

*The Prophet of Democratic Education: The Overlooked Lessons and Legacy of Boyd Bode*

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Abstract: Democracies experienced a serious rise of totalitarianism during the 1930s. Concerns surrounding this threat to democracy fueled discussion amongst scholars of education about how schools should approach democratic education. Atop the helm of these scholars was Boyd Bode, educational philosopher from the Ohio State University. This article aims to resuscitate Boyd Bode as a pioneer of democratic education in the United States of America by focusing on his vision toward the role of reflective thought in democratic life, how this role was challenged within the progressive education movement, the role of schools in cultivating democratic life, and how he empowered others at Ohio State to perpetuate his vision.

Résumé : Les démocraties ont connu une sérieuse montée du totalitarisme au cours des années 1930. L'anxiété suscitée par cette menace pour la démocratie a alimenté les débats parmi les spécialistes de l'éducation sur la manière dont les écoles devraient aborder l'éducation démocratique. À la tête de ces chercheurs se trouvait Boyd Bode, philosophe pédagogique de l'Université de l'État de l'Ohio. Cet article vise à faire renaître Boyd Bode en tant que pionnier de l'éducation démocratique aux États-Unis d'Amérique et en se concentrant sur : 1) sa vision du rôle de la pensée réflexive dans la vie démocratique; 2) comment ce rôle a été remis en question au sein du mouvement éducatif progressiste; 3) le rôle des écoles sur comment cultiver la vie démocratique; et 4) comment il a donné aux autres membres de l'État de l'Ohio les moyens de perpétuer sa vision.

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In the early to mid-twentieth century, democracy seemed doomed. Both Western and Eastern Europe experienced ruthless authoritarian threats the likes the world had seldom seen. The American homeland was also not immune to authoritarian rule as the cultural landscape saw the rise in popularity of Father Charles Coughlin as a demagogic media figure along with Huey Long, the populist politician who rose to power in Louisiana and threatened to rise to the American Presidency. It is in this increasingly dark time that a messenger emerged who defended democracy as a worthwhile project that required a certain kind of commitment from schools. This prophetic messenger's name was Boyd Bode. This article aims to resuscitate Bode as a figure who has much to teach us today about how to wisely thwart authoritarian threats that regularly loom over democracies.

### **A Prophet Without Honor**

Boyd Henry Bode was born in Ridott, Illinois in 1873. His was among the many farming families who migrated from Germany to the United States in the mid-nineteenth century. He grew up in a relatively large family, with seven siblings in total, that was also religious as his father, Henry Bode, was a minister in the First Christian Reformed Church. He earnestly pursued an education, unique among his brothers and sisters, that paved the way for him to earn a bachelor's degree in 1896 from Oskaloosa, Iowa's Penn College and a year later another bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan. By 1900 he earned a Ph.D. from Cornell University with a specialty in philosophy. As a fresh graduate of Cornell, Bode accepted a position as professor of philosophy at the University of Wisconsin where he worked until his move to the University of Illinois in 1909. It was in Illinois where Bode began to rise to prominence in the field of philosophy and where he became interested in practically applying philosophy to the emerging field of education. In 1921, Bode accepted an offer from the Ohio State University to become head of its department of principles and practice of education. Bode, as you will see later, made an enormous imprint on Ohio State and democratic education in general.

Bode was arguably one of the most significant intellectual voices in the country in the first half of the twentieth century. William James tabbed Bode "among the foremost of our rising philosophers" (Bullough, 2005 p. 77). John Dewey considered Bode to be "one of the two or three strongest of his generation in this country" when it came to philosophic originality (Bullough, 2005, p.

77). By the end of the 1920s, Bode had cemented himself among the leading philosophers of education in the country, having authored three principal works that garnered a positive reception: *Fundamentals of Education* (1921), *Modern Educational Theories* (1927), and *Conflicting Psychologies of Learning* (1929). He was one of the founders of the experimentalist tradition that stressed students learned most effectively through their experiences and a process of trial and error. While John Dewey is popularly portrayed as the primary purveyor of experimentalism, Bode's contributions were more than ancillary. John Childs (1953), longtime progressive educator and disciple of Dewey, provided the following perspective on Bode's significance in founding the experimentalist tradition:

But Bode was no mere echo of the views of others. His own contributions to the experimentalist philosophy, as well as his creative part in the development of its implications for a theory of education, were so fundamental that he really should be counted among the founders of this movement in contemporary philosophy (p. 1).

