

Willystine Goodsell (1870-1962) and John Dewey (1859-1952): History, Philosophy, and Women's Education

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Abstract

This article explores the work of history and philosophy in publications by Willystine Goodsell, professor of history and philosophy at Teachers College, Columbia University, and the entanglement of Goodsell's approach to scholarship with that of her doctoral supervisor John Dewey. The article experiments with diffractive reading to examine Dewey's and Goodsell's approach to history, as well as Goodsell's configuration of women's historical and contemporary participation in education. It looks at Dewey's comment that women's 'philosophising' would not be the same 'in viewpoint or tenor' as that composed from the 'different masculine experience of things' and investigates the principles that order liberal and vocational education in Goodsell's view of a reformed education for women. The conclusion asks whether diffractive reading is an enhanced form of intertextuality.

Keywords: history, philosophy, diffraction, gender, dualisms, liberal education, vocational education, women's education, girls' education

Introduction

Willystine Goodsell, professor of history and philosophy at Teachers College, Columbia University USA, has been credited with being the most important educational theorist among Teachers College

women during the interwar period. After working as a school teacher, Goodsell completed a PhD with John Dewey and was appointed assistant professor (1910) and then associate professor (1927) at Teachers College, where, like William Heard Kilpatrick, she taught history and philosophy of education. Goodsell saw schooling as a potential site for educating democratic citizens, a stance that Kathleen Weiler argues places Goodsell in the social reconstructionist camp amongst Teachers College progressive educators.¹ Much of Goodsell's teaching and writing was concerned with women's education and democratic citizenship,² an area largely missing from the work of male progressive educators.³ In *The Education of Women: Its Social Background and Its Problems* (1923) Goodsell critiques the work of G Stanley Hall and Edward Thorndike, who asserted that women were innately emotional and nurturing (and intellectually inferior) because of their biological role as mothers. Goodsell also considers ways in which women should be educated in order to participate as full

¹ Kathleen Weiler, 'No Women Wanted on the Social Frontier: Gender, Citizenship and Progressive Education', in *Challenging Democracy: International Perspectives on Gender, Education and Citizenship*, ed. by Madeleine Arnot and Jo-Anne Dillabough (London: Routledge, 2000), 122-37.

² Goodsell's books on women include: Willystine Goodsell, *A History of the Family as a Social and Educational Institution* (New York: Macmillan, 1915) which appeared in Paul Monroe's textbook series alongside Dewey's *Democracy and Education*; Willystine Goodsell, *The Education of Women: Its Social Background and Its Problems* (New York: Macmillan, 1923) (citations in the article are from the 1924 edition); Willystine Goodsell, *Pioneers of Women's Education in the United States: Emma Willard, Catherine Beecher, Mary Lyon* (McGraw-Hill Education Classics (New York, London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1924); Willystine Goodsell, *Problems of the Family* (New York and London: The Century Co., 1928); Willystine Goodsell, *A History of Marriage and the Family* (New York: AMS Press, 1934).

³ Kathleen Weiler, 'The Historiography of Gender and Progressive Education in the United States', *Paedagogica Historica* 42, no. 2 (2006): 161-76, here 167.

and equal citizens in a democracy.⁴ Sari Knopp Biklen comments that Goodsell's books are characterised by a particular style of engagement. Before talking about the main psychological or sociological focus of her study, she traces the historical development of a contemporary situation she defines as a problem⁵ and she uses history to argue that the social construction of ideas of womanhood were not inevitable in society as it was currently organised.⁶

This article complements Weiler's and Bilken's accounts by focussing on the entanglement of history and philosophy in Goodsell's work. The article is prompted by two comments, the first from John Dewey, who wrote in 1919:

Women have as yet made little contribution to philosophy. But when women who are not mere students of other persons' philosophy set out to write it, we cannot conceive that it will be the same in viewpoint or tenor as that composed from the standpoint of the different masculine experience of things.⁷

⁴ Weiler, 'No Women Wanted', 130.

⁵ Weiler notes that little historical work has addressed the involvement of women or conceptions of women's education in the social reconstruction movement. To date, Weiler, 'No Women Wanted' is the most searching analysis of Goodsell's writings on women and their education but see also Sari Knopp Biklen, 'Willystine Goodsell', in *Women Educators in the United States*, ed. Maxine Seller (New York: Greenwood, 1994), 227-32; R. Engel, 'Willystine Goodsell: Feminist and Reconstructionist Educator', *Vitae Scholasticae* 3, no. 2 (1984): 355-80.

⁶ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 347.

⁷ Dewey, 'Philosophy and Democracy' (Middle Works 11, 45), quoted in Charleen H Seigfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism: Reweaving the Social Fabric* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 29.

The second is Terri Wilson's statement that after completing *The Conflict of Naturalism and Humanism*, Goodsell turned *from* philosophy *to* the study of women and the family.⁸ These comments prompt questions about whether, and if so how, philosophy might have played a part in Goodsell's ongoing historical work as well as questions about the place of history in Dewey's philosophy.⁹

To explore these questions the article experiments with diffractive reading to examine Dewey's and Goodsell's approach to history, as well as Goodsell's configuration of women's historical and contemporary participation in education. The first section traces entanglements between Goodsell's and Dewey's publications and outlines diffractive reading as research strategy. The second section uses diffractive reading to discuss Dewey and Goodsell's approach to history. The third section examines the work of philosophy in Goodsell's configuration of women's historical and contemporary participation in education and Dewey's comment that women's 'philosophising' would not be the same 'in viewpoint or tenor' as that composed from the 'different masculine experience of things' and to investigate the principles that order liberal and vocational education in Goodsell's view of a reformed education for women. The conclusion re-assembles threads of diffractive analysis to argue that for Dewey history was a tool in philosophy, whereas for Goodsell philosophy was a tool in history; and that it was the balance between history and philosophy that shifted in Goodsell's work, rather than a turn *from* philosophy *to* the study of women and the family. The conclusion also argues that Goodsell's work departs from 'the standpoint of the different masculine experience of

⁸ Craig A. Cunningham, David Granger, Jane Fowler Morse, Barbara Stengel, and Terri Wilson, 'Dewey, Women, and Weirdoes: Or, the Potential Rewards for Scholars Who Dialogue across Difference', *Education and Culture* 23, no. 2 (2007): 27-62, here 45. The emphasis is mine.

⁹ For aspects of historical context and for the content of Goodsell's writings (which fall outside the purpose defined for this article) see scholarship cited in footnote 5.

things' in ways that shed light on aspects of Dewey's work. Finally, it raises the question of whether diffractive reading is an enhanced form of intertextuality.

