



John Dewey – Our unfree Press (1961)

Description

John Dewey was an American philosopher, psychologist, Geogist, and educational reformer whose ideas have been influential in education and social reform. Dewey is one of the primary figures associated with the philosophy of pragmatism and is considered one of the fathers of functional psychology. [More at Wikipedia](#)

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The only really fundamental approach to the problem is to inquire concerning the necessary effect of the present economic system upon the whole system of publicity; upon the judgment of what news is, upon the selection and elimination of matter that is published, upon the treatment of news in both editorial and news columns. The question, under this mode of approach, is not how many specific abuses there are and how they may be remedied, but how far genuine intellectual freedom and social responsibility are possible on any large scale under the existing economic regime.

Publishers and editors, with their commitments to “the public and social order” of which they are the beneficiaries, will often prove to be among the “chief enemies” of true “liberty of the press,” Dewey continued. It is unreasonable to expect “the managers of this business enterprise to do otherwise than as the leaders and henchmen of big business,” and to “select and treat their special wares from this standpoint.” Insofar as the ideological managers are “giving the public what it `wants’,” that is because of “the effect of the present economic system in generating intellectual indifference and apathy, in creating a demand for distraction and diversion, and almost a love for crime provided it pays” among a public “debauched by the ideal of getting away with whatever it can.”

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