Despite Bode's significant contributions to educational philosophy, he has gone the way of author John Williams' (1965) fictitious William Stoner who, upon retirement, became a name seldom spoken of by educational leaders and "a sound which evokes no sense of the past and no identity with which they can associate themselves or their careers" (p. 4). Perhaps Bode's anonymity is a result of a career overlapping the more famous John Dewey and being miscast by some as a mere underling of Dewey. Historian Lawrence Cremin (1964), for instance, once remarked that Bode appeared to be a disciple of Dewey because of the similarity in their work. Yet, Dewey knew better than to merely cast aside Bode as a mimic or minor contributor. "Whatever came to him from any source," Dewey (1948) proclaimed about Bode, "came out different after it had passed through his mind with its unfailing instinct for clarity, his sense of humor, and his constant vision of where and how the ideas in question should and could enter the lifestream of human beings" (p. 267).

It is unfortunate that this lanky, mustached philosophy professor with the blue suit, tousled tie, and beckoning sense of humor is someone who we've misplaced as a mere afterthought. It was perhaps Bode, more than anyone else, who best articulated the

role democracy should play in schools. It behooves us today to revisit Boyd Bode's vision of democratic education if we aim to preserve democratic life today. The remainder of this article focuses on that vision and Bode's contributions in making that vision into a reality.

### **Pragmatism and Reflective Inquiry**

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, after the United States' Civil War, a philosophical movement emerged that paved the way for a new understanding of how to solve problems. This movement, called pragmatism, became intrinsically connected with characteristics of democracy. Pragmatism required individuals to use argument and evidence as a basis of the workability of a particular conclusion on its own as opposed to the notion of idealism that claimed reality to be formed by the mind. Bode (1938) claimed idealism to be a primal enemy of democracy: "The great obstacle to democracy, down to the present day, is the Platonic philosophizing which lifts purposes or values out of the realm of everyday living and places them where 'operational' procedures cannot reach them" (p. 112). While the genesis of pragmatism is mostly attributed to philosophers such as Charles Pierce, William James, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., and Dewey (Menand, 2002), Bode deserves significant credit for its development. At the center of Bode's claim about pragmatism is that it runs contrary to absolutism, which is at the core of idealism. Idealism, according to Bode, always leads to a stifling of thought since it is set apart from the nature of everyday living. Absolutes exist in many forms such as nationalism, theology, racism, to name only a few. What runs contrary to absolute thinking is reflective (or scientific) thinking that became the basis of Bode's vision for a democratic education.

Bode was greatly influenced by John Dewey's classic work *How We Think* (Bullough, 1981). In it, Dewey articulated a workable definition and operational stages of reflective inquiry. Reflective inquiry, according to Dewey (1989), is: "*Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends*" (p. 118). This "active, persistent, and careful consideration" consists of stages very similar to the application of the scientific method upon scientific problems. These stages, according to Dewey (1989) are: suggestion, intellectualization, hypothesis, reasoning, and testing the hypothesis. They can be simplified into three larger categories: 1) inference; 2) evidence gathering; and 3) a settled situation. An inference, like the scientific

method's hypothesis, consists of the formation of an educated guess as an answer to a particular question. Evidence gathering, like the scientific method's experimentation and collection of data, consists of collecting data associated with the topic to gauge the accuracy of the educated guess. Finally, a settled situation, like analysis and conclusion, is an arrival to an answer to the question that either supports or detracts from the educated guess, serving as an answer to the question unless or until further data reveals a change.

Both Bode and his more popular contemporary, John Dewey, steadfastly defended reflective inquiry as the educational approach that fits best with democratic principles. In fact, Bode's former student, H. Gordon Hullfish, claimed that his teacher so closely connected scientific thinking (i.e., reflective thought) to democracy that his book, *Democracy as a Way of Life*, should have been titled "Science as a Way of Life" (Bullough, 1981). Bode's biographer, Robert Bullough (1981) said this about the intrinsic connection Bode saw between reflective thinking and democracy: "Democratic living was commensurate with intelligent living. Liberty and freedom, which, when expanded, define the nature of social progress, would, he thought, result from the application of the scientific method and spirit to the problems of cooperative living" (p. 71).