Entangled texts and diffraction

In the forward to her doctoral thesis *The Conflict of Naturalism and Humanism* (1910)¹⁰ Goodsell acknowledges Dewey's 'vigorous thought', which she writes 'has vivified and reshaped my entire philosophy of nature and of man'.¹¹ The introduction to *The Education of Women* also acknowledges the 'vivification' of Dewey's thought on Goodsell's educational and social philosophy from the standpoint of which, she writes, the 'many-sided problem of women's education are viewed' in the text.¹² In a footnote to her chapter on values she 'gladly acknowledges her profound indebtedness to America's leading educational philosopher for many of the vantage points from which this subject is viewed'.¹³ Goodsell's published acknowledgements to Dewey draw on two meanings of 'vivification' in the Western tradition, where 'to vivify' is to endow with life or renewed life, or to acquire life and become alive, to animate, quicken, enliven, brighten and sharpen.¹⁴ Goodsell drew on this understanding of 'vivification' in a letter to Dewey in 1929, where she counted herself

¹⁰ Willystine Goodsell, *The Conflict of Naturalism and Humanism* (New York City: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1910).

¹¹ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, iii.

¹² Goodsell, *Education of Women*, vi.

¹³ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 327.

¹⁴ *Oxford English Dictionary*.

among ‘so many other of the students whose minds have been quickened by your own’.¹⁵ A second more philosophical meaning of ‘vivification’ refers to how the disjunction of dualistic concepts might be overcome in a way that gives life to both terms.¹⁶ This understanding of ‘vivification’ equates with Dewey’s *Cyclopedia* entry entitled ‘Dualism’ which defines dualisms as ‘philosophy systems which make a hard and fast antithesis between terms which are related to each other in experience’.¹⁷

Although Dewey supervised Goodsell’s doctoral thesis, the ‘vivification’ to which Goodsell alludes did not necessarily flow all one way. In the absence of Goodsell’s personal papers, whether conversations with Goodsell sharpened Dewey’s thinking remains a matter of conjecture. But Charleen H. Siegfried draws on accounts from Dewey’s students to argue that in his classes Dewey often thought through whatever was puzzling him at the moment and these reflections would appear in his next book.¹⁸ In the preface to *Democracy and Education* Dewey notes his debt to a long line of students, whose successive classes spanned more years than he cared to enumerate.¹⁹ Dewey also shared his thoughts with Elsie Ridley Clapp and asked for her reactions. Clapp writes ‘it was [Dewey’s] belief that such sharing helped his own thinking’,²⁰ as Sam Stack argues. Dewey’s

¹⁵ Willystine Goodsell to John Dewey, 20 October 1939, Teachers College, Columbia CJD 9/14 ALS (06177) With thanks to Sam Stack for this reference.

¹⁶ *Oxford English Dictionary*.

¹⁷ John Dewey, ‘Dualism’, in *A Cyclopedia of Education: Vol.2*, ed. Paul Monroe (New York: Macmillan, 1911), 374.

¹⁸ Siegfried, *Pragmatism and Feminism*, 51-2.

¹⁹ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1916), iii. References are from the 2004 Dover Publications edition.

²⁰ Unpublished Elsie Ridley Clapp Memoirs, 113, quoted in Sam F. Stack, *Elsie Ripley Clapp (1879-1965): Her Life and the Community School* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 69.

‘hearty acknowledgements’ to Clapp in the preface to *Democracy and Education* for her ‘many criticisms and suggestions’ and his thanks to ‘Professor Kilpatrick’ and ‘Dr Goodsell’ for ‘criticisms’ and for having ‘been kind enough to read the proofsheets’ suggest more than a one-way process. Neither Clapp nor Goodsell are listed in the index, however. Nor is Dewey’s colleague George Herbert Mead, despite, as Geert Biesta argues, Meadian ideas about the role of gesture in human cooperation and interaction playing a central role in Dewey’s account of the process of communication in ways distinctively different from what Dewey had written before.²¹ Biesta also cites the potential influence on Dewey’s thinking of other Columbia colleagues including the anthropologists Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict and Dewey’s former colleague and co-author James Hayden Tufts, whose cooperation in their jointly authored *Ethics* (1908), argues Biesta, exposed Dewey to questions about cooperation and coordination of action and its importance for the emergence of group mores and customs.²²

Together with Goodsell’s attribution of ‘vivification’ these speculations gesture towards Julia Kristeva’s comment on intertextuality that ‘any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; [and] is the absorption and transformation of another’.²³ From the perspective of intertextuality, reading becomes a process of moving between texts, and meaning exists between a text and the other texts to which it relates within a network of textual relations, as Graham Allen outlines.²⁴ This article adds a

²¹ Gert J.J. Biesta, “‘Of All Affairs, Communication Is the Most Wonderful’: Education as Communicative Praxis”, in *John Dewey and Our Educational Prospect: A Critical Engagement with Dewey's Democracy and Education*, ed. David T. Hansen (New York: SUNY Press, 2012), 23-38, here 27-28.

²² Biesta, “‘Of All Affairs’”, 27-28.

²³ Julia Kristeva, ‘Word, Dialogue and Novel’, in *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Toril Moi, 34-61 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), here 37.

²⁴ Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (London: Routledge, 2000 [2011 edition]), 1.

further layer to intertextuality by deploying a diffractive strategy to read Goodsell's and Dewey's texts through one another with a focus on the possibilities for new ideas to evolve.²⁵ As a strategy, diffractive reading builds on the optical metaphor of diffraction from wave phenomena in physics, where diffraction refers to how waves - whether they be light, water or sound waves - behave (and spread out) when they move through passages or encounter an obstruction.²⁶ Waves meeting (or meeting an obstruction) either create a more intense wave together, cancel each other out, or result in anything in between.²⁷ At the point of diffraction, the original wave partly remains within the new wave after its transformation into a new one and so on, wave after wave.²⁸ What counts in diffraction are the effects of diffraction and entanglement; not the separate elements.²⁹ As Donna Haraway writes, diffraction is a 'mapping of interference, not ... replication, reflection, or reproduction'.³⁰ What counts for a diffractive reading are 'the *effects* of difference - what Karen Barad refers

²⁵ Vivienne Bozalek, 'Socially Just Pedagogies', in *Posthuman Glossary*, ed. Rosi Braidotti & Maria Hlavajova (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 396-98, here 398.

²⁶ Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 90-1.

²⁷ Maria Uden, *The Novel Feminist Diffraction Concept Its Application in Fifty-One Peer Reviewed Papers. Research Report* (Lulea Tekniska Universitet, 2018), 2.

²⁸ Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 97-123

²⁹ Lynne Keevers and Lesley Treleaven, 'Organizing Practices of Reflection: A Practice-Based Study', *Management Learning* 42, no. 5 (2011): 505-20, here 509.

³⁰ Donna Haraway, 'The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others', in L.C. Grossberg, C. Nelson, C and P.A. Treichler (Eds.) *Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge), 295-337, here 300.

to as the ‘differences that matter’ that result from ‘interferences’ between texts³¹ through which potentialities for new understandings emerge. But, as Iris van der Tuin argues, diffractive reading can also be productive in affirming links between scholars.³²

The following section examines how history is configured in Dewey’s and Goodsell’s work. It reads Goodsell and Dewey through one another to look first at their configuration of history as a scientific approach and as a history of the present; and second, as a critical and pedagogic tool.

