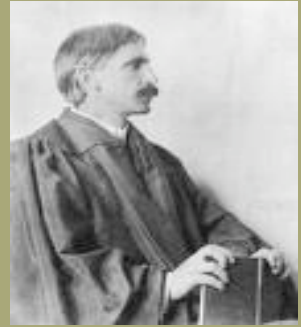
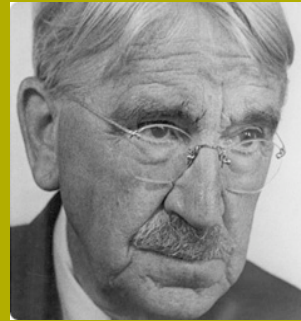




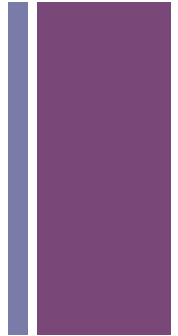
“But if one sets to understand the flowering of a plant, he is committed to finding out something about the interaction of soul, air, water, and sunlight that conditions the growth of plants.”



Notes on John Dewey:

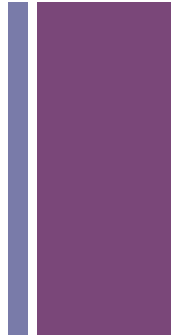
+ Consider the following quotes:

- “Organism does not live in an environment but by means of an environment. The processes of living are enacted by the environment as truly by the organism for they are an integration.”



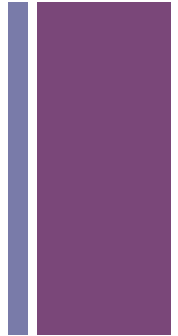
+ Consider the following quotes:

- Experience includes “adaptive courses of action, habits, functions [and] connections of doing and undergoing” [MW 12:131-32].



+ Consider the following quotes:

- Experience is “double-barreled”, includes not only *what* is experienced, but **how**: ‘Like its congeners, life and history, [experience] includes *what* man do and suffer, *what* they strive for, love, believe, and endure, and also how men act and are acted upon, the ways in which they do and suffer, desire, and enjoy, see, believe, imagine-in short, process of experiencing’ (LW 1:18).

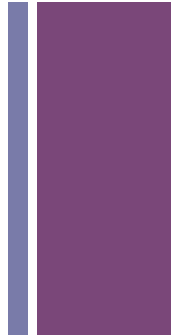


+ Consider the following Quotes:

- The “postulate of immediate empiricism” is the hypothesis that “things—anything, everything, in the ordinary or non-technical use of the term ‘thing’—are what they are experienced as” (MW 3:158).
- “A genuine empiricism in philosophy entails that, no matter how abstract and remote our philosophical speculations might turn out, we need to start and end with directly experienced subject matter. For Dewey, then, experience is a *‘starting point and terminal point*, as setting problems and as testing proposed solutions” (LW 1:14). This turn toward everyday lived experience is the most important philosophical inheritance we have received from Dewey.” ~ Gregory Pappas, *John Dewey’s Ethics*, 20.

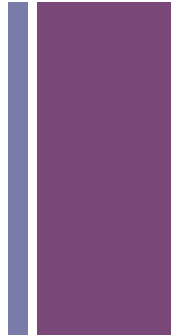
+ Consider the following quotes:

- Intelligent Inquiry is “the controlled or direct transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is... determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations.” *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, 104.



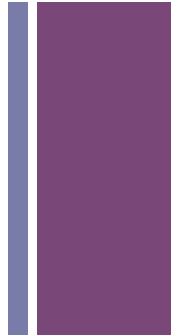
+ Consider the following quotes:

- “[T]he most pervasive fallacy of philosophic thinking goes back to neglect of context” (LW 6:5). We commit the analytic fallacy, “whenever the distinctions or elements that are discriminated are treated as if they were final and self-sufficient” (LW 6:7).



