

citation at the end of each chapter. Hence he should have realized that all of those pages were *not* devoted to a discussion of John Dewey's work, as stated in the review, but were mere footnote citations and bibliographic listings. This is in keeping with the standard practice in scholarly books.

It puzzles us as to how your reviewer could have reached this stage in his career without knowing (1) that a scholarly review is not drawn from a previously published review of the same work, and (2) the difference between the discussion of a cited work and the listing of an endnote and a bibliographic reference. Had your reviewer actually looked at the pages, he would have seen the difference.

Daniel Tanner and Laurel N. Tanner

To the Editor:

I must say I was surprised by the nature of the response by Daniel Tanner and Laurel Tanner to my review essay on their *History of the School Curriculum*. The review is sharply critical of the book. In it I argue that the book is a failure on at least three different levels: 1) it is poorly written; 2) it is not really a history of the school curriculum at all but a history of John Dewey's influence on this curriculum; and 3) it advances the claim that this influence was substantial and pervasive, which it was not. The bulk of the essay is devoted to a discussion of why the liberal version of progressivism had so little effect on the structure and content of what is taught in American schools. Given the sweeping nature of this critique, which extended over 4,000 words, it is puzzling to find that they choose to challenge only two sentences out of the entire essay. In one I quote from a previously published review of the book, and in the other I cite the number of page-references to Dewey noted in the index. Let me say a word about each of these concerns.

First, they assert that I "derived much of [my] ammunition from the lead essay review of [their] book which had appeared over a year earlier in the *Educational Researcher*." In fact, I quote a single sentence from this review—simply to demonstrate that I am not the only person who thinks that the writing in the book is, as the other reviewer puts it, "usually uninspired and occasionally dreadful." Nothing else in my essay is drawn from the earlier review—hardly "an appalling violation of scholarship," as the Tanners claim. Much as they might want to deny it, independent reviewers can come to similarly negative conclusions about their book.

Second, they accuse me of taking a scholarly "shortcut" by using the index to count the number of pages where they refer to Dewey. As a result, they say, I artificially increased my tally of the number of actual textual references by mistakenly including pages from the endnotes where

Dewey is merely cited. If true, this means that I am guilty of committing another scholarly offense, which they call “hyperinflation of statistics.” Since I have never been one to inflate his scholarly claims in a manner that can be so easily detected, I was worried by this charge and hastily went back to the index to do another count. In the essay I noted that there were a total of 122 textual references to Dewey, but in the recount I found only 121. The index shows an additional 26 endnote pages where Dewey is cited, but these are not included in the 121 textual references. Thus I hyperinflated my count by a grand total of one. *Mea culpa*. The point of calculating this little statistic was to show the central role the authors assign to Dewey in the shaping of the American curriculum, a role which (as I argue in the essay) he did not in fact play.

My main regret in all this is that the Tanners chose to respond—inaccurately, as it turns out—to two pieces of marginalia in my review without ever challenging the central arguments I was making about their book and about American curriculum history. This could have been a gratifyingly substantive exchange, but unfortunately that was not to be.

David F. Labaree

*Editorial Note:* Letters to the editor are published verbatim.