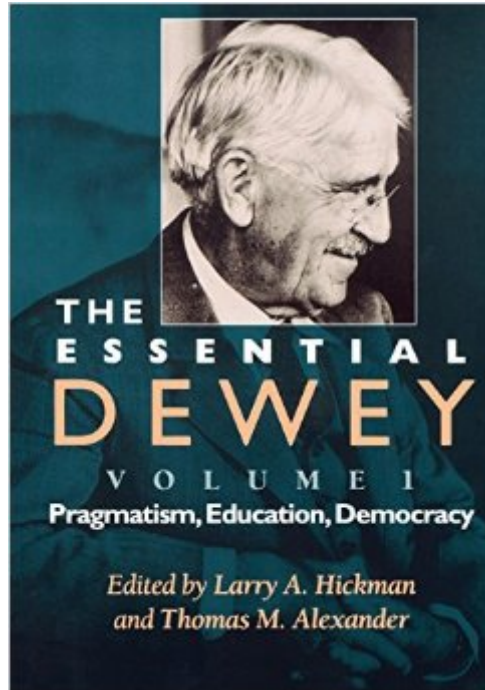# The Essential Dewey, Volume 1: Pragmatism, Education, Democracy

Synopsis

In addition to being one of the greatest technical philosophers of the twentieth century, John Dewey (1859-1952) was an educational innovator, a Progressive Era reformer, and one of Americaâ ™s last great public intellectuals. Deweyâ ™s insights into the problems of public education, immigration, the prospects for democratic government, and the relation of religious faith to science are as fresh today as when they were first published. His penetrating treatments of the nature and function of philosophy, the ethical and aesthetic dimensions of life, and the role of inquiry in human experience are of increasing relevance at the turn of the 21st century.Based on the award-winning 37-volume critical edition of Deweyâ ™s work, The Essential Dewey presents for the first time a collection of Deweyâ ™s writings that is both manageable and comprehensive. The volume includes essays and book chapters that exhibit Deweyâ ™s intellectual development over time; the selection represents his mature thinking on every major issue to which he turned his attention. Eleven part divisions cover: Dewey in Context; Reconstructing Philosophy; Evolutionary Naturalism; Pragmatic Metaphysics; Habit, Conduct, and Language; Meaning, Truth, and Inquiry; Valuation and Ethics; The Aims of Education; The Individual, the Community, and Democracy; Pragmatism and Culture: Science and Technology, Art and Religion; and Interpretations and Critiques. Taken as a whole, this collection provides unique access to Deweyâ ™s understanding of the problems and prospects of human existence and of the philosophical enterprise.

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Customer Reviews

I believe that John Dewey was one of the most important philosophers in history, bar none. But he is not easy to read, in part because of the subtlety of his thinking, in part because of his prose style, which can be ponderous and convoluted. My first encounter with him was in "Pragmatism: A Reader" by Louis Menard (Pragmatism: A Reader), and I was not thrilled. For some reason, I decided to try Vol. 1 of this anthology, and my opinion was totally turned around. This book is an excellent introduction to Dewey's thinking. The articles are well-selected, presenting a lot of breadth, and substantial depth in such a way that you are led somewhat gently into difficult subject matter, and not bowled over by unfamiliar concepts. Of course, like most anthologies, at some point it leaves you wanting to go deeper. I bought both Vol. 1 and Vol. 2, but someplace early in Vol. 2 decided to switch to "Experience and Nature" (Experience and Nature), and am glad I did. I will probably go back to Vol. 2, though. The BREADTH of Dewey's thought was also phenomenal, and only a good anthology (or a lifetime of study) can give one a feel for that.

I ordered this book for one of my philosophy courses and I have to say this man is by far one of the greatest thinkers I've ever read. If you have any interests in education this book is a must read for you!

These are the books for your library when you want to review John Dewey's writing.

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