+ Consider the following quote:

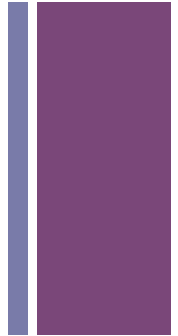
- “Personality, selfhood, subjectivity are eventual functions that emerge with complexly organized interactions, organic and social” (LW 1:162).
- “Nature is an affair of affairs, the dynamic and changing arena of organismic change and adaptation.” ~ David Hildebrand, *Dewey*, 38.





Consider the following quote:

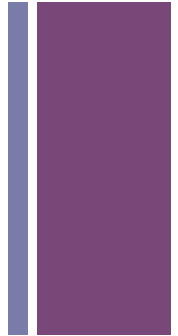
- **“Philosophy is criticism; criticism of the influential beliefs that underlie culture; a criticism which traces the beliefs to their generating conditions as far as may be, which tracks them to their results, which considers the mutual compatibility of the elements of the total structure of beliefs. Such an examination terminates, whether so intended or not, in a projection of them into a new perspective which leads to new surveys of possibilities. ~ "Context and Thought”**





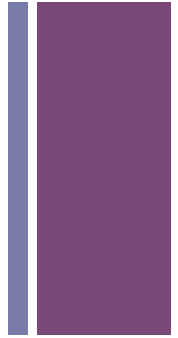
Consider the following quote:

- **Intelligence becomes ours in the degree in which we use it and accept responsibility for consequences. It is not ours originally by production... Thoughts sprout and vegetate; ideas proliferate. They come from deep unconscious sources... Our active body of habits appropriates it. The suggestion then becomes an assertion. It no longer merely comes to us. It is accepted and uttered by us. We act upon it and thereby assume, by implication, its consequences. The stuff of belief and proposition is not originated by us. It comes to us from others, by education, tradition, and the suggestion of the environment. Our intelligence is bound up, so far as its materials are concerned, with the community life of which we are a part. We know what it communicates to us, and know according to the habits it forms in us. Science is an affair of civilization not of individual intellect [MW 14:216].**



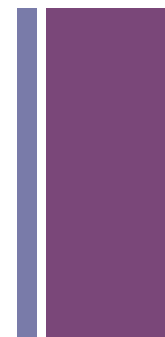
+ Consider the following quotes:

- **In “What Pragmatism Means by Practical,” Dewey points out that “it lies in the nature of pragmatism that it should be applied as widely as possible; and to things as diverse as controversies, beliefs, truths, ideas, and objects” [MW 4:101).**
- **If pragmatism is to be an honest philosophy, it must live by its own rules and become, Dewey writes, “not a contemplative survey of existence nor an analysis of what is past and done with, but an outlook upon future possibilities with reference to attaining the better and averting the worse. Philosophy must take, with good grace, its own medicine” (MW 10:37-8).**



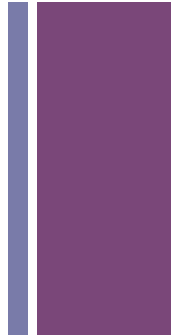
+ Consider the following quote:

“Genuine toleration does not mean merely putting up with what we dislike, nor does it mean indifference... It includes active sympathy with the struggles and trials of those of other faiths than ours and a desire to cooperate with them in the give-and-take process of search for more light... There may be, there will be differences on many points. But we must learn to make these differences a means of learning, understanding, that mere identity means cessation of power of growth” [LW15:183].



+ Consider the following quote:

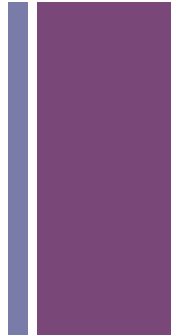
Understood as a science, then, ethics ‘is concerned with collecting, describing, explaining and classifying the facts of experience in which judgments of right and wrong are actually embodied or to which they apply’ [MW 3:41].





