it fosters and depends upon creative individuals—although it is also and importantly that; democracy is creative in the sense that it involves the task of creation and re-creation. Bernstein puts it this way:

A creative democracy is one that always faces new, unexpected challenges. We see this today in what many call “globalization.” . . . The problem we face is how to ensure that new emerging global institutions are genuinely democratic, that they are responsive to the desires and needs of those affected by them.⁶⁷

This sort of creativity, Bernstein suggests, following Dewey and Peirce both, requires a peculiar kind of ideal, not one divorced from reality, but an ideal attuned to and capable of shaping reality itself. The ideal is erotic and political at once; erotic because it is desired, however elusive it proves itself to be; but political because it is capable of animating us in a common attempt

to root our relationships with one another in deeper intimacy with the real. We return here to Peirce who, in positing the thing-in-itself as a regulative ideal capable of holding our shared search for truth accountable to something “independent of the vagaries of me and you,” sought to cultivate in the community of inquirers habits of responsive and responsible communicative transaction.

Drawing on Dewey, Bernstein insists that this ideal “becomes living reality only when it becomes a ‘personal way of individual life’ in which we open ourselves to the ‘fullness of communication.’”⁶⁸ But in emphasizing the institutional side of creative democracy, Bernstein recognizes that the “fullness of communication” entails a dynamic and reciprocal relationship between the personal habits of individual life and the institutional practices of public life. In a digital age these personal and institutional practices are mediated by powerful modes of digital communication that can have transformative political effects if they are themselves understood in transactional terms. Our technologies condition the things we say, but the things we say condition the technologies we create. Digital modes of communicative transaction are capable of bringing forth the practices of creative democracy if, through them, we commit ourselves to putting an engaged fallibilistic pluralism into practice.

PART IV: CULTIVATING CREATIVE DIGITAL DEMOCRACIES

In the wake of the crisis of technology opened by the creation of the World Wide Web, cultivating the habits of responsible communication is critical to our capacity to create more enriching and responsive communities. Whatever else it might be, the World Wide Web is the most powerful publishing platform ever devised. With the very private press of a virtual button, personal ideas, thoughts, and words can be made public on a global scale. Yet until they are woven into the ethico-political life of a networked public, these publications remain mere wind eggs, incapable of enriching our relationships with one another.

The ease with which ideas enter a global public exacerbates the difficulty of integrating them into coherent communities. The very affordances that make this technology transformative can also limit its ability to constitute responsive and responsible publics. The publishing platform enables the dissemination of more information than can be meaningfully engaged; it reinforces our dependence on technology to bring vast amounts of data into terms that can be understood on a human scale; it empowers individuals to enter into a public sphere so fragmented and diverse it distorts our capacities to disclose ourselves to one another and thus undermines attempts to create coherent and vibrant publics.

And yet, as a publishing platform, the World Wide Web opens for us an unprecedented capacity to create meaningful publics. With this powerful affordance comes the responsibility to cultivate the habits of communication capable of creating more enriching communities of human social and political life. If the ethics of philosophy has, since Socrates, always been a transformative political practice, in a digital age, its capacity to create more humane and meaningful publics depends upon the cultivation of habits of communicative transaction rooted in a disciplined, candid, and sincere commitment to engaged fallibilistic pluralism.

Following Dewey, we might identify such flourishing publics as creative digital democracies, recognizing that democracy itself is not so much a form of government as a task of public communicative practice in which the public has authoritative voice. Authority here is rooted in a deep-seated respect won neither by force nor persuasion, which enables us to respond to one another in ways that empower us to live well together.⁶⁹ This is the respect the Greeks called *aidōs*, and imagined Hermes to have been sent by Zeus to deliver to every single human; and it is at the root of the candor and sincerity we have associated with the practices of engaged fallibilistic pluralism. Yet, in creative *digital* democracies, the authoritative voices of individuals entering into public communicative transaction are mediated by a technology that disembodies the words and ideas from the individuals expressing them in ways that undermine our human capacity for respect.