### **A Self-Conscious Democracy**

In 1936, while visiting in Munich, Germany, Bode wrote a monograph that became published as the aforementioned *Democracy as a Way of Life*. In it, he articulated how the meaning of democracy had evolved in the United States toward a particular way of living. "Teaching democracy in the abstract," Bode (1939) argued in *Democracy as a Way of Life*, "is on a par with teaching swimming by correspondence" (p. 75). Schools, in accordance with Bode's vision for them, should explicitly address democratic education throughout the curriculum. This democratic education, according to Bode, is built on the trust of people and their ability to think for themselves. Reflective inquiry into social problems was a central feature of Bode's vision for a democratic way of life in schools. However, Bode also stressed that education for a democratic way of life required equal consideration of attitudes and appreciations. A democratic way of life was one that "aims to promote the ideal of 'free and equal' by taking proper account of individual differences and by reliance on the principle of community living" (Bode, 1939 p. 82). Such a life includes students learning about personal responsibility to both self and the larger community:

“He [sic] may not willfully disturb others, he [sic] may not be careless in handling school property; he [sic] may not permit himself to be undependable in his [sic] relations to others” (Bode, 1939, p. 80). The school, therefore, should become a habitat where democracy garners meaning and “is peculiarly the institution in which democracy becomes conscious of itself” (Bode, 1939, p. 95).

There are, however, significant obstacles in the way of organizing school around democracy. Schools, by their very nature, emerge as a mirror reflection of the society from which they arise and to whom and what they serve. If a society is not necessarily wholly committed to democracy, then its institutions will reflect such neutrality or fence-sitting. In 1938, a year prior to the publication of *Democracy as a Way of Life*, Bode published a small but significant book entitled *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*. Like its 1939 successor, *Progressive Education at the Crossroads* emphasized the need for schools to be centered around democracy. However, it was pointed in its critique of the popular brand of progressive education that garnered influence in the curricular field.

Bode’s chastisement of progressive education centered on a seemingly never-ending schism between its romantic naturalistic and experimentalist wings. Bode, an experimentalist, challenged the child-centered pedagogy of romantic-naturalism that claimed education should center exclusively upon children’s own interests. Experimentalists, on the other hand, argued that students should be led by teachers to learn through problem-solving activities centered around pertinent social issues. Bode (1938) claimed that if progressive education centered on romantic naturalism, schools would be institutions that focused on individualism and, therefore, a mere compilation of “ingenious devices for tempering the wind to the shorn lamb” (p. 26). In other words, there will be nothing to ground the curriculum and progressive education would be a mere sporadic set of pedagogical strategies. He associated progressive education’s inclination toward romantic naturalism with Platonic idealism that essentially ignored everyday reality by ideally centering on what’s best for an individual student. Rather than this, Bode (1938) advocated for progressive education to be focused and aligned with societal aims: “If progressive education is to fulfill its promise, it must become consciously representative of a distinctive way of life” (p. 5). This distinctive way of life, according to Bode (1938), must stress “the irreconcilable conflict between democracy and absolutism” (p. 112). If it fails to differentiate the uniqueness of

the knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with democratic living with those of absolutism, then a democracy will easily succumb to authoritarian rule. Bode's (1938) pointed message was both a loud warning in light of grim world events and also a ray of optimism and hope for a brighter future where schools shaped a more democratic future: "Progressive education has a unique opportunity to become an avowed exponent of a democratic philosophy of life, which is the last remaining hope that the common man [sic] will eventually come into his [sic] own" (p. 122).

### **A Post-Script to Other Values?**

An educational movement arose from within the ranks of progressive education in the 1930s that, on the outside, appeared to promote a democratic philosophy of life. This movement, social reconstructionism, was spearheaded by George Counts, who then was a professor of education at Columbia University. Counts at the time focused on the sociological dimension of education and saw schools as a central player when addressing the inequalities associated with the Great Depression. The Depression was a seismic economic and social crisis in the United States in the 1930s that resulted in massive unemployment and general financial collapse. This economic catastrophe led some to signal a stoppage of free market enterprise and a Communist revolution like the one Russia experienced nearly a decade earlier. These tensions found their way to education when a group of Progressive educators encouraged American teachers to seek political power and move the country toward, if not a Communist revolution, then at least a revolution that promoted collectivism, or a distribution of wealth across the population like the ideas promoted in socialist theory. A fissure emerged among Progressive educators with one faction desiring schools to explicitly indoctrinate students to adhere to this socialist philosophy while the other faction, whose members were also genuinely concerned with improving society, believed social improvement was best achieved in schools indirectly through reflective inquiry. Counts was the philosophical leader of the former faction who urged schools, particularly teachers, to spearhead a new social order. Counts (1932) stressed that Progressive education should "become less frightened than it is today at the bogies of imposition and indoctrination" (p. 9-10). In other words, Counts was perfectly comfortable with teachers indoctrinating students toward supporting a collectivist society. The other faction, much more moderate in tone than Counts' social reconstructionism, stressed