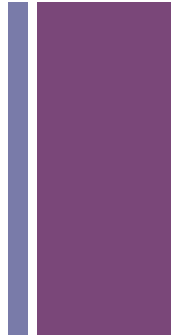
Consider the following quote:

- “Democracy is the faith that the process of experience is more important than any special result attained, so that special results achieved are of ultimate value only as they are used to enrich and order the ongoing process. Since the process of experience is capable of being educative, faith in democracy is all one with faith in experience and education. All ends and values that are cut off from the ongoing process become arrests, fixations. They strive to fixate what has been gained instead of using it to open the road and point the way to new and better experiences” [LW 14:229].



+ Consider the following quote:

- “There was embodied in the spirit of the people [his early life in Vermont] the conviction that governments were like the houses we live in, made to contribute to human welfare, and that those who lived in them were as free to change and extend the one as they were the other when developing needs of the human family called such alterations and modifications” [LW 5:194].



+ Background (1859-1952):

- From T. H. Huxley's text on physiology during junior year at University of Vermont, Dewey discovered the concept of the organic and developed a sense of the interdependence and interrelated unity of all things.
- He wrote that he subconsciously desired a world and a life that would have the same properties as had the human organism that Huxley described.
- In Hegel and in the 19th idealists such as F. H. Bradley, Dewey discovered the most profound philosophical expression of this emotional and intellectual craving. From this organic perspective, which emphasized process and change, all distinctions are functional and relative to a developing unified whole.
- The organic perspective could be used to oppose the static and the fixed and to break down the hard and fast dichotomies and dualism that plagued philosophy. Long after Dewey drifted away from his early Hegelianism, his outlook was shaped by his intellectual bias for a philosophy based on change, process, and dynamic organic interaction.

+ Dewey's Departure from Idealism:

They distorted the character of experience

- In their preoccupation with knowledge and knowing, idealists neglected the non-cognitive and non-reflective experiences of doing, suffering, and enjoying that sets the context for all knowing and inquiry.
- Man is primarily a being who acts, suffers, and enjoys.
 - If we are to understand the nature of thought, reflection, inquiry, & role of human life, we must appreciate their emergence from, and conditioning by, the context of non-reflective context.

He rejected their idea of a single unified whole in which everything is ultimately interrelated

- He displayed an increasing sympathy with the pluralism of the British empiricists.
- He insists that life consists of a series of overlapping and interpenetrating experiences, situations, or contexts, each of which has its internal qualitative integrity.
- The individual experience is the primary unity of life.

Dewey developed a Naturalistic Bias:

- While they had important insights into the organic nature of experience, they had over-generalized them into a false cosmic projection.
- Dewey discovered in the new developing human sciences, especially in what he called the anthropological-biological orientation, a more careful, detailed, scientific articulation of the organic character of experience.

+ Summary: Practical Starting Point:

Starting Point:

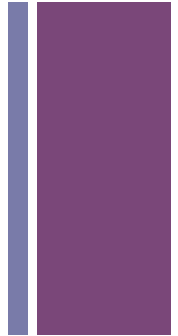
- Rather than committing the philosophical fallacy, we begin where we are, in a situation as participants, rather than as inhabitants of a culture, conceptual scheme, or a concept.
- Philosophical inquiry is itself in situations as unique, complex, and changing pre-reflective contexts.

+ Practical Starting Point:

- **Dewey urges a practical starting point, a bottom-up approach to philosophical inquiry. Drawing upon William James's "radical empiricism" Dewey proposes that philosophers avoid prejudicial frameworks and assumptions and accept experience as it is lived.**
- **Such an approach is self-consciously empirical, fallible, and social; employing it, Dewey writes, can "open the eyes and ears of the mind...[with sensitivity] to all the varied phases of life and history" (LW1:373).**
- **By recommending a more humble and mindful respect for experience, Dewey is not suggesting a surrender to irrationality; after all, it is in experience that one finds patterns of inquiry and logic useful for ordering and directing future events.**



Dewey contends for a practical starting point:



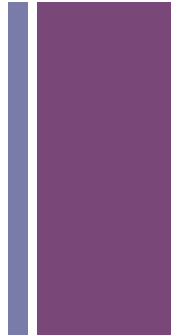
- **For too long, philosophy has been largely concerned with logical demonstration based on certain premises—it has approached issues with a "top down" rather than "bottom up" method. The top-down method may be said to use a "theoretical starting point" because it already assumes much about what must be discovered prior to any actual philosophical inquiry.**
- **For example, investigations into the nature of perception that start out with fairly definite presumptions about, say, "subjects" and the "objects" they are perceiving; or, investigations into moral questions that presume that, whatever particular answers are found, morality consists in one overarching and universal principle.**

+ Practical Starting Point:

- **For Dewey, the practical starting point is more than a strategy of doing philosophy; it is the profound & consequential acknowledgment that philosophy's inquiries are similar to many others: done by particular people, with particular perspectives, at a definite time & place, with consequences that must be considered. In other words, philosophy must be done as if it actually matters [Paraphrasing David Hildebrand's *Dewey*].**

+ Key Concept: Experience and Nature.

- The central key for understanding Dewey's philosophy is experience. Although his notion of experience develops from an idealistic to a naturalistic analysis of experience, a coherent view of experience emerges.
- In his early philosophy Dewey was sympathetic to the theory of experience developed by the Hegelians and 19th century philosophers like Bradley. He thought of experience as a single, unified whole in which everything is ultimately related. There are no rigid dichotomies or breaks in experience and nature. All distinctions are functional and play a role in a complex organic system.
- Dewey also shared the idealists' antipathy to the atomist and subjectivist tendencies in the concept of experience elaborated by the British empiricists. But as Dewey drifted away from his early Hegelian orientation he indicated three major respects in which he rejected the idealistic concept of experience:

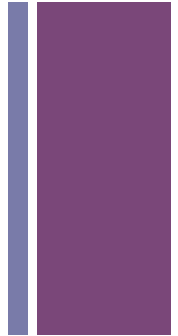


+ A New Philosophical Empiricism:

- Concept of Experience that combined the strong naturalistic bias of the Greek philosophers with a sensitive appreciation for experimental method as practiced by the sciences.
- Sympathies with the Greek view of experience, which involves social knowledge and skills and is the means by which man comes into direct contact with qualitatively rich and variegated nature.
- This view of experience is reconstructed in light of the experimental method of the sciences.

+ What is Nature?

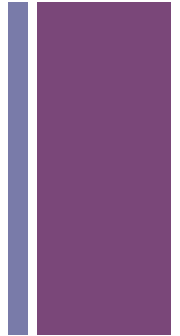
- Nature consists of a variety of transactions that are grounded in three evolutionary levels.
- Transaction is the term that designates the type of action in which the components and elements involved in the action both condition and are conditioned by the entire coordination. The elements of a transaction play a functional role in the developing coordination.
- Three levels of natural transaction are:
 - Physiochemical;
 - Psychophysical;
 - Human Experience.



+ Experience:

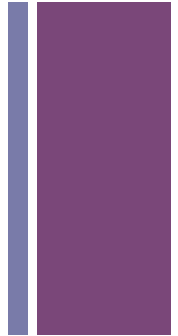
“Organism does not live in an environment but by means of an environment. The processes of living are enacted by the environment as truly by the organism for they are an integration.”

Parties are defined by their interrelation; they have no independent or prior experience; it is inclusive subject matter that modern philosophy breaks up into dualisms. Philosophers need to consider the context that shapes their own reflections and this includes the background of inquiry and selected interests that guide it.



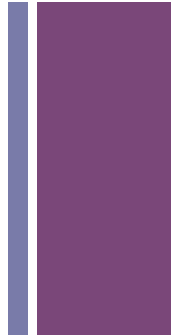
+ Experience is transactional between man & environment.

- Human experience consists of one type of natural transaction, a type that has been the latest to evolve.
- The distinguishing characteristic of this level are to be located in the nature of language, communication, and social living that humans have developed.
- Experience is all-inclusive in the sense that man is involved in continuous transactions with the whole of nature and through systematic inquiry, he can come to understand the the essential characteristics of nature.