Genetic history as scientific enquiry

Diffractive reading seeks generative ‘inventive provocations.’³³ As Goodsell’s and Dewey’s approach to historical practice illustrates, these ‘inventive provocations’ can strengthen dynamic links between scholars.³⁴ Goodsell’s use of history to trace a situation she defines as a problem aligns with Dewey’s comments in *Democracy and Education* that the ‘vitality’ of history comes from its links with the present, and with his view that ‘knowledge of the past is the key to understanding the

³¹ Karen Barad, ‘Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter’, *Signs* 28, no. 3 (2003): 801-33, here 811.

³² Iris van der Tuin, *Generational Feminism: New Materialist Introduction to a Generative Approach* (Boulder: Lexington Books, 2014).

³³ Karen Barad interview in Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin, *New Materialism: interviews & Cartographies* (London: Open Humanities Press, 2012), 50.

³⁴ Iris van der Tuin, *Generational Feminism: New Materialist Introduction to a Generative Approach* (Boulder: Lexington Books, 2014), 97.

present'. History, writes Dewey 'deals with the past, but this past is the history of the present'.³⁵ He maintains that the principle of gaining insight into any complex product is to trace the process of its making - to follow it through the successive stages of its growth, which for Dewey makes 'the true starting point of history ... always some present situation with its problems' because 'past events cannot be separated from the living present and retain meaning'.³⁶

Dewey fleshes out his approach to history in two linked articles in the *Philosophical Review* (1902) where he terms his approach to history as 'genetic'.³⁷ He draws on a model of history from Thorstein Veblen who argues for 'a genetic account' as an evolutionary science. Working in the arena of economics, Veblen casts his genetic approach as a 'process of an unfolding sequence' in which to seek the 'cumulative sequence [of economic] institutions'.³⁸ Veblen works with a model of 'man' [sic] whom he characterises not as a 'bundle of desires that are to be saturated by being placed in the path of the fires of the environment', but as a 'coherent structure of propensities and habits

³⁵ Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 205. Dewey's *Democracy and Education* and Goodsell's *The Conflict of Naturalism and Humanism* share similar discussion from the history of intellectual thought, as well as headings like 'Education as National and Social', which appears as a chapter heading in *The Conflict of Naturalism and Humanism* and as a section heading in *Democracy and Education*.

³⁶ Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 206.

³⁷ John Dewey, 'The Evolutionary Method as Applied to Morality: 1. Its Scientific Necessity', *The Philosophical Review* 11, no. 2 (1902): 107-24; John Dewey, 'The Evolutionary Method as Applied to Morality: II. Its Significance for Conduct', *The Philosophical Review* 11, no. 4 (1902): 353-71.

³⁸ Thorstein Veblen, 'Why Is Economics Not an Evolutionary Science?', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 12, July (1898): 378-93. The discussion of Veblen draws on Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), 328.

which seeks realisation and expression in an unfolding activity'.³⁹ For Veblen, the agent's 'methods of life to-day' are 'enforced upon him by the habits of life, carried over from yesterday' and by 'circumstances left as the mechanical residue of the life of yesterday'. These 'residues' become the point of departure from which genetic (evolutionary) history traces 'the cumulative working out of the economic interest in the cultural sequence'.⁴⁰

Dewey's approach to history is consistent with his approach to continuities of dualisms more generally. He argues that genetic history is a scientific approach that overcomes dualisms of intuitionism and empiricism because it embodies the principle of continuity of process that does not separate past and present.⁴¹ For Goodsell genetic history is scientific because it seeks 'ideals which are suggested by actual conditions, not formed in the study by speculation'.⁴² For Dewey genetic history is scientific because it enables the scholar to determine 'the exact conditions, and the only conditions, which are involved in [a phenomenon] coming into being', which he argues means there is a direct parallel between genetic history and scientific experiment. In genetic history it is the presentation of the matter in a simplified form that enables the researcher to 'detach and grasp separately elements which are wholly lost in the complexity of the mature phases'.⁴³ Dewey sees this presentation as analogous to the artificial isolation of a physical fact from its usual context in the experimental method of the physical sciences. This isolation enables the significance of the later 'members' of

³⁹ Veblen, 'Why is Economics Not an Evolutionary Science?', 391.

⁴⁰ Veblen, 'Why is Economics Not an Evolutionary Science?', 394.

⁴¹ Dewey, 'Evolutionary Method: 11', 371.

⁴² Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 4.

⁴³ Dewey, 'Evolutionary Method: 1', 123.

the series to be established, and each successive degree of complication to be traced ‘as it introduces itself’.⁴⁴

Having found conditions operating historically by themselves, we can see what happens when these conditions come together. We can refer the more complicated fact to the combination of conditions. Here we have the counterpart of the synthetic recombination, or cumulative method of experiment. We put together the separate threads coming from different sources, and see how they are woven into a pattern so extensive and minute as to defy the analysis of direct inspection.⁴⁵

The ‘fact’ is not to be viewed in isolation but is given meaning as a ‘distinct and yet related part of a larger historic continuum’ which enables an interpretation of the process operating under different conditions.⁴⁶ For Dewey, this makes genetic history ‘an organ for analysis of the warp and woof of the present social fabric of making known the forces which have woven the pattern’.⁴⁷ But what is important, writes Dewey, is not the identity of the content, but the method of comparison and abstraction, which he argues must point to differences; for only through insight into diversification, he argues, can the hold upon the process become ‘vital and concrete’.⁴⁸

For Dewey, the analogy of control from the physical sciences means that genetic history has the potential to lead to intellectual control because of the ability to interpret phenomena. He also locates genetic history as a tool for practical control because of ‘the ability to secure desirable and avoid

⁴⁴ Dewey, ‘Evolutionary Method: 1’, 117.

⁴⁵ Dewey, ‘Evolutionary Method: 1’, 117.

⁴⁶ Dewey, ‘Evolutionary Method: 1’, 123-4.

⁴⁷ Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 208.

⁴⁸ Dewey, ‘Evolutionary Method: 1’, 119.

undesirable future experiences'.⁴⁹ Dewey argues that because the genetic method helps us see the present situation comprehensively and analytically, and to grasp factors that have counted in different ways, it enables us to direct conduct itself. From Dewey's perspective, this makes genetic history amenable to questions of ethics and morals. For Goodsell it makes genetic history an element in the toolbox to ameliorate the political situation of women. The following section deploys diffractive reading to explore some of the threads through which the *effects* of this difference in Goodsell's and Dewey's deployment of history are set to work.

