Bibliography on Education and Democracy
(with emphasis on recent work, and including sporadic, personally biased annotations)
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Part I.  Democracy and Education

Note: All works by John Dewey and those discussing Dewey are in this section.


Gutmann, Amy (Fall, 1990?). *Democratic education in difficult times*. *Teachers College Record*, 7-20.

The first of the contemporary (post Dewey) works on education and democracy, and a near-classic in the field. Has recently gained a number of critics--a mark of distinction for a text not yet a decade old.


When a critical theorist in education turns his attention to democracy and schools, this could be what it would look like. I say "could be" because Giroux's prose can be maddeningly obscure. Despite that fault, Giroux's is a powerful voice in the analysis of the anti-democratic features of American schools.

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Kelly examines democracy and education from the perspective of one who is both a socialist and a feminist. Fascinating reading, though it is easy to get bogged down in places.


A fine collection of articles by notable, contemporary American educational thinkers. Examines the intersection of educational theory, democratic ideals, and the realities of schooling from a number of different vantage points, including sociological, rhetorical, economic, political.


A rationale for the involvement of colleges of arts and sciences in teacher education, resting on the vital importance of preparing teachers who understand what it means to ready their students for participation in a political and social democracy. Contains excellent annotated bibliography.


This article and the one just above represent highly insightful studies on the relationship between education and democracy by one of the most thoughtful and careful philosophers of education currently working on the subject. The *RRE* article, while imposing in scale and substance, is among the best contemporary work on the topic of democracy and education.


A brief, useful overview of the liberal/communitarian debate, with helpful historical background. Authors favor communitarian theory, and frame the implications for education in ways that make their preferences quite clear.


A work of sustained and imposing scholarship, filled with fascinating insights as it describes not only Dewey’s ideas about democracy, but also the historical context in which these ideas developed, as well as the key actors on both sides of the arguments about socialism, communism, and democracy.


A top notch, relatively brief, primer on the inter-relationships among democratic theory and practice, the role of schooling in a democratic society, and the teaching of civics and social studies. Unfortunately out of print, it is worth locating in the library or used book store.
Part II. Studies of Democracy from the Perspectives of the Disciplines:  
Political Science, Economics, History and Sociology

Adler, Mortimer (1987). We hold these truths. NY: Macmillan.
A clear, thought-provoking introduction to the concept and practice of democracy. Contains 103 pages of text that should prove especially useful to those venturing for the first time onto the political and philosophical scaffolding for democracy.
See also the small paperbacks from Odonian Press (Berkeley, CA), including What Uncle Sam Really Wants (1986-92), and The Prosperous Few and the Restless Many (1993).
A fascinating and provocative discourse on the first amendment right of free speech, with an engaging analysis of the differences between discourse and free speech.
A book true to its name. It is a primer intended to reacquaint the reader with what we hope was learned in high school civics and college political science courses. Thoughtfully organized, this book is worth rereading every so often as a refresher on what the Constitution is about.
Superb, accessible description and analysis of notions of democracy, and what is required to make them work (and fail).
First rate analysis of the theory and practice of democracy. In this prize-winning work, Dahl employs rigorous logic and sound scholarship to extend our understanding of democracy. Essential text for anyone who would probe the depths of democratic theory.


An important new work by a well-known professor of ethics at the University of Chicago. A lament for great peril in which democracy now finds itself, but with an upbeat regard for the future of democracies provided that...(you have to read the book to find out).


From p. xviii: “This volume . . . seeks to provide a generic understanding of what is required to form and sustain a communitarian society—a generic paradigm for a sociology of virtue.”


This book and the one above are the work of one of the most articulate spokespersons for communitarian democracy.


There are those who argue that a healthy democracy requires a vital, market-based economy. Fukuyama, like Putnam (see below) turns this notion on its head to argue that a cohesive, morally grounded society is a prerequisite economic prosperity.


One of the most original philosophers of education of our time turns his attention to the concept of public speech, defining it, anguish over its accelerating disappearance from the culture, and helping us to understand what is required for its restoration.