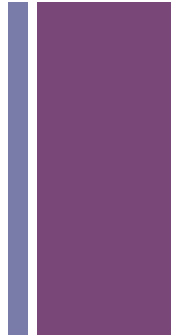
+ Philosophy as a method:

- If philosophy is to develop an effective system of operative ideas, then it has to develop a method that is pragmatic and empirical. Philosophy has to become a primarily a method rather than a system. We should think of philosophy as intelligent methods of inquiry rather than an over-arching system of beliefs.
- William James described pragmatism as a method only. Pragmatism does not stand for any special results. It is a method only. But the general triumph of that method will mean an enormous change. If you follow the pragmatic method, you must bring out of each word its practical cash value; set it to work in the stream of your experience. It appears less as a solution than as a program for more work.
- Theories become instruments than answers to enigmas.



+ Experience:

- Experience is more than thinking and knowing.
- Experience is not subjective, inaccessibly private, or merely mental; it includes broader categories of action.
- Experience does not focus exclusively or primarily on the past. It includes today's projects; it looks forward.
- Experience isn't composed of discreet, distinct sense data that await assembly by the mind. Instead, it is shot through with thought, inference, inquiry.
- Dewey believed that earlier empiricists based their views on traditional prejudices and assumptions, unsupported by experience. Splits and dualisms have pervaded traditional philosophy, separating theory from practice, knowledge from action, subject through object. Other dichotomies separate the mind from body, the self from society, experience from nature, and values from fact. So, called empirical philosophy has not been very empirical.



+ Experience:

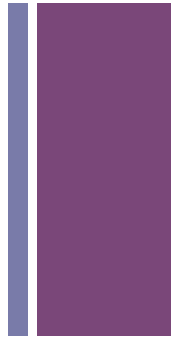
Dewey does not use the common word “experience” in its conventional sense. For Dewey “experience” is neither simply the subject that “experiences” nor the object that is “experienced.” It is not merely the interaction of the subject and object that exist separately from their interaction. Rather, the subject and object are unified and related, partial features within the on-going unity that is experienced.

“Experienced is double-barreled in that it recognizes in its primary integrity no division between act and material, subject and object, but contains them both in an unanalyzed totality.” ~ Dewey.

+ Experience emerges from Interaction:

- “Experience emerges from interaction... There is... an inherent rhythm or shape to life as it oscillates between phases of stability and of instability... When sensation and conscious experience occur, they may be seen as a broadening and deepening of this character... Growth is the establishment of continuity... There is, in short, a dynamic rhythmic and growing nature to all interaction; experience exemplified this in a heightened degree”

~ Alexander, 127.



+ Summary: Epistemology:

Epistemology:

- Central focus of Dewey's philosophical interests. He rejected the term "epistemology" favoring the "theory" of inquiry" or "experimental logic" or "intelligent inquiry":
- Initially Dewey argued that the world of fact does not stand apart from thought, but is itself defined within thought as its objective manifestation. But he came to reject this notion of Hegelian Idealism in view of Darwin, and argued in "The Reflex Arc Concept of Psychology" (1896) that the organism interacts with the world through self-guided activity that coordinates and integrates sensory and motor responses. The implication is that the world is not passively perceived
- Knowledge is the product of successful inquiry; the mistake of traditional accounts was to demand that knowledge be certain; hence that it be placed upon a more solid foundation than inquiry can provide.

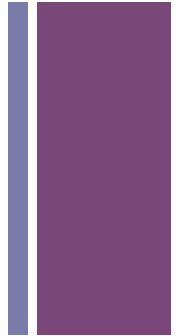
+ Summary: Epistemology:

Epistemology:

- Intelligent inquiry (1) begins with an indeterminate situation; we have a felt difficulty; (2) Recognize and state the problem; (3) Determine a reasonable and plausible solution; (4) Action; experimental testing in which we seek to confirm or disconfirm the suggested hypothesis.
- A productive naturalistic approach to the theory of knowledge must begin with a consideration of the development of knowledge as an adaptive human response to enviroing conditions aimed at an active restructuring of these conditions.
- Rather than mind-body dualism, the organism interacts with the world through self-guided activity that coordinates and integrates sensory and motor responses. The world is not passively perceived and thereby known; active manipulation of the environment is involved integrally in the process of learning from the start.