Genetic history as pedagogical and ameliorative tool

Dewey argues that genetic history provides the intellectual tools to bring morality into the realm of science⁵⁰ through enquiry into processes through which moral practices and ideas have originated.⁵¹ We cannot, for example, says Dewey take a present case of parental care, or of a child's untruthfulness, and cut it into sections, or tear it into physical pieces, or subject it to chemical analysis. Only through history, through a consideration of how it came to be what it is, can we unravel it and trace the interweaving of its constituent parts.⁵² He sees genetic history as a method for determining how specific moral values came to be, and as a way of determining their significance as indicated in their 'career'.⁵³ His genetic history of 'moral facts' operates on the assumption that norms, ideals

⁴⁹ Dewey, 'Evolutionary Method: 1', 123-4.

⁵⁰ Dewey, 'Evolutionary Method: 11', 355.

⁵¹ Dewey, 'Evolutionary Method: 1', 113.

⁵² Dewey, 'Evolutionary Method: 1', 113.

⁵³ Dewey, 'Evolutionary Method: 11', 356

and unreflective customs arise in response to the demands of particular situations and once in existence operate with a lesser or greater success.⁵⁴ He argues that genetic history is an instrument of inquiry, of interpretation, and of criticism of current assumptions and aspirations because the ‘pasts’ of currently accepted customs, beliefs, moral ideals, hopes, and aspirations become available for analysis.⁵⁵ For Dewey moral judgments are judgments about ways to act, about deeds to do, about habits to form, and about ends to cultivate. From Dewey’s viewpoint genetic history ‘directs’ conduct because it modifies a judgment, or a conviction, which leads to modified conduct.⁵⁶ Pursued in this fashion, argues Dewey, history is of ethical value in teaching.

In *Ethics* (1908), Dewey and Tufts adopt a problem-based approach to analysis in which they locate genetic history as a pedagogical device to assist students view the field of morality ‘objectively’ and to see problems as ‘real problems’. They argue that considering how moral values were formed in the first instance⁵⁷ and tracing moral life ‘through typical epochs of its development’, enables students to realise what is involved in their own habitual standpoints.⁵⁸ Dewey and Tufts argue that as students move from simpler material⁵⁹ and trace ‘rudiments’ and ‘survivals’, some of which apply to the present and some of which do not, genetic history’s comparative element sharpens ‘vision’

⁵⁴ Dewey, ‘Evolutionary Method: 11’, 356

⁵⁵ Dewey, ‘Evolutionary Method: 11’, 370.

⁵⁶ Dewey, ‘Evolutionary Method: 11’, 370.

⁵⁷ John Dewey and James H, Tufts, *Ethics*, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1908 [1909 edition on kindle]), loc. 17826.

While the overall text of *Ethics* was approved by Dewey, the section on the family is not discussed in this article because it was written by Tufts.

⁵⁸ Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, Preface.

⁵⁹ Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, loc.17829.

and awakens students' 'attention' when considering theoretical matters,⁶⁰ From this perspective, genetic history constitutes a style of reason⁶¹ and technology of the self⁶² in which the self is written through the increasing self-regulation of the learner as moral subject, able to intervene in moral and social affairs⁶³ through a form of historical consciousness around the idea that learning about the lineage that led to the present is needed to build both society and its citizens.⁶⁴

In *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution* Goodsell situates genetic history as 'most likely to be efficient in bringing about a better state of affairs in any problematic situation'⁶⁵ because it gives 'respect for facts', rather than for 'theories about facts' and so provides 'broad and

⁶⁰ Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, locs.17829, 19832.

⁶¹ Thomas, S. Popkewitz, 'Styles of Reason: Historicism, Historicizing, and the History of Education', in *Rethinking the History of Education*, ed Popkewitz, 1-26, here 4.

⁶² Michel Foucault, 'Technologies of the Self', in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, ed. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton (London: Tavistock, 1988), 16-49.

⁶³ Thomas Popkewitz, 'The Reason of Reason Cosmopolitanism and the Governing of Schooling', in *Dangerous Coagulations? The Uses of Foucault in the Study of Education*, ed. Bernadette M. Baker and Katharine E. Heyning (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 189-224.

⁶⁴ Friedrich, Daniel S.Friedrich, 'The Mobilization of Historical Consciousness in the Narratives About the Last Argentine Dictatorship', in *(Re)Constructing Memory: School Textbooks and the Imagination of the Nation*, ed. James H. Williams, 13-34. (Rotterdam: SensePublishers, 2014), 13-34, here 17.

⁶⁵ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 3.

accurate knowledge' as the first step in social reform.⁶⁶ An enlightened understanding of how certain laws, customs and ideas came to be and why they are still maintained, she writes, is the first step toward working out a satisfactory theory of how things ought to be.⁶⁷

As the following section explores, Goodsell deploys genetic history in her arguments for reform of women's education. The first part of the next section reads Goodsell's *The Education of Women, A History of the Family as a Social and Educational Institution*, and Dewey's *Democracy and Education* through each other. This diffractive reading is not undertaken to compare and contrast whether the 'vivification' of Goodsell's work results in degrees of 'fidelity' with concepts as used by Dewey which would be to 'empty' history by seeing Dewey's writing as a fixed idea and texts as enclosed objects.⁶⁸ Rather, reading diffractively seeks the results of combining the disturbances created by reading the texts through each other, which Barad terms 'superpositions'. In Barad's deployment of diffraction as metaphor this is analogous to how a new wave emerges when individual waves in the sea flow together having met an obstruction or flow against a breaker.⁶⁹ The two 'breakers' around which the diffractive reading focuses in the next section are aspects that Goodsell constitutes as 'problems' and which thread through her use of history and her arguments to reconfigure women's education: first, social isolation; and second, individualism. Here I am interested in how philosophi-

⁶⁶ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 3-4.

⁶⁷ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 3.

⁶⁸ Pierre-Marc de Biasi, 'Towards a Science of Literature: Manuscript Analysis and the Genesis of the Work', in *Genetic Criticism: Texts and Avant-Textes*, ed. Jed Deppman, Daniel Ferrer and Michael Groden (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Incorporated, 2004), 36-68, here 37.

⁶⁹ Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, 28, 74.

cal concepts might thread into Goodsell's historical analysis. I also use diffractive reading to consider whether, despite Goodsell's acknowledgement of the 'vivification' of Dewey's work, differences emerge between Goodsell's and Dewey's writings that might align with Dewey's comment that women's 'philosophising' would not be the same 'in viewpoint or tenor' as that composed from the standpoint of 'the different masculine experience of things'.

Genetic history and social participation

In the *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution* and *The Education of Women* Goodsell uses genetic history to emphasise that ideas of womanhood are historical and social constructs,⁷⁰ and to deny the inevitability of society 'as it is presently organised'.⁷¹ These ideas form key elements in her critique of Hall and Thorndike's views of women as innately emotional and nurturing and intellectually inferior because of their biological role as mothers.⁷² In *The Education of Women* Goodsell points to the historic cramping of life and its effects that result from women's social isolation in the family with the result that 'she failed to develop in any marked degree those social qualities so highly esteemed by civilised men'.⁷³

In *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution* Goodsell deploys a genetic analysis allied with an orientalist orientation characteristic of the feminist discourse of her day to rehearse a similar thread of social isolation in a narrowly personal environment. She characterises the 'patriarchal family of the Greek type' through 'problematic' marriage-relations that exclude reciprocity between

⁷⁰ Weiler, 'No Women Wanted', 131.