Our capacity to create more responsive, humane, and enriching digital publics depends upon the disciplined commitment to dialogical engagement that initially drew me to the New School and to the embodied practices of Bernstein's philosophy. It is a commitment to dialogue that remains always cognizant of and patient with the fallibility endemic to all human communication, a philosophical practice open to the rich plurality of traditions, perspectives, and orientations that inform all human transaction. Each time we enter into the digital public domain, we put certain values into practice. Each time we post or tweet or text, we have the opportunity to enrich or impoverish our relationships with one another. This sort of public speaking is a deceptively powerful way of appearing in public and is thus a potentially transformative kind of political practice. If, as Arendt has said, "The space of appearance comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action, and therefore predates and precedes all formal constitution of the public realm and . . . the various forms in which the public realm can be organized,"⁷⁰ the networked public opened by the World Wide Web is a space of appearance whose transformative power lies in our capacities to put words into practice in ways capable of enriching the public realm we share. This power, however, depends not only upon personal ways of individual life, as Dewey rightly insisted, but also upon our abilities to speak and act in

concert with one another. “Power,” as Arendt puts it, “is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together.”⁷¹

The actualization of power in a digital age depends upon our capacities to cultivate in ourselves and one another the habits of communicative transaction informed by a disciplined, candid, and sincere commitment to engaged fallibilistic pluralism. To flesh out, finally, in more concrete terms, the digital practices through which such a commitment might be enacted in a digital age, we might conclude by suggesting three dimensions of engaged hermeneutical responsiveness that, if cultivated in our personal habits of digital communicative transaction, have the power to open new, more creative, and enriching democratic communities capable of shaping the networked digital public in more responsive and humane ways.⁷²

The first, which might be described as hermeneutical empathy, is rooted in the Peircean and Gadamerian recognition that our prejudices inform and limit our capacities to respond to one another and so require us to imagine our way into the positions of those with whom we are engaged in order to tune our responses accordingly. Responses animated by hermeneutical empathy demonstrate the capacity to understand the position of the other even if it is one with which we ultimately fail to agree. Here, however, a second dimension of effective communicative transaction suggests itself, for with empathy comes the capacity for generosity. This dimension is rooted in a candid recognition of shared fallibility and enables us to lend one another the courage to risk ideas in public without being cowed by the anxiety that they might prove themselves inadequate. Indeed, hermeneutical generosity seems to be a necessary condition for the possibility of weaving a concern for truth into our relationships with one another; for as a regulative and erotic ideal, truth holds us accountable to it and to one another in ways that can become debilitating if not tempered by a responsive generosity that affirms failure as endemic to the creation of fulfilling relationships. Thus, finally, the third dimension of effective communicative transaction in a digital age is rooted in a common concern to create more enriching and responsive communities; it is the disciplined, candid, and sincere commitment to hermeneutical transformation that first becomes possible when we endeavor to speak and act together in public. The power of such an endeavor lies in the manner in which it unfolds and the spirit in which it is undertaken. Here Arendt is eloquent: “Power is actualized only where word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities.”⁷³ To capture something of the intangible nature of the reality this power is capable of creating, Arendt speaks metaphorically of a “‘web’ of human relationships”⁷⁴ in which we disclose

ourselves to one another in ways that are capable of creating new more just and humane realities. Although this “web” has emerged in the digital age as a vast and diverse public sphere, it is no less intangible and no less fragile than the web of human relationships that has always determined the nature of human political life. The engaged, fallibilistic pluralism for which Bernstein so eloquently advocates and so elegantly embodies opens us to the cultivated habits of communicative transaction capable of deepening and enriching our relationships with the world and those we encounter here.

NOTES

1. Mark Ward, in a 2006 BBC article suggests that August 6th is a key date, see “How the Web Went World Wide,” BBC, August 3, 2006, sec. Technology, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/5242252.stm>. The quotation about the WWW project can be found in the initial message Berners-Lee posted to the alt.hypertext discussion board, see Tim Berners-Lee, “Re: Qualifiers on Hypertext Links,” August 6, 1991, <http://www.w3.org/People/Berners-Lee/1991/08/art-6484.txt>. For a broader account of the creation of the World Wide Web, see, Tim Berners-Lee, *Weaving the Web: The Original Design and Ultimate Destiny of the World Wide Web*, 1 edition (San Francisco: HarperBusiness, 2000), pp. 42–51.

2. Beranek traces the story back to October 3, 1969, when a computer at UCLA transmitted “114,” the octal code for the letter “L,” to a computer at Stanford in a first attempt to login to another computer over the Internet. “107,” the code for “O,” came next before the computer at Stanford crashed on “117,” the code for “G.” Still, as Leo Beranek suggests, “In its own phonetic fashion, the UCLA computer said ‘ello’ (L-O) to its compatriot in Stanford. The first, albeit tiny, computer network had been born.” See, Leo Beranek, “Roots of the Internet: A Personal History,” *Massachusetts Historical Review* 2 (January 1, 2000): p. 55.