that schools should address social inequality but provide individual students with the freedom to decide for themselves what course of action they should take in resolving the matter. This moderate faction was led by Bode.

In 1935 Bode challenged the rising popularity of social reconstruction by penning an article for publication in the journal *Social Frontier*. In it, he admitted that partisanship on social issues was inescapable, and that social injustice should not be muted in the curriculum. However, he argued that providing only one possible policy solution for students was tantamount to forcing them “to take sides without knowing how to go about it” (Bode, 1935, p. 290). Bode’s primary concern in this matter was the preservation of democracy in the classroom. “Unless we can bring to the fore some deeper or more inclusive meaning of democracy,” Bode (2013) asserted, “we are once more lost in a fog” (p. 290). A proponent of the policies purported by then President Franklin Roosevelt, Bode saw a danger in what he saw as writing a “blank check” to address social ills. Most importantly, Bode (2013) saw that beneath its veil, social reconstructionism was an anti-democratic movement that sought to oust the principles of reflective thought out of the classroom and hence subject ordinary people once again to edicts from rulers:

It is a curious circumstance that it has become necessary to argue, as against proposed democratic reforms of education, for the right of the individual to choose his [sic] own beliefs, and for faith in the intelligence of the common man [sic]. The desire to predetermine beliefs indicates a lack of such faith. The remedy for the shortcomings of the progressive education movement is not to prescribe beliefs, but to specify the areas in which reconstruction or reinterpretation is an urgent need. If this point is covered, we can afford to take the position that the teacher has fulfilled his obligations if he provides the conditions for sincere and careful thinking, without assuming responsibility for the outcome. Faith in democracy requires submission to this test, without hedging or qualifications. If we profess to trust the intelligence of the common man [sic], we cannot refuse to risk the application of the test. (p. 296-7)

The core of Bode's conception of democratic life was this faith in ordinary people. This faith entailed a belief that individuals have the capacity to think for themselves and can collectively make evidence-based decisions for their communities and country. Social reconstructionism, according to Bode, was rooted in a distrust of people albeit with the guise of serving their best interests and of society.

The challenges brought forth to democratic education by Counts' social reconstructionist movement were, according to Bode, centered on a crisis of values among those who professed to advocate for democratic life. Bode (1940) observed that democracy's fragility is due to individuals not prioritizing its principles when put in direct contrast to positions that they may hold dearer. As was usually the case, Bode (1940) eloquently penned his position on the matter for public viewing:

But assuming that we all believe in democracy, we still have to face the question of what we are to do when this value conflicts with other values. The Puritans are reputed to have been a well-disposed people who believed in democracy, but when the presence of dissenting Quakers in their midst compelled them to make a choice between keeping to the democratic way of life and preserving the purity of their religion, they ruled against democracy. For them democracy was a postscript to other values. What is it to us as a people?  
(p. 362)

There were parallels between the social reconstructionist movement and the Puritans of centuries ago. The Puritans sought to purify New England culture whereas the social reconstructionists sought to cleanse the socio-political environment of oppressive forces mired against the public, particularly the economically unfortunate. The unwavering zeal of both groups toward their righteous causes fueled an anti-democratic sentiment whenever they faced dissent or in their unwillingness to entertain alternative approaches when addressing their concerns. Bode saw these parallels play out in his own career. "Bode has an uncanny ability," his former student, Gordon Hullfish (1948) said of his mentor, "to penetrate the many disguises which those of authoritarian inclination wear" and to force "the authoritarian to show his true hand" (p. 267).