⁷¹ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 347.

⁷² Weiler, 'No Women Wanted', 130.

⁷³ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 6-7.

husband and wife but includes sexual impropriety. She sees arranged marriages leading to ignorance of each others' temperaments and characters, which she argues provides a serious handicap to marriage relations. She maintains this is exacerbated by what she terms the docility of the typical girl-bride in contrast to the cultivation of the husband, a situation Goodsell considers is rendered more difficult by the seclusion of the bride in early life 'remote from all developing influences' save that of her own family and friends. Due to the effect of confining the Greek woman largely to the home, the husband's range of interests and activities increases as he engages with public questions in the market-place or the state gymnasium, with the result that the life of the man and wife 'flow on widely separate channels' As a result, a marriage 'begun in indifference' not infrequently ends in 'cold estrangement if not in positive aversion' because 'the wife's mental power is limited wholly by personal and household concerns'.⁷⁴ She portrays Ionian married women lapsing into adultery with slaves as 'evidence of the truth ... that purity in its purest sense cannot be secured by ignorance and seclusion'.⁷⁵ She points to a contrast with prostitutes living in houses licensed by the state and to the existence in Greek cities of Heteriae - women of foreign birth and trained from childhood to a life of immorality, but who have been well educated, well informed on public affairs and socially gifted, but are accessible only to wealthy or socially-prominent men. She critiques a Greek view of marriage for neglecting the education of respectable women who proved 'dull and naive in the company of cultivated husbands', while granting 'dissolute' women intellectual training.⁷⁶

What emerges when this genetic account of the 'problematic' 'patriarchal family of the Greek type' is read through *Democracy and Education* is an underlying dualism of communication-isolation

⁷⁴ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 91-2

⁷⁵ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 91.

⁷⁶ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 95-6, 109.

that both Goodsell and Dewey work to redress. Like Dewey Goodsell locates the family as a social institution in organic relation to other social institutions in promoting the best interests of community life.⁷⁷ She also portrays democracy as a mode of associated living⁷⁸ based on inclusive ways of social and political action, at the heart of which is the process of communication that Biesta terms conjoint activity,⁷⁹ which hinges around the principle of shared interests and opportunities for communication and participation. This constitutes the primary test of the worth of any form of human association, a position that Dewey outlines in chapter 7 of *Democracy and Education*.⁸⁰ Sharing this philosophical stance, Goodsell depicts an ‘undesirable society’ in which ‘internal and external barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience’ operate and are inimical to women’s ‘development’.⁸¹ Her historical account is underpinned by a philosophical stance concerned with dualisms of communication-isolation that in her account also map onto dualisms of public-private.

In *Democracy and Education* Dewey, too, acknowledges serious barriers between men and women and includes gender relations in his criticism of the hard and fast walls which mark off social groups and classes.⁸² These prevent fluent and free communication by setting up different types of life experience, each with isolated subject matter, aim and standard of values. He, too, rejects the

⁷⁷ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 6.

⁷⁸ see also Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 87.

⁷⁹ Gert J. J. Biesta, ‘Education and the Democratic Person: Towards a Political Understanding of Democratic Education’, *Teachers College Record* 109, no. 3 (2007): 740-69.

⁸⁰ Biesta, ”Of All Affairs”, 33, 35.

⁸¹ Terms taken from Biesta, ”Of All Affairs”, 35

⁸² Susan Laird, ‘Women and Gender in John Dewey’s Philosophy of Education’, *Educational Theory* 38, no. 1 (1988): 111-29.

then-debated misconception of the inherent mental inferiority of the female sex,⁸³ But, argues Weiler, in *Democracy and Education*, Dewey takes the classic liberal feminist line of women being employed like slaves (and like artisans) to furnish ‘the means of substance in order that others, those adequately equipped with intelligence, may live the life of leisurely concern with things intrinsically worthwhile’.⁸⁴ Dewey also omits from his account of gender any view of the husband in reciprocal relation to the woman, which Susan Laird argues leaves unexamined questions about possible female subordination and servitude within the family.⁸⁵ In Goodsell’s account of Greek women’s isolation, female subordination and servitude within the family run as threads through her analysis and reappear in in her discussion of the individualism of the American family, to which discussion now turns.

In *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution* Goodsell’s analysis of the modern American family forms part of what she views as a larger problematic around the family’s ‘instability and maladjustment to social conditions’.⁸⁶ Goodsell sees the modern American family composed of ‘individuals with approximately equal rights before the law, and with a disposition to assert those rights in ways likely to weaken the unity of family life’.⁸⁷ She seeks the ‘origins’ of the American family’s individualism through a genetic history of the Roman family, which she depicts in the

⁸³ John Dewey, ‘Is Co-Education Injurious to Girls?’ *Ladies Home Journal* 28, June (1911): 22-61, here 22. See the discussion in Laird, ‘Women and Gender’, and also Susan Laird, ‘Rethinking “Coeducation”’, *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 13, no. 3 (1994): 361-78.

⁸⁴ Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 243.

⁸⁵ Laird, ‘Women and Gender’.

⁸⁶ This forms part of the wider concern that Goodsell addresses in *The History of the Family*, about the present situation of the family, which she views in terms of instability and maladjustment to social conditions.

⁸⁷ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 113.

‘simple days’ as ‘unified’, with no place for the individual outside the family institution - ‘to be a free-lance, not owing obedience to a family head, was to be a social outcast’.⁸⁸ Goodsell portrays the Roman wife and mother in these ‘simple days’ as both honoured and subordinated, respected but without legal rights either to property or as a person: she ‘merely pass[ed] from the power of the father to that of her husband’.⁸⁹ But within these restrictions, argues Goodsell, the Roman matron was mistress of the household, and respected as the guardian of the family honour, her husband’s partner in the education of the children, and priestess beside her husband in family worship, able to walk in public with considerable freedom, when men were expected to make way as a mark of their respect. It was custom, argues Goodsell, not the command of her husband that restricted a Roman woman’s movements. Goodsell notes that in what she terms the ‘unified’ Roman family girls received a careful home training in their future duties as Roman housewives, and some middle class [sic] girls attended *lidi* (private elementary schools)’. She concludes that girls were probably not left in complete ignorance (unlike Greek maidens) but were given some instruction in reading and writing at home.⁹⁰

In her genetic exercise Goodsell traces a growing individualism of the Roman family as customs changed with the change of ideas resulting in the Roman family coming to resemble the American family in a number of ways. Goodsell connects changes in the status of women to the Romans’ 30 year war, when management of estates devolved to wives, and some Roman women became wealthy from accumulated wealth that flowed into Rome both as a result of war, and from the decreasing population of men from death, enslavement, or absence on duty. For Goodsell, the passage of authority in the management of family estates from absent husbands to their wives provided a

⁸⁸ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 113.

