**Snippets related to dialogic argument from a variety of sources (Only the snippets are assigned for this week’s reading; the links are provided for the benefit of those who wish to view a full item)**

**1. Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays.* Austin: University of Texas Press. (pages 6 and 7)**

There exists a very strong, but one-sided and thus untrustworthy, idea that in order better to understand a foreign culture, one must enter into it, forgetting one's own, and view the world through the eyes of this foreign culture. This idea, as I said, is one-sided. Of course, a certain entry as a living being into a foreign culture, the possibility of seeing the world through its eyes, is a necessary part of the process of understanding it; but if this were the only aspect of this understanding, it would merely be duplication and would not entail anything new or enriching. Creative understanding does not renounce itself, its own place in time, its own culture; and it forgets nothing. In order to understand, it is immensely important for the person who understands to be located outside the object of his or her creative understanding – in time, in space, in culture. For one cannot even see one's own exterior and comprehend it as a whole, and no mirrors or photographs can help; our real exterior can be seen and understood only by other people, because they are located outside us in space and because they are others.

In the realm of culture, outsideness is a most powerful factor in understanding. It is only in the eyes of *another* culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly (but not maximally fully, because there will be cultures that see and understand even more). A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning: they engage in a kind of dialogue, which surmounts the closedness and one-sidedness of these particular meanings, these cultures. We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise itself; we seek answers to our own questions in it; and the foreign culture responds to us by revealing to us its new aspects and new semantic depths. Without *one’s own* questions one cannot creatively understand anything other or foreign (but, of course, the questions must be serious and sincere). Such a dialogic encounter of two cultures does not result in a merging or mixing. Each retains its own unity and *open* totality, but they are mutually enriched.

**2. Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). *Speech Genres & Other Late Essays.* Austin: University of Texas Press. (page 119 and page 121)**

Understanding as dialogue.

The narrow understanding of dialogism as argument, polemics, or parody. These are the externally most obvious, but crude, forms of dialogism. Confidence in another’s word, reverential reception (the authoritative word), apprenticeship, the search for and mandatory nature of deep meaning, *agreement*, its infinite gradations and shadings, … the layering of meaning upon meaning, voice upon voice, strengthening through merging (but not identification), the combination of many voices … that augments understanding, departure beyond the limits of the understood, and so forth.

The Bakhtin chapters and book are not available online. York Libraries call number: P 49 B2813 1986

**3. Williams, T. C. (February 2020). An incoherent truth. *Harpers Magazine, 340*(2037), 5-7.**

When one is “well intentioned” and striving for a better society—however fuzzily that goal may be defined—and when there really is a nihilistic authoritarian holding the polity hostage, moderation and magnanimity toward the opposition can look a lot like delusion and betrayal. But this is shortsighted. In *The Return of the Political,* the leftist political theorist Chantal Mouffe has cautioned against dismissing ideological adversaries out of hand. In her work, she quotes generously from the Nazi legal theorist Carl Schmitt. “It is by facing up to the challenge posed by such a rigorous and perspicacious opponent,” she has written of Schmitt, “that we shall succeed in grasping the weak points” of our own views. Schmitt himself had argued that the primary liberal principle on which all else rests is the idea that truth is only achieved through an unimpeded “competition of opinions,” since there is no final truth in liberalism, no single common good. This is the parliamentary ideal—it demands compromise and debate.

To read full article, click [**here**](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5216bd80e4b0849894968a9c/t/5fa7071092c73f0939b5e8af/1604781842803/williams%2Bfrom%2BHarpers.pdf).

**4. Englund, T. (2006). Deliberative communication: a pragmatist proposal. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 38*(5), 503-520.**

## Introduction

What would a democratic conception of education look like today? In trying to develop a democratic conception of education, I draw on the pragmatic tradition (Englund [1996](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775)). Thus, neo‐pragmatism focuses on communication as a democratic way of life. It creates new visions for the relationship between democracy and education through communication (Englund [2000a](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775)). Many works on deliberative democracy are also inspired by pragmatism, especially Dewey’s ([1984](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775)) *The Public and its Problems*, and are explicitly based on the need for the education of citizens in deliberative capabilities and attitudes (Gutmann and Thompson [1996](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775)). Thus, an ongoing deliberative democracy requires citizens with well‐established deliberative attitudes, and a society that rests on the ideas of deliberative democracy is a long‐term project: [page 503]