Bode put his trust in what he called “the common man” and refuted Platonic idealism. To Bode, social reconstructionism was grounded in an absolutist way of life devoid of the trust of ordinary individuals’ capacity to think and govern for themselves. It was this crux between democracy and absolutism that Bode (1938) refused to waver away from the line he had drawn in the proverbial sand that “the center of any educational program which professes to be democratic must be the irreconcilable conflict between democracy and absolutism” (p. 112). While progressive education appeared to be in a state of disarray with some of its adherents lured away by the promise of social reconstructionism and still others affixed to a child-centered focus on romantic naturalism, Bode (1938) cast an alternative vision for the movement and saw the true future of progressive education as fostering a “distinctive educational system” that supported democracy as having “a deep and inclusive meaning” (p. 26). While Bode wrote on his own in the late 1930s and early 1940s to promote this vision of progressive education that ultimately tied reflective inquiry with democratic education, he knew his singular efforts were not enough. Through his position as a professor at the Ohio State University, Bode created an activity system of human mediation at Ohio State that fulfilled his democratic vision for progressive education through an enrichment of the emerging broad field of social studies education.

### **The Ohio School of Democracy**

It seems that most of the leaders of the progressive era worked at Teachers College in Columbia University. This was the case anyway for John Dewey, Harold Rugg, William Kilpatrick, and George Counts. The attention paid to a prolific professor is likely to be accentuated if that professor works in New York City. Bode was far removed from the Big Apple. When Bode left the University of Illinois’ philosophy department in 1921 to accept an appointment as head of the department of Principles and Practices at the Ohio State University’s College of Education, he decided to finish out his career in Columbus, Ohio (except for some post-retirement bridge jobs). To Bode, the field of education was in dire need of direction and substance. “In education,” Bode wrote to fellow philosopher Max Otto, “I found everybody all dressed up, but with no place to go” (Bullough, 1981, p. 117). Bode set out to do significant work at Ohio State. In fact, he turned Ohio State into a center for graduate study that rivaled Teachers College (Watras, 2012). One article published in the acclaimed journal *Social Frontier* (Stanley & Benne, 1939)

even referred to Bode, along with some of his colleagues and students, as “The Ohio School of Democracy in Education.” This section focuses on Bode’s work with developing a school of democracy in education at Ohio State and the significant influence of that school upon the field of social studies education.

While Bode impacted numerous students under his watch at Ohio State, one in particular paved the way for a transformation of civic education in the United States. Alan Griffin was both an undergraduate and graduate student under Bode. In 1942, Griffin completed his doctoral dissertation entitled *A Philosophical Approach to the Subject Matter Preparation of Teachers*. On its first page is a signature of approval: Boyd H. Bode.

Along with H. Gordon Hullfish (also a Bode protégé), Bode served as Griffin’s mentor. These three collectively “gave to Ohio State in the 40s the reputation of being the western bastion of the Progressive Education Movement” (Engle, 1982, p. 45). Griffin’s dissertation is highly regarded in the field of social studies education for both its quality and its clarification on the role reflective thought should play in history education (Evans, 2004). The central theme of Griffin’s dissertation is how history education serves different purposes in a democracy as opposed to an authoritarian society. According to Griffin (1942), authoritarian societies emphasize a “hierarchy of preferred values and habits, a collection of unquestionable beliefs, a set of orthodox attitudes, and a selection of ‘things children ought to know’” (p. 80). Writing at a time when the brutality of Nazi Germany posed a present threat, Griffin (1942) explained how such brute force typically associated with authoritarianism was mostly a byproduct of an attempt by the authoritarian to suppress doubt and questioning:

Steel whips and concentration camps are not the basis of authoritarianism, but only an exceptionally unpleasant consequence of it. The basis is the reliance by leaders, teachers, parents, or other authorities upon ignorance as a guide to the conduct of followers, pupils, or children (p. 97).

On the other hand, according to Griffin (1942), pedagogical practices that supported a democratic society freely allowed both doubt and questioning. This even included the freedom of students to intelligently question the very existence of their democracy. “Democracy is concerned, not with the specific character of the

directing of values of the culture in which it is imbedded," Griffin (1942) proclaimed, "but rather with the way in which central values come into being and are maintained or modified" (p. 95). Like with Bode, reflective inquiry played an intrinsic part in Griffin's conception of a history education that supported a democracy.