⁸⁹ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 115.

⁹⁰ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 116.

training in self-reliance and efficiency that led to a rise in the social status of women. While this power was delegated (and withdrawn on the return of the family head), it was a source of personal self-worth that fostered women's desire for broader opportunity and influence and stimulated their development of 'vigorous personalities'.⁹¹ This was coupled with an unwillingness to submit to restrictions on their daily lives and interests when husbands returned from war, which she portrays as having wide-ranging effects on family relations, as some Roman women sought to become learned, and some became a power in politics. She concludes that changes in the law resulting from changed conditions meant that the Roman matron was to all intents and purposes a free agent controlling her own actions and to some extent her property, while a changed conception of marriage made the wife the equal of her husband and recognised her right to the full and free development of her powers as an individual with responsibilities and privileges.⁹²

Differences emerge through diffractive reading between elements of analysis related to women that Goodsell deploys in her genetic history of the individualism of the American family and elements of analysis that Dewey deploys when locating women with slaves. The shifting exercise (and diminution) of male power as well as the shifting relative status of the woman under different systems and in different historical periods emerge in Goodsell's text but not in Dewey's. In Goodsell's text (but not in Dewey's) women also traverse boundaries of public and private in their exercise of power and authority as circumstances change. In her historical account Goodsell demonstrates continuities of experience across dualisms of public and private as they relate in experience to women

⁹¹ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 131

⁹² Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 134.

and men. But questions about female power and practices that demonstrate continuities across public-private dualisms are eclipsed in Dewey's account of women as slaves, despite continuities forming a key principle in Dewey's philosophical approach to dualisms.⁹³

What 'comes to matter' in Dewey's account is that his position on dualisms of gender resonates more generally with an apolitical stance that Biesta identifies in Dewey's work. Like Hanson, Biesta highlights the stress on the moral in Dewey's final paragraph in *Democracy and Education*, which Biesta relates to Dewey's espousal of the notion of *Bildung* - the process of self-formation through the dialectical interaction of the individual with culture and society,⁹⁴ which Biesta argues orients Dewey towards an account that is moral and social. Goodsell, too, sees the 'socialised and moralised character' as the 'supreme end of education'⁹⁵ and she tackles ways in which women should be educated in order to participate as full and equal citizens in a democracy.⁹⁶ But her political desire to provide a prescription to reform women's education orients her towards a notion of *Erziehung* - a stance towards education, that as Biesta notes, is focussed on actions by an educator to promote particular 'qualities' in those being educated, with the ultimate aim of promoting their freedom and independence.⁹⁷

⁹³ See also Laird, 'Women and Gender' and Charleen H. Seigfried, ed. *Feminist Interpretations of John Dewey* (Pennsylvania State University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010).

⁹⁴ Gert J.J. Biesta, 'Education and Democracy Revisited: Dewey's Democratic Deficit', In *John Dewey's Democracy and Education: A British Tribute*, ed. Steve Higgins and Frank Coalfield (London: UCL IOE Press, 2016), 149-69, here 153.

⁹⁵ Biesta, 'Dewey's Democratic Deficit', 177.

⁹⁶ Weiler, 'No Women Wanted', 131.

⁹⁷ Biesta, 'Dewey's Democratic Deficit', 166

Because diffraction patterns record (as Haraway puts it) 'the history of interaction, interference, reinforcement [and] difference',⁹⁸ diffractive reading enables researchers to account for both 'the history of how something came to *be* as well as what it *is simultaneously*'.⁹⁹ There are resonances between diffractive analysis and Foucault's genealogical approach in that diffractive reading enables glimpses of processes through which truths and knowledge are produced, as well as the truths and knowledge produced,¹⁰⁰ as analysis of Goodsell's and Dewey's texts illustrate.¹⁰¹

In the final section, I comment on the particular 'qualities' associated with Goodsell's prescription of liberal and vocational education for women. I use diffractive reading to explore continuities of experience in the grid that gives intelligibility to the principles that order liberal and vocational education in Goodsell's views on women's education which draw on her ongoing engagement with dualisms of isolation-communication and her analysis of individualism.

Genetic history and women's education

⁹⁸ Donna J Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium: Femaleman(C)_Meets_Oncomouse* (London: Routledge, 1993 [1997 edition], 273.

⁹⁹ Donna Haraway and Thyrsa Nichols Goodeve, *How Like a Leaf: Donna J Haraway. An Interview with Thyrsa Nichols Goodeve* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 104, italics in original.

¹⁰⁰ Johanna Sefyrin, 'From Profession to Practices in It Design', *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 37, no. 6 (2012): 708-28 points to resonances between diffraction and genealogy.

¹⁰¹ In this, diffractive reading is analogous to laboratory experiments in physics, where diffraction experiments record the history of the passage of light waves through slits in a screen as it is broken up on a screen on the other side of the slits, as well as what happens with the light.

Like Dewey Goodsell articulates a focus on the moral person almost at the end of *The Education of Women*. In her sights are ‘problems’ of the ‘new girl’, the ‘flapper’¹⁰² and the woman educated in the liberal arts college, whom she portrays as ‘isolated’ in ways that resonate with her genetic analysis of communication- isolation dualisms and of individualism in *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*. Goodsell identifies the withdrawal of highly educated women from ‘intimate contacts with social life in the interest of a purely personal development’ as problematic.¹⁰³ For Goodsell the appeal of the faculty of colleges and universities is to the intellect not to the ‘social impulses’ or to the ‘power to do’.¹⁰⁴ This, Goodsell argues, deprives young women of opportunities to work with an organised group for an end which serves the public good or to come into ‘sympathetic and helpful contact’ with many types of human beings. For Goodsell, this runs the risk that women’s growth in social understanding and sympathy will be permanently hampered as they withdraw into a social isolation from a ‘mistaken sense of complete independence which may result in the arrest of growth’ and a ‘crystallisation of life’.¹⁰⁵ Goodsell warns that such isolation risks both a ‘retardation of personal development’ and an irreparable loss to society’.¹⁰⁶

Goodsell’s discussion of what she describes as an almost complete exclusion from liberal arts colleges for women of courses having a vocational bearing resonates with Dewey’s views in *Democracy and the Education* on liberal and vocational education and on the individual and the world.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 327.

¹⁰³ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 338.

¹⁰⁴ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 337.

¹⁰⁵ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 338.

¹⁰⁶ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 338.

¹⁰⁷ Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 285.

As in Dewey's account of the formation of the moral person, Goodsell sees democracy as a mode of associated living and the school as an instrument for bringing about democracy by providing opportunities for pupils to participate in the construction, maintenance and transformation of social and political life more generally. Goodsell, too, stresses the importance of an education linked to active experience and everyday life. In *The Conflict of Humanism and Naturalism* she had argued that only when educational institutions reproduce life-conditions which challenge thought by presenting it with novel and problematic situations can 'knowledge capable of functioning in the guidance life ... be acquired and applied'.¹⁰⁸ Such views inform her argument in *The Education of Women* that educational institutions for women have to realise that 'free personality cannot attain fruition in an academic atmosphere aloof from the concerns of every day social life'.