+ What is truth?

- Dewey and James criticized the traditional correspondence view of truth in that it begs the question of what the “agreement” or “correspondence” of idea with reality is.
- Dewey maintained that an idea agrees with reality, and is therefore true, iff it is successfully employed in human interaction in pursuit of human goals and interests, that is, if it leads to the resolution of a problematic situation in Dewey’s terms.
- After Bertrand Russell criticized Dewey’s view, Dewey abandoned traditional meanings in favor of “warranted assertibility” to describe the distinctive property of ideas that result from successful inquiry.





Instrumentalism within an evolutionary framework:

“What measures [knowledge’s] value, its correctness and truth, is the degree of its availability for conducting to a successful issue the activities of living beings” [MW 4:180].

Human meaning & intelligence emerge from the struggles and satisfactions shared by most other natural organism.

Knowing does not develop for every species. It is a specific, signifying response (or function) that only develops given the prior development of more basic abilities (such as inhibition, feeling, or sentiency, and anticipation).

This framework provides an opportunity for epistemology to start examining knowing as a process that is practical and cooperative rather than explaining knowledge as the final (even divine) product of theological reflection.

Practical Starting Point:

- Starts with the fact that we are in and of this world;
- Knowing is a “connection of things which depend upon others and more primary connections between a self and things; [and] ... which grows out of these more fundamental connections and ... operates in their interests at specifiabile crises” (MW 6:119).
- Knowing (and intelligence) emerge as functions that allow organisms actively to reconstruct precarious situations in ways that suit their imperatives.
- In that process, “intelligence is born... mind as individualized, initiating, adventuring, experimenting, dissolving [is also born]” (LW 1:888).

+ Practical Starting Point Frees Philosophy:

To Investigate:

- Natural phenomena, culture's imaginative (as well as reflective artifacts): its magic, myth, politics, painting, and penitentiaries" (LW 1:28).

To Solve:

- Illusionary problems, such as how knowledge in general is possible or whether we can ever know 'the external world' or 'other minds.'



Instrumentalism: If knowing is a natural function, continuous with the rest of experience, then concepts and ideas are tools or instruments. Thinking has biological origins, moral significance, & real effects in the world.



This approach to knowing rejects traditional dualisms:

- Action vs. Thought;
- Theory vs. Practice;
- Dualisms are not helpful. We should replace old theoretical divisions between action and thought with practical distinction “between blind, slavish, meaningless action and action that is free, significant, directed, and responsible” (LW 1:324).

The Pattern of Inquiry:

- Phase 1: An indeterminate situation in which a difficulty is felt- “Something’s wrong... a strange noise wakes me up in the middle of night:
- Phase 2: The institution of a problem; its location and definition-the problem seems to be... we define the problem.
- Phase 3: Hypothesis of a possible solution-”Maybe what I should do is...”
- Phase 4: Reasoning out the bearings of the suggestion-”Doing that would mean...”
- Phase 5: Active experimental or observational testing of the hypothesis-”Let’s try this and see what happens...”

Success is measured by the creation of a determinate situation out of one which is indeterminate.

+ How do we define Inquiry?

How does Dewey define Inquiry: “It is the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole (Logic: The Theory of Inquiry, 104).” ~ Dewey.

Dewey believes truth is inseparable from action and knowledge is inseparable from acts to know. Four steps of inquiry:

1. We begin with an indeterminate situation; we have a felt difficulty).
2. Recognize and state the problem;
3. Determine a reasonable and plausible solution;
4. Action; experimental testing in which we seek to confirm or disconfirm the suggested hypothesis.