3. Dick’s father, Henry Bernstein, with two of his brothers, owned a furniture store in Brooklyn, Simon Bernstein’s Sons. Although neither of Dick’s parents went to college, when Dick received his PhD his father said to him: “Richard, if philosophy doesn’t work out I want you to know there will always be a place for you in the furniture business.”

4. Bernstein, Richard J. “Pragmatism, Pluralism, and the Healing of Wounds.” *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 63, no. 3 (November 1, 1989): pp. 5–18. doi:10.2307/3130079, p. 17. Engaged fallibilistic pluralism has three dimensions. Engagement: a willingness to risk one’s ideas and beliefs by putting them into practice in ways that determine and, hopefully, enrich our relationships and communities. Fallibilism: the recognition that our finite position is not objectively absolute and thus is always in need of further refinement. Pluralism: a commitment to affirming diversity and embracing difference, not as something merely to be tolerated, but as the very source of the energy that animates human being-together in the world.

5. The language of “communicative transaction” is inherited from John Dewey who, in a text coauthored with Arthur Bentley, distinguished between *interaction* and *transaction*. The mechanistically inflected notion of “interaction” points to connections between discrete individuals isolated from the contexts in which their relationships unfold. The more organically inflected idea of “transaction” points the naturally and historically conditioned connections between situated individuals bound dynamically together in living community. This distinction is at the heart of John Dewey and Arthur Fisher Bentley, *Knowing and the Known* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1949).

6. Richard J. Bernstein, “Metaphysics, Critique, and Utopia,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 42, no. 2 (December 1, 1988): p. 257, doi:10.2307/20128726.

7. See, Liddell and Scott, *krinein*, v. and OED, *crisis*, n.

8. *Pheadrus*, 274e5-7. All references to Plato are from Plato, *Platonis Opera*, vol. I–V (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

9. Heidegger, “The Question Concerning Technology,” in Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. with an Introduction by William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 13.

10. *Protagoras*, 321d1-2.

11. *Protagoras*, 321d4-5. The Greek here is interesting, because Plato has Protagoras play with the tenses of the verb *echein* to signal that initially (deploying the aorist to denote at one time) humans only had wisdom to survive, while over the entire course of that time (deploying the imperfect) humans did not have the art of politics. See, Nicholas Denyer, *Plato: Protagoras*, Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 105.

12. *Ibid.*, 322c1-3. The Greek *aidōs* is the more archaic of the two words the Greeks had for “shame,” the other being, *aischunē*. Without going into the complex and subtle differences between the two, the more archaic form seems more consistently associated with the virtue of modesty, while *aischunē* is more readily associated with the virtue of courage. For a good discussion of the differences, see Christina H. Tarnopolsky, *Prudes, Perverts, and Tyrants: Plato’s Gorgias and the Politics of Shame* (Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 11–13. Marina McCoy emphasizes the degree to which “*aidōs*” points to “a concern for the opinions of others.” See, Marina McCoy, “Protagoras on Human Nature, Wisdom and the Good: The Great Speech and the Hedonism of Plato’s Protagoras.” *Ancient Philosophy* 18 (1998): 23n4.

13. *Protagoras*, 322d2-5.

14. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (W. W. Norton & Company, 1989), p. 44.

15. Richard J. Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), xiii.

16. Pierre Hadot has traced this deeper history in *What Is Ancient Philosophy*. See, Pierre Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 237–81.

17. In the *Apology*, Socrates explicitly points to the Delphic message as the animating principle of his attempt to live a philosophical life. See, *Apology*, 21a-22e. For the extended argument that his philosophical life, and indeed, the writing life of Plato as well, are different but connected political practices, see Christopher P. Long,

Socratic and Platonic Political Philosophy: Practicing a Politics of Reading (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

18. Richard J. Bernstein, *The New Constellation: The Ethical-Political Horizons of Modernity/Postmodernity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1992), p. 9.

19. Richard J. Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), p. 150.

20. Richard J. Bernstein, *The Pragmatic Turn* (Cambridge, UK; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2010), p. 17, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=570086>.