### The deliberation concept and the Swedish situation

In efforts to develop what has come to be called ‘the democratic foundation of schools’ in Sweden, the idea of ‘deliberative communication’ has occupied a prominent position. Thus, both the Ministry of Education ([2000](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775)) and the National Agency for Education ([2000](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775)) have advocated deliberative communication as a central form of activity in schools. Deliberative communication is understood in this context as communication in which different opinions and values can be brought face to face,

[with] an endeavour to ensure that each individual takes a stand by listening, deliberating, seeking arguments and evaluating, while at the same time there is a collective effort to find values and norms that everyone can agree upon. (National Agency for Education [2000](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775): 6; my translation) [page 504-505]

Dewey emphasizes the communicative aspects of education and the idea of education as a place for reflection upon common experiences. It is also from Dewey … that we see the idea of a democratic society as an open, communicative society in which institutions such as schools serve as public spaces/weak publics that encourage deliberative communication, and in which the public has to define itself (Englund [1996](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775), Ljunggren [1996a](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775), [b](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775)).

The concept of education which Dewey ([1980](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775): 86) introduces is summarized in the idea of a ‘continuous reconstruction of experience’, and concerning the potential of education he says that

we are doubtless far from realizing the potential efficacy of education as a constructive agency of improving society, from realizing that it represents not only a development of children and youth but also of the future society of which they will be the constituents. (Dewey [1980](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775): 85)

It is also through his emphasis on the relationship between education and democracy as a life‐form that Dewey understands education as a forum for communication between people with different experiences. The communicative criteria put forward by Dewey ([1980](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775)) with the aim of achieving free and open communication between and within groups provide important guidance for the development of criteria for the idea of deliberative communication.

Dewey’s work is basic to the idea of deliberative communication in schools. This is also true of his view that one of the central tasks of education is to develop the capacity of every individual for intelligent deliberation and balanced consideration of alternatives through mutual communication.

To read full article, click [**here**](https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00220270600670775).

**5. O’Dwyer, S. (2001). The classical conservative challenge to Dewey. *Transactions of the Charles S. Pierce Society, 37*(4), 491-514.**

In the footnotes to a number of Richard Rorty's essays and books can be found references to a philosopher whom Rorty thinks highly of; Michael Oakeshott, a British philosopher who taught at the London School of Economics, and who died in 1990. Oakeshott is a formidable representative of the philosophical tradition of classical conservatism, which traces its lineage back to Edmund Burke. The conservatism I am speaking of does not always represent "right wing" political views, and it should not be confused with libertarianism. It is, moreover, really much more a product of British than of American intellectual culture. It is best described in Noel O'Sullivan's book Conservatism as a "philosophy of imperfection" (O'Sullivan 1976, pp. 11-12). Classical conservatism is characterised by its scepticism for Enlightenment rationalism, its conviction that social order is sustained by traditions of adaptable institutions and practices rather than by rational planning, and by its rejection of unlimited democratic sovereignty in favour of a limited political practice amenable to reform. Moreover, unlike the religious conservatism that has typically opposed Deweyan pragmatism, Oakeshott's conservatism does not argue for the transcendental or spiritual status of moral ideals. It provides a secular, non- transcendental account of their status in moral practice. In doing this, it articulates a potentially more interesting challenge for pragmatists to consider.

Just such a challenge is laid down in Oakeshott's book Rationalism in Politics, published in 1960. His criticisms of rationalism in 20th century politics and moral thought cast a wide net, calling in question some central ideological assumptions in the political orthodoxy of both the left and the right, and highlighting the severe shortcomings of a prevailing intellectualism in different branches of moral philosophy. This essay can be treated as something of an introduction for pragmatists to the political and moral thought of this philosopher. But there is a specific reason for me wanting to discuss Oakeshott in connection with Dewey. Oakeshott was opposed to what he saw as the reduction of political and moral practical wisdom to technique. There are three assumptions in rationalist thinking that he singles out for criticism:

1. The assumption of the "sovereignty of technique". Rationalists believe that technical knowledge represents a distinct form of knowledge separate from and superior to traditional beliefs, and that the latter merely represent a "form of nescience".

2. The assumption of rationalist pedagogy: that political and moral intelligence is something that can be explicitly taught, and that it is best taught to minds emptied of all prejudices.

3. The rational engineering assumption: that political and moral intelligence consists in the competent application of techniques or methods for solving problems.

To read full article, click [**here**](https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/stable/40320858).