If our inquiry is successful, the original indeterminate situation is transformed into a unified whole. Knowing is that which is warranted by the careful use of the norms and methods of inquiry. The knowledge gained serves as the background for further inquiry.

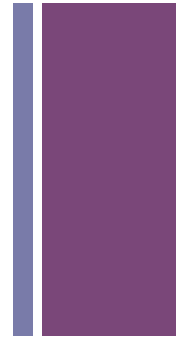
+ How do we define Inquiry?

1. This pattern of inquiry is to be a general schema for all inquiry.
2. But specific procedures, testing method, types of evidence, et. will vary with various types of inquiry and different kinds of subject matter.
3. The rules, procedures, and evidences required for the conduct of any inquiry are derived from other successful inquiries.
4. By studying the types of inquiry that have been most successful in achieving warranted conclusions, we can abstract norms, rules, and procedures for directing further inquiry.
5. These norms may themselves be modified in the course of further inquiry.

+ How do we define Inquiry?

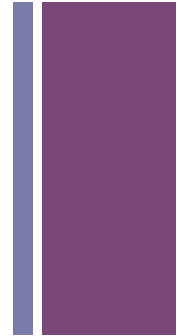
6. All inquiry presupposes a social or public context that is the medium for funding the warranted conclusions and norms for further inquiry.
7. Inquiry requires a community and helps to further the development of this community.
8. The essential principle of democracy is that of community; an effective democracy requires the existence of free, courageous, and open-minded inquirers.
9. Inquiry is essentially a self-corrective process.
10. To conduct a specific inquiry, some knowledge claims, norms, and rules must be taken as fixed, but no knowledge claims, norm, or rule is absolutely fixed; it may be criticized, revised, or abandoned in light of subsequent inquiry and experiences.

+ Dewey's Inquiry & Traditional Theories of Inquiry



- Dewey's theory of inquiry as an on-going self-corrective process and his view of knowledge as that which is warranted through inquiry is radically different from traditional theories.
- Dewey thought of this theory as an alternative to the views of those who have claimed that there is an epistemological given that is indubitable and known with certainty (absolutely certain, indubitable, or incorrigible).
- From Dewey's perspective, the general model has informed many classical theories of knowledge is confused and mistaken.
- There are no certain fixed truths that are given or known with certainty. Furthermore, knowledge neither has nor requires such as foundation in order to be rational.

+ Dewey's Inquiry & Traditional Theories of Inquiry



Inquiry and its objective, knowledge, are rational because inquiry is a self-corrective process by which we gradually become clearer about the epistemological status of both our starting points and conclusions. We must continually submit our knowledge claims to the public test of a community of inquirers in order to clarify, refine, and justify them.

+ How do we define Inquiry?

First, we look for a pattern inquiry which begins with an indeterminate situation (Dewey calls this is the antecedent condition of inquiry). An indeterminate situation is questionable, disturbed, confused, ambiguous, obscure; action is needed. But it is unclear how the organism should respond to its environment.

Second, to begin to resolve an indeterminate situation we must recognize and state the problem. Simply stating the problem at least changes an indeterminate situation into a determinate one. A problem well-put, is half-solved.

+ How do we define Inquiry?

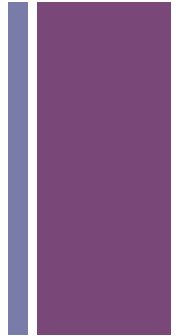
Third, we have to determine a reasonable and plausible solution. No indeterminate situation is completely indeterminate. Each one exists against a background of definite facts. We never begin with total doubt

Consider a fire alarm going off in a crowded building. Much is unknown about how to respond but much is known (e.g., stairs, exits, and fixed places); these factors are fixed in existence and we must fix them in observation in order to define the problem (e.g., you could ride the elevator, walk down the stairs, or jump out of a window. At first the possibilities may be void, little more than suggestions. To become a genuine idea, these suggestions must be subjected to reason and inquiry. Reