



The Public and Its Problems

By John Dewey

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In *The Public and Its Problems*, a classic of social and political philosophy, John Dewey exhibits his strong faith in the potential of human intelligence to solve the public's problems. In his characteristic provocative style, Dewey clarifies the meaning and implications of such concepts as "the public," "the state," "government," and "political democracy." He distinguishes his a posteriori reasoning from a priori reasoning, which, he argues permeates less meaningful discussion of basic concepts. Dewey repeatedly demonstrates the interrelationships between fact and theory.

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Editorial Review

Review

“The definitive edition of John Dewey’s most enduring work on politics. Melvin Rogers has performed the admirable task of crafting a beautifully lucid introduction and an exhaustive annotation of the text. Students and scholars of Dewey will be in Rogers’s debt for many years to come.”

—Ian Shapiro, Yale University

“The introduction and annotations are sophisticated, illuminating, elegant, and accessible. Masterfully situating Dewey in his historical context, Rogers persuasively shows that *The Public and Its Problems* remains a radically democratic book. This is the best edition available of Dewey’s most important political philosophical work.”

—Jack Turner, University of Washington, author of *Awakening to Race: Individualism and Social Consciousness in America*

About the Author

John Dewey (1859–1952) was an American philosopher, psychologist and educational reformer whose ideas have been influential in education and social reform. Dewey was an important early developer of the philosophy of pragmatism and one of the founders of functional psychology. He was a major representative of progressive education and liberalism. In 1894 Dewey joined the newly founded University of Chicago (1894–1904) where he developed his belief in an empirically based theory of knowledge, becoming associated with the newly emerging Pragmatic philosophy. His time at the University of Chicago resulted in four essays collectively entitled *Thought and its Subject-Matter*, which was published with collected works from his colleagues at Chicago under the collective title *Studies in Logical Theory* (1903). During that time Dewey also initiated the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, where he was able to actualize the pedagogical beliefs that provided material for his first major work on education, *The School and Social Progress* (1899). In 1899, Dewey was elected president of the American Psychological Association. From 1904 until his retirement in 1930 he was professor of philosophy at both Columbia University and Columbia University's Teachers College. In 1905 he became president of the American Philosophical Association. He was a longtime member of the American Federation of Teachers.

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