**6. Oakeshott, M. (1962). The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind. *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays.* London: Methuen, 197-247.**

It may be supposed that the diverse idioms of utterance which make up current human intercourse have some meeting-place and compose a manifold of some sort. And, as I understand it, the image of this meeting-place is not an inquiry or an argument, but a conversation.

In a conversation the participants are not engaged in an inquiry or a debate; there is no 'truth' to be discovered, no proposition to be proved, no conclusion sought. They are not concerned to inform, to persuade, or to refute one another, and therefore the cogency of their utterances does not depend upon their all speaking in the same idiom; they may differ without disagreeing. Of course, a conversation may have passages of argument and a speaker is not forbidden to be demonstrative; but reasoning is neither sovereign nor alone, and the conversation itself does not compose an argument. . . . In conversation, 'facts' appear only to be resolved once more into the possibilities from which they were made; 'certainties' are shown to be combustible, not by being brought in contact with other 'certainties' or with doubts, but by being kindled by the presence of ideas of another order; approximations are revealed between notions normally remote from one another. Thoughts of different species take wing and play round one another, responding to each other's movements and provoking one another to fresh exertions. Nobody asks where they have come from or on what authority they are present; nobody cares what will become of them when they have played their part. There is no symposiarch or arbiter, not even a doorkeeper to examine credentials. Every entrant is taken at its face-value and everything is permitted which can get itself accepted into the flow of speculation. And voices which speak in conversation do not compose a hierarchy. Conversation is not an enterprise designed to yield an extrinsic profit, a contest where a winner gets a prize, not is it an activity of exegesis; it is an unrehearsed intellectual adventure. It is with conversation as with gambling, its significance lies neither in winning nor in losing, but in wagering. Properly speaking, it is impossible in the absence of a diversity of voices: in it different universes of discourse meet, acknowledge each other and enjoy an oblique relationship which neither requires nor forecasts their being assimilated to one another.

This, I believe, is the appropriate image of human intercourse, appropriate because it recognizes the qualities, the diversities, and the proper relationships of human utterances. As civilized human beings, we are the inheritors, neither of an inquiry about ourselves and the world, nor of an accumulating body of information, but of a conversation, begun in the primeval forests and extended and made more articulate in the course of centuries. It is a conversation which goes on both in public and within each of ourselves. ... Education, properly speaking, is an initiation into the skill and partnership of this conversation in which we learn to recognize the voices, to distinguish the proper occasions of utterance, and in which we acquire the intellectual and moral habits appropriate to conversation. And it is this conversation which, in the end, gives place and character to every human activity and utterance. (pages 196-198)

The book is not available online. York Libraries call number: JA 71 O24 1981

**7. Reiter, S. N. (1994). Teaching dialogically: Its relationship to critical thinking in college students. In P. R. Pintrich, D. R. Brown, & C. E. Weinstein (Eds.), *Student Motivation, Cognition, and Learning: Essays in Honor of Wilbert J. McKeachie* (pp. 275-310)*.* Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.**

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The Reiter chapter is not available online. Only available through interlibrary loan

**8. O'Doherty, K. (May 28, 2020). Trust, Trustworthiness, and Governance in Times of COVID.A presentation to *The Psychology of Global Crises 2020* online conference.**

Democracies are built on the premise of mistrust (of especially elites) but require trust to function. During pandemics governments enact public health measures with more force than usual. From the perspective of public health officials, compliance to public health measures is a high priority. From the perspective of publics, the question of which information to trust and which measures to adopt has more salience. In spite of much research on trust, there is very little attention to the ontological assumptions underpinning use of the concept in research and practice. I identify three distinct approaches to trust, each with a focus that relies on different underlying conceptualisations: 1) A focus on trust as an intra-psychic phenomenon 2) A focus on trustworthiness as a set of normative criteria 3) An understanding of trust as relational, with attention to historical, cultural, and normative aspects of relationships. I then argue that one mechanism to build relational trust in times of pandemics is public deliberation. Public deliberation allows for the explicit and public consideration of important trade-offs that need to be considered in making policy decisions. However, the ideals of public deliberation are difficult to implement given COVID-19 constraints in which prolonged in-person gatherings of people are not feasible. I provide an overview of plans for a virtual public deliberation process in British Columbia, Canada, which is intended to provide a forum to generate public input on key policy decisions about ongoing measures to combat COVID.

To view full conference presentation, click [**here**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7KeW-1mVOo).