



# Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology by John Dewey

*John Dewey*

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## **Human Nature and Conduct: An Introduction to Social Psychology by John Dewey** John Dewey

The book, *Human Nature and Conduct* by John Dewey, does not purport to be a treatment of social psychology. But it seriously sets forth a belief that an understanding of habit and of different types of habit is the key to social psychology, while the operation of impulse and intelligence gives the key to individualized mental activity. But they are secondary to habit so that mind can be understood in the concrete only as a system of beliefs, desires and purposes which are formed in the interaction of biological aptitudes with a social environment. John Dewey (1859–1952), author of *Human Nature and Conduct: The Introduction to Social Psychology*, was an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer whose ideas have been very influential to education and social reform. John Dewey asserted that complete democracy was to be obtained not just by extending voting rights but also by ensuring that there exists a fully-formed public opinion, accomplished by effective communication among citizens, experts, and politicians, with the latter being accountable for the policies they adopt. John Dewey's most significant writings were "The Reflex Arc Concept in Psychology" (1896), a critique of a standard psychological concept and the basis of all his further work; *Democracy and Education* (1916), his celebrated work on progressive education; *Human Nature and Conduct* (1922), a study of the function of habit in human behavior; *The Public and its Problems* (1927), a defense of democracy written in response to Walter Lippmann's *The Phantom Public* (1925); *Experience and Nature* (1925), John Dewey's most "metaphysical" statement; *Art as Experience* (1934), John Dewey's major work on aesthetics; *A Common Faith* (1934), a humanistic study of religion originally delivered as the Dwight H. Terry Lectureship at Yale; *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (1938), a statement of John Dewey's unusual conception of logic; *Freedom and Culture* (1939), a political work examining the roots of fascism; and *Knowing and the Known* (1949), a book written in conjunction with Arthur F. Bentley that systematically outlines the concept of trans-action, which is central to his other works. While each of these works focuses on one particular philosophical theme, John Dewey included his major themes in most of what he published. John Dewey published more than 700 articles in 140 journals, and approximately 40 books. His main interests were: Philosophy of education, Epistemology, Journalism, and Ethics.

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