For Goodsell, the academic aloofness from the concerns of every day life with which she charges women's liberal arts colleges reinforces a historic conception of culture 'as a priceless personal possession, having nothing to do with the work-a-day world'.¹⁰⁹ As such it constitutes a response to the 'crisis in culture' to which Biesta and Burbules argue Dewey's work also responds.¹¹⁰ In *The Crisis of Naturalism and Humanism* Goodsell traces this crisis genetically to a bifurcation of thought in the philosophy of nature and of man around naturalism and humanism.¹¹¹ Here, she ar-

¹⁰⁸ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 172.

¹⁰⁹ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 330

¹¹⁰ Gert J. J. Biesta and Nicholas C Burbules, *Pragmatism and Educational Research* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003) term this a 'crisis in rationality', 16.

¹¹¹ The introduction to *The Conflict of Naturalism and Humanism* traces the emergence in Greek philosophy of naturalism and humanism. In four succeeding chapters Goodsell considers their 'emergence' in the renaissance, their 'more

gues that bifurcation leads to a failure by the humanist to see that ‘ideals are vital when born of present needs of ministering to them’ and causes the naturalist to be blind to ‘the truth that the very facts to which he binds his faith are dependent for their discovery upon those ideals he ignores’.¹¹² In *The Crisis of Naturalism and Humanism*, she sees the task of educational history as abolishing this opposition by harmonising the discordant elements in the present-day curriculum. For Goodsell, this requires a higher degree of unity in the aim and method of education¹¹³ around the ‘precious product of the interaction of thought and things’.¹¹⁴ Like Dewey in *The School and Society*¹¹⁵ and *The Child and the Curriculum*¹¹⁶ Goodsell argues that subjects have become detached from living experience¹¹⁷ and severed from their source in social life with the result that they provide an individualist type of education¹¹⁸ in which instruction deals too much with ‘spectral abstractions’ and

clear definition’ in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the humanism of the German enlightenment; and the conflict of naturalism and humanism in the nineteenth century. [Further work is needed to unpack the relationship of her text to contemporary German debates about the relationship of the sciences and humanities.](#) The following chapter, focussed on humanism and naturalism in education, includes an account of how this ‘conflict’ plays out in educational theory and practise in different periods. Throughout the text, Goodsell provides accounts of particular thinkers and summaries of naturalism and humanism at the conclusion of each period. The last chapter presents pragmatism as the means to overcome the conflict which she argues has remained unhealed to the present time.

¹¹² Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 4.

¹¹³ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 163.

¹¹⁴ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 165.

¹¹⁵ John Dewey, *The School and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1900).

¹¹⁶ John Dewey, *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1902).

¹¹⁷ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 175.

¹¹⁸ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 175, 177.

too little with warm realities', so that students do not perceive that 'second hand knowledge, so logically presented, once had its birth in experience and leads back to it'.¹¹⁹ Knowledge, she states, cannot be digested vicariously for any individual. If it is to become part of the 'bone and sinew of ... intellectual and moral life it must catch hold of that life - it must show its credentials';¹²⁰ for to educate, argues Goodsell, is to 'make plain the bearing of all knowledge upon human life, in its physical, social or moral aspects'.¹²¹

These ideas from *The Crisis of Naturalism and Humanism* re-appear in *The Education of Women* in Goodsell's argument that studies have been fenced off from each other so that they serve different ends and embrace difference values, which she relates to prevalent views of what the 'liberally educated man or woman should achieve'.¹²² Like Dewey in *Democracy and Education* Goodsell eschews a hierarchy of subjects. She argues that the value of a study cannot be determined by the nature of the subject matter with which it deals. Rather (and like Dewey), its value lies in the range and depth of 'appreciations' that it makes possible.¹²³ Her prescription for women's education aims to break down barriers between subjects as well as between subjects and daily life by providing students with 'live experiences' through opportunities for bodily activity in projects they themselves frame.¹²⁴ Such 'vital experiences', argues Goodsell (acknowledging Dewey's *Democracy and Education*), would mean intellectual, emotional, and personal values would be personally felt, along

¹¹⁹ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 172.

¹²⁰ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 173.

¹²¹ Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 173.

¹²² Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 330.

¹²³ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 335.

¹²⁴ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 331.

with the joy of ‘social give and take’,¹²⁵ with the result that ‘living relationship[s] to each other and to the social life of the ... world would be woven into the ... structure of the mental life of young women’.¹²⁶

Goodsell’s suspicion of a higher education for women that is aloof from the concerns of every day life and her wish to break down barriers between subjects leads to a prescription for women’s education that would introduce a domestic element into the college of liberal arts and the high school and would introduce liberal education into education for girls of the labouring class and into trade schools for women. Goodsell argues that vocational training has been seen only in terms of acquiring technical skill with immediate market value, whereas she sees it as just as important for girls of the labouring class to ‘enlarge the scope and significance of their education’ through the ‘infusion of liberal education with social purpose’. For Goodsell, this requires ‘the emancipation of vocational education from the dominance of cramping conceptions of its end’ with the aim of becoming ‘truly liberalising to the mind’.¹²⁷ Conversely, domestic instruction in the college of liberal arts and the high school is to become ‘infused with social purpose and efficiency’. Goodsell’s prescriptions for liberal and vocational education for women play into her desire for an education that is closer to the experience of day to day life and into her stress on social inter-relations in society, where she, like Dewey, sees the family as a basic unit. Her proposals for conjoining liberal and vocational aspects in women’s education hark back to a need she identifies in *The Conflict of Naturalism and*

¹²⁵ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 331.

¹²⁶ Goodsell, *Education of Women*, 332.

¹²⁷ Whether Goodsell engaged practically with working women’s education is a matter for future research. For Dewey’s support of working women’s education, see: Maria Tamboukou, *Women Workers' Education, Life Narratives and Politics: Geographies, Histories, Pedagogies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), 44-46.

Humanism for the ‘interaction of thought and things’.¹²⁸ This stress in *The Crisis of Naturalism and Humanism* on elucidating the relation in experience of what otherwise separated out as dualisms threads as a philosophical element through her historical scholarship going forward and her prescriptions for educational practice.

But Goodsell was also on feminist ground, where analysis of the position of women and their role in the family were diverse, as Goodsell herself outlines in the final chapter of *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*. Here she attempts to identify dualisms by classifying theories of women and the family in dichotomous terms as radical or conservative before sketching out a middle ground of experience in which to locate ‘moderate progressives’. These are the ‘educated men and women’ who constitute ‘the majority of the enlightened and reflective minds in the community’¹²⁹ who are in favour of a ‘gradual solution for the perplexing questions involved in modern family life in the light of reason, good will and social experience’.¹³⁰ Goodsell’s desire to introduce a domestic element into the college of liberal arts and the high school and to introduce liberal education into vocational and trade school education for girls emerges as a prescription to bring together educational practice that is otherwise separated. It resonates with her desire for continuities in respect of dualisms and to ‘harmonize’ otherwise ‘discordant elements’ that in the philosophy of her doctoral thesis are grounded in a bifurcation of humanism and naturalism. But emerging from her thinking in *The Education of Women* about dualisms of liberal and vocational education is an image of womanhood in which the particular ‘qualities’ of the woman are shaped through both intellectual *and* vocational activity. This continuity can be mapped, in turn, onto the double burden of

¹²⁸ .Goodsell, *Naturalism and Humanism*, 165.