21. The first three points Peirce makes in delineating the “spirit of Cartesianism” draw this out. He references universal doubt, the role of the individual consciousness as the “ultimate test of certainty” and the reduction of the multiform of scholastic argumentation to a “single thread of inference.” See, Charles S. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 5.264, <http://alias.libraries.psu.edu/eresources/PASTMASTERS>. The fourth point Peirce makes—the positing of God as an ultimate principle—gestures to the thetic dimension of the spirit of Cartesianism that Reiner Schürmann so eloquently criticizes in his account of the “modern hegemonic fantasm” in *Broken Hegemonies*. See, Reiner Schürmann, *Broken Hegemonies*, *Studies in Continental Thought* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), pp. 351–444.

22. See, Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism*, pp. 16–20.

23. Bernstein, *The New Constellation*, p. 17.

24. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, p. 5.265. In “Some Consequences of Four Incapacities,” Peirce rehearses the four denials he had established in “Questions Concerning Certain Faculties Claimed for Man.” See, *Ibid.*, 5.213–263.

25. Richard J. Bernstein, “Pragmatism, Pluralism and the Healing of Wounds,” *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 63, no. 3 (November 1, 1989): pp. 5–18, doi:10.2307/3130079.

26. That promise is Cartesian: “Archimedes used to demand just one firm and immovable point in order to shift the entire earth; so I too can hope for great things if I manage to find just one thing, however, slight, that is certain and unshakeable.” See, René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), AT 7:24. It would be hard to find a more eloquent articulation of a philosophical project animated by “Cartesian Anxiety” than this one from the *Second Meditation*; it appears when those of us who have followed Descartes in the course of his mediation, are at our most doubtful and despondent.

27. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, p. 5.265.

28. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics* (University of California Press, 2008), p. 9. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes: “Interpretation is never a presuppositionless grasping of something previously given. When the particular concretion of the interpretation in the sense of exact text interpretation likes to appeal to what ‘is there,’ what is initially ‘there’ is nothing else than the self-evident, undisputed prejudice of the interpreter, which is necessarily there in each point of departure of

the interpretation as what is already ‘posited’ with interpretation as such, that is, pre-given with fore-having, fore-sight, fore-conception.” See, Martin Heidegger and Joan Stambaugh, *Being and Time*, SUNY Series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), § 32, p. 141.

29. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p. 9.

30. Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis*, pp. 126–28.

31. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd edn. (New York: Continuum, 1994), 240 and 247, respectively.

32. Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, AT 7:35.

33. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, p. 5.265.

34. Hermann Diels, *Die Fragmente Der Vorsokratiker* (Zürich: Weidmann, 1996), fr. 18, 133. For a discussion of this passage in Xenophanes and how it relates to Aristotle’s conception of truth, see Christopher P. (Christopher Philip) Long, *Aristotle on the Nature of Truth* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 49–71.

35. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, p. 5.265.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 5.264.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 5.265.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 5.264.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 5.265.

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*, p. 5.310.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 5.311.

43. Immanuel Kant, trans. Paul Guyer, and Allen W. Wood, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Works. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A 508–9/B 536–37. Peirce’s passage echoes this in such a way that it is possible to imagine the *Critique of Pure Reason* open to these pages of the “Antinomy of Pure Reason” on his desk while Peirce was writing “Some Consequences of Four Incapacities.” Kant goes on to write in that section: “thus it is a principle of reason which, as a *rule*, postulates what should be effected by us in the regress, but *does not anticipate* what is given in itself in the *object* prior to any regress” (Kant, A509/B537, emphasis his).

44. See, *Ibid.*, A 671/B 699.

45. Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, p. 5.311.

46. *Ibid.*

47. Charles Sanders Peirce, *Selected Writings (Values in a Universe of Chance)* (Courier Dover Publications, 1958), p. 398.

48. Catherine Legg, “Charles Peirce’s Limit Concept of Truth,” *Philosophy Compass* 9, no. 3 (March 1, 2014): 208, doi:10.1111/phc3.12114.

49. In his response to Vincent Colapietro, Bernstein indicates the central role of hope in his thinking when he suggests that a passage from Colapietro might serve well as “an epigraph for all of my writings.” Colapietro writes: “The question of hope transposes itself and becomes the hope of questioning, the hope of continuing to pose meaningful, orienting, and fruitful questions. Social conditions and moral qualities

are as vital to sustaining this hope as are intellectual ability and rhetorical sophistication.” See, Warren G. Frisina and Sheila Greeve Davaney, eds., “Engaged Pluralism: Between Alterity and Sociality,” in *The Pragmatic Century: Conversations with Richard J. Bernstein* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), pp. 60, 71.