Griffin's entire academic career was at the Ohio State University. Like his own mentor, Bode, Griffin emphasized reflective inquiry as a pivotal pathway toward the educational preparation for democratic citizenship. Also, like Bode, Griffin was a renowned and impactful influence on his own flock of students who later became trailblazers in the efforts toward education for democratic citizenship. Atop Griffin's protégés were Maurice Hunt and Lawrence Metcalf who collaborated in 1955 on a pivotal teacher education book entitled *Teaching High School Social Studies: Problems in Reflective Thinking and Understanding* with a second edition published in 1968. A central theme addressed in the book is that of what Hunt and Metcalf aptly called "closed areas." According to Hunt and Metcalf (1968), "those areas of belief which are most important to individuals are likely to be those in which rational thought is least valued" (p. 26). As a result, such areas are "closed" to reflective thought among some individuals and their respective communities to protect their ego or sense of self. Areas like economic policy, race relations, sexuality, or social class were among those Hunt and Metcalf counted as those most likely to be closed. While Hunt and Metcalf popularized this notion of closed areas in the field of social studies education, it was Bode who first foresaw closed areas as central obstacles to reflective thought. Closed areas are intrinsically connected to the idealism and absolutism that Bode (1938) characterized as a theme within authoritarian societies and an enemy of democratic life.

The linear link between Bode, Griffin, Hunt, and Metcalf is clearly their emphasis upon the connection between reflective thought and democratic life. This central characteristic of education for democratic citizenship became a hallmark for the Ohio State University throughout the twentieth century. Although Griffin died unexpectedly in 1964, Ohio State University kept this legacy alive through other protégés of Griffin, such as Gene Gilliom, who remained at Ohio State and perpetuated this same brand of democratic education for flocks of succeeding graduate students who became academic leaders for succeeding generations of teachers and teacher educators. Yet, this incremental process all began with Bode who, in Vygotskian fashion, spearheaded what really was a socio-

cultural activity system through the Ohio State University that influenced how the nation and world viewed education for democratic citizenship.

### Discussion

In 1944, while democracy and authoritarianism continued to duel in a gruesome world war, the long career of Boyd Bode at the Ohio State University came to an end. In his retirement, Bode accepted a position as a graduate school lecturer in philosophy at the University of Florida where his daughter, Eleanor, served as a faculty member. Remaining committed to the moral scope of his work, he continued to strongly tout his positions on democratic education both in the classroom and in journal publications. While Bode's spirit remained willing to remain in the arena, his body eventually betrayed him. A diagnosis of cancer of the spine derailed Bode's retirement plans. Yet he still taught an occasional graduate seminar for nearly two years from a prone position in his living room, surrounded by graduate students, an oxygen tank for when he had trouble breathing, and his loving daughter who assisted him. On March 29, 1953, Boyde Henry Bode died. He was seventy-nine years old.

As we saw in this article, Bode contributed to democratic education in three powerful ways: 1) he cast a vision for what a democracy should look like; 2) he lifted public schools as the means through which democracy becomes self-conscious; and 3) he used the Ohio State University as a vehicle to empower his students to carry on his vision for democratic education. It is worth mentioning that looking back upon Bode with a nostalgic lens can be misleading. He didn't have all the answers to the problems of his day. While he stressed that democracy was a way of life, he failed to provide the necessary details to fully illustrate what such a way of life should look like and how to achieve it. While he stressed that the public school was where a democracy becomes self-conscious, he was one of the first to admit that he was not a "school man" in that he spoke philosophically and not always practically. In other words, Bode failed to provide a practical vision for what schools should do to make democracies self-conscious. For instance, his stance on behalf of reflective inquiry in the wake of the rise of social reconstructionism lacked an answer to how students should become aware of social problems and be democratically positioned to address those problems. In this way, Bode's contributions were more cosmic than practical and more idealistic than realistic. Yet he is

seldom recognized as a key progenitor of democratic education that he rightfully was. He breathed life into what an educational system in a democratic society should look like and, in many instances, left it to those who followed his footsteps to color in the details.

Like a prophet from sacred scripture, Boyd Bode cast a vision for how democracies sustain and propel themselves forward and sounded the warnings of what happens when they fail to do so. There are parallels between the world inhabited by Bode and our own. Authoritarianism is once again luring pockets of people within democracies away from democratic skills and dispositions (Applebaum, 2020). Our generation would be wise to revisit Bode's optimistic vision for democratic education and hence recommit ourselves to democracy as a way of life.

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