¹²⁹ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 536ff.

¹³⁰ Goodsell, *History of the Family*, 550.

work *and* home for women and so onto the time-poor everyday lives of women, with its dilemmas and contradictions, that feminist scholars have worked down the years to understand, critique and overcome¹³¹ and which intersects with notions of class and race in diverse ways.¹³²

Conclusion

Emerging from a diffractive reading is Goodsell's and Dewey's shared approach to genetic history as a scientific tool for understanding the present and as a pedagogical device that fashions the 'educated person' through a style of reason that configures a form of historical consciousness amenable to the pursuit of change in both society and its citizens. Diffractive reading also illustrates a shared orientation around communication that Biesta argues is central to Dewey's view of an education to counteract the 'crisis in culture' and the obfuscation of continuities across hard-to-shift dualisms.

But diffractive reading also points up 'exclusions that [come to] matter'.¹³³ Dewey's central principle of continuity between dualisms is eclipsed in respect of his treatment of gender relations. While Goodsell interpolates gendered power and female practices into her accounts and traces women's movement across public-private boundaries, Dewey eclipses questions of male power and leaves the dualisms of public-private intact. What emerges as a matter that 'comes to matter' is that his position around relations of gender feeds into what Biesta identifies as a more general 'apolitical' stance in his work: one that orients Dewey to a view of view of education that is moral and social and aligned with a notion of education as *Bildung*. Goodsell's political intent in redressing the position of women leads to a prescription for women's education geared to 'qualities' fashioned through liberal *and* vocational education, and linked to the importance that she (like Dewey) attributes to the

¹³¹ Christina Hughes, *Women's Contemporary Lives: Within and Beyond the Mirror* (London: Routledge, 2002).

¹³² See Weiler, 'No Women Wanted'.

¹³³ Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity', 811.

family as a social unit and illustrates an orientation to a view of education as *Erziehung*. While Goodsell addresses aspects of women's education through an agenda that male progressive educators ignored, her continued adherence to a philosophical project that sought to relate dualisms to each other in experience underpins tensions in prescriptions for an education comprising both liberal *and* vocational education. This adherence suggests a potential thread for future study of the range of tensions to which Weiler's analysis of Goodsell's approach to women's education and citizenship alerts.

In returning to the two statements that prompted this article, a diffractive analysis illustrates that Goodsell shapes historical analysis through genetic history as outlined by Dewey and through a conceptual apparatus grounded in a philosophical project she and Dewey shared. This was focussed around the relation in experience of dualisms that she pursued from *The Conflict of Humanism and Naturalism* onwards. For Dewey history emerges as a tool of philosophy, whereas for Goodsell, philosophy emerges as a tool in her historical analysis. In re-orienting her focus to women and the family it was the balance between history and philosophy that shifted in Goodsell's scholarship rather than a turn *from* philosophy after doctoral study *to* the study of women and the family.

Goodsell continued to adhere to shared notions of education and of democracy with Dewey to which her acknowledgements of Dewey's 'vivification' alerts; but she was no 'mere student' of Dewey's philosophy. The political intent that drove her scholarship and led to an approach resonating with *Erziehung* is suggestive of Dewey's comment that women's philosophising would not be the same 'in viewpoint or tenor' as that composed from the standpoint of the 'masculine experience of things'. But whether Dewey's comment on women having yet made little contribution to philosophy may have had more to do with the isolation of women from the powerful all male discussion

groups at Teachers College in the inter-war period that Weiler traces must remain a matter of conjecture.¹³⁴

Despite the tendency for male contemporaries to ignore women educationists, both Weiler and Elizabeth St Pierre point to the importance of considering relationships between women writers and the writings of male contemporaries with whom they share both a language and political goals, but whose writings ‘faced towards (and plug into) concerns that differ in both focus and intensity’.¹³⁵ In seeking connections, contrasts, and interference patterns¹³⁶ diffractive reading provides a strategy through which to work in the ‘middle’ of Goodsell’s and Dewey’s writing. It does so in ways with the potential to highlight both processes through which truths and knowledge are produced and the truths and knowledge produced. Diffractive reading illustrates some similarities and differences with the ‘mosaic of quotations’ constituting intertextuality to which Kristeva alerts.¹³⁷ In highlighting elements that both Goodsell and Dewey shared, but also how exclusions in their texts come to matter,¹³⁸ diffraction assists in moving beyond the ‘vivification’ that signals links between Goodsell’s and Dewey’s texts; and it moves beyond how Goodsell’s attribution of this ‘vivification’ might mark her ‘intentions’ to direct and control the reception of the text, as Genette’s intra-textual

¹³⁴ Weiler, ‘No Women Wanted’, 133.

¹³⁵ Kathleen Weiler, ‘Introduction’, in *Feminist Engagements: Reading, Resisting, and Revisioning Male Theorists in Education and Cultural Studies*, ed. Kathleen Weiler (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1-12, here 2; Elizabeth Adams St Pierre, ‘Coming to Theory: Finding Foucault and Deleuze’, in *idem*, 141-64.

¹³⁶ Simon Ceder, *Towards a Posthuman Theory of Educational Relationality: Cutting through Water* (London: Routledge, 2018), 54.

¹³⁷ Kristeva, ‘Word, Dialogue and Novel’.

¹³⁸ Barad, ‘Posthumanist Performativity’, 811.

notion of paratext might suggest.¹³⁹ In pursuing the *effects* of ‘differences that matter’ that Barad contends result from ‘interferences’ between texts¹⁴⁰ diffraction moves beyond comparing or contrasting texts for the intertextual ‘blends’ and ‘clashes’ to which Roland Barthes refers,¹⁴¹ and it goes beyond the search for competing and conflicting voices and dialogic clashes to which Mikhail Bakhtin’s notion of polyphony alerts.¹⁴² It is in the potential for new understandings to emerge from the ‘interferences’ between texts where the claims for the benefits of diffraction can be found. But it remains an open question whether a research strategy around diffraction constitutes an enhanced form of intertextual and intra-textual reading.

¹³⁹ Gérard Genette, ‘The Proustian Paratext’, *SubStance: a Review of Theory and Literary Criticism* 17, no. 2 (1988): 63-77.

¹⁴⁰ Barad, ‘Posthumanist Performativity’, 811.

¹⁴¹ Roland Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, Trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 146.

¹⁴² Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, trans. C. Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).