From the Introduction, p. 1: “Of all the challenges that American democracy faces today, none is more formidable than the problem of moral disagreement. Neither the theory nor the practice of democratic politics has so far found an adequate way to cope with conflicts about fundamental values. We address the challenge of moral disagreement here by developing a conception of democracy that secures a central place for moral discussion in political life.”


An impressive reference volume covering nearly every aspect of the Supreme Court, including a large number of cases. Arranged alphabetically, many of the articles are quite detailed. An excellent source book of just over a thousand pages.
A sweeping overview of the origins of democracy, covering the Greeks, Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, through Bentham, Mill, Hegel and Marx. Also contains thoughtful chapters on foundational concepts in democratic theory.


From p. 12: "Conservatism, as we shall see, is based on the Strict Father model, while liberalism is centered around a Nurturant Parent model. These two models of the family give rise to different moral systems and different discourse forms, that is, different choices of words and different modes of reasoning.


Passionate argument that the elites in America are responsible for the problems of democracy. Lasch argues that the elites, including the intellectual elites, have been poor stewards of democratic ideals and institutions. Also serves as an important contribution to the public-private debate.

Fascinating, provocative thesis that a new multiracial middle-class has emerged in America, sharing a common language, customs and culture. The formation of this new middle class has been impeded by plutocrats who do not want it to develop as a "Trans-American" majority. With a new social compact and invigorated sense of identity, Lind argues that this new class can emerge as America's fourth republic (the previous three being Anglo-America, Euro-America, and Multicultural America).

More or less a sequel to Lowi's famous 1969 book, *The End of Liberalism*. In some ways, an even more fascinating thesis than the earlier book. There is much here for those interested in the public/private distinction. The conclusion to the Preface of this book reads: "I begin this book and I also conclude it with an appeal inspired by Dante, to be engraved in large letters over the portal of politics: "Abandon God, all ye who enter here." Whenever the true believers of all faiths can take that as good advice, the light will again shine more brightly on this, the greatest of all republics--if we can keep it" (p. xv).


Helpful guide to the liberal/communitarian debate, accessible to the lay reader.

From pp. 1-2: “The marriage of democracy and constitutionalism is not an easy one, however. Tensions arise when the expansion of democracy leads to a weakening of constitutionalism, or when the strengthening of the constitutional ideal entails a restraint of the democratic process.
On what basis do we evidence concern for the lives of people we do not know and who are far from us? Nussbaum struggles with this question, and answers it by invoking the literary imagination--but not as a substitute for rule-governed moral reasoning. An important and insightful work.
An examination of the strengths and weaknesses of democratic theory in light of the challenges from postmodern thought. Finds that democracy survives these criticisms quite well. Contains an important section on the place of education and schools in a democracy.
An anthology of interesting and important contributions to political and social philosophy. Topics include public reason, public practical reason, agonistic liberalism, the Pareto Argument, and individual responsibility.
Although too little discussed in these times, there are (or were) crucial connections between democracy and religion, particularly in the first century of the new republic. One's understanding of these connections is materially advanced by grasping Mr. Jefferson's ideas on the topic. This article is a helpful place to begin the exploration.
A rather amazing book of articles, pictures, colorful charts, and strong opinions detailing how government works in America--at the federal, state, county and municipal levels. The book is intended to re-engage Americans in their government, and includes a 12 step "political" recovery program modeled from Alcoholics Anonymous. A civics course in a book about the size of four *Time* magazines (with a similar format, too).
Readable and highly provocative study of democratic institutions in Northern and Southern Italy, and an extended discussion of what the differences between the two regions mean for the future of democracies, particularly the U.S. Winner of many awards, and frequently cited in the political literature. See also Putnam, Robert D. (January, 1995), Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy,* 6(1), 65-78; also the review of this article in *The Economist,* February 18, 1995, 21-22.
Includes “The Idea of Public Reason Revisited.”
Part III. Connected and Related Work

Section A - Liberalism and Liberal Education


**Section B - Citizenship Education and Political Socialization**


**Section C - Related Work**


While not on the subject of democracy and education, this book contains essential information on how democratic governments can distort the work of schools. There are important lessons here for how democratic politics and democratic schooling can be opposed to one another.


Not on the topic of education and democracy, but an important discussion of how democratic politics can work against the sustenance of democratic schooling.