50. Peirce, *Selected Writings (Values in a Universe of Chance)*, p. 398.

52. Dewey speaks explicitly of “inventive effort and creative activity” in the essay itself. See, John Dewey, “Creative Democracy—The Task Before Us,” in *The Later Works of John Dewey, Volume 14, 1925–1953: 1939–1941, Essays, Reviews, and Miscellany*, eds. Jo Ann Boydston, R. W. Sleeper, and Anne Sharpe, 1st edition (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), p. 225.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 226.”

54. That Socrates considered his own philosophical activity a political practice, can be heard in the provocative passage in the *Gorgias* in which he claims to be one of the only people in Athens attempting the “political art truly.” See, *Gorgias*, 521d7. For a detailed account of the political nature of the practices of Socratic philosophy, see Long, *Socratic and Platonic Political Philosophy*.

55. Dewey, “Creative Democracy—The Task Before Us,” p. 226.

56. Richard Bernstein, “Creative Democracy—The Task Still before Us,” in *The Pragmatic Century: Conversations with Richard J. Bernstein* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006), pp. 200–02.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 201.

58. *Ibid.*

59. Richard Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism: Essays 1972–1980* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), pp. 61–2.”

60. Schürmann insists that the rise of analytic philosophy “cannot be dissociated from the governmental and academic ‘witch hunt.’ If the social reformer Dewey and the philosopher of life Whitehead were no longer read, the reason was that it was no longer read, the reason was that it was no longer prudent to read and teach them. The eclipse of American philosophy in America, that is, of pragmatism, is to be inscribed in a broader cultural overshadowing. It became dangerous to make pronouncements on what were called ‘values.’ Whoever could not hang these on the American flag in some way or other was labeled a Communist and put his career at risk.” See, Reiner Schürmann and Charles T. Wolfe, “Concerning Philosophy in the United States,” *Social Research* 61, no. 1 (April 1, 1994): 94, doi:10.2307/40971023. John McCumber’s *Time in a Ditch* takes up and fleshes out this line of argument in exhaustive detail. See, John McCumber, *Time in the Ditch: American Philosophy and the McCarthy Era* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2001).

61. Bernstein is careful to distinguish the “the many impressive achievements of analytic work from the arrogant ideology that surrounded it during the first wave of its flourishing in America.” See, Bernstein, “Pragmatism, Pluralism and the Healing of Wounds,” p. 13.

62. See, Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism: Essays 1972–1980*, p. 219.

63. Schürmann and Wolfe, “Concerning Philosophy in the United States,” pp. 99–100.

64. Bernstein speaks of the importance of conflict in his 1988 presidential address. See, Bernstein, "Pragmatism, Pluralism and the Healing of Wounds," p. 17. Nozick's formulation is poignant, but it is offered in his text as a criticism for the manner in which philosophy is all too often practiced. See, Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 4–8.

65. Schürmann and Wolfe, "Concerning Philosophy in the United States," p. 97.

66. Bernstein, "Pragmatism, Pluralism and the Healing of Wounds," p. 18.

67. Bernstein, "Creative Democracy—The Task Still Before Us," p. 201.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 202.

69. In *On Violence*, Arendt writes that the hallmark of authority "is unquestioning recognition by those who are asked to obey; neither by coercion nor persuasion is needed. . . . To remain in authority requires respect for the person or the office. The greatest enemy of authority, therefore, is contempt, the surest way to undermine it is laughter." See, Hannah Arendt, *Crises of the Republic: Lying in Politics; Civil Disobedience; On Violence; Thoughts on Politics and Revolution* (New York: Mariner Books, 1972), 144. For more on authority in Arendt, see "What Is Authority?" in Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Penguin Books, 1954).

70. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 199.

71. Arendt, *Crises of the Republic*, p. 143.

72. These dimensions of hermeneutical responsiveness were originally outlined in a blog post associated with the development of the *Public Philosophy Journal*. See, Christopher P. Long, "The Peer Review Coordinator and the Collegiality Index," *The Long Road*, November 27, 2013, <http://www.cplong.org/2013/11/the-peer-review-coordinator-and-the-collegiality-index/>.

73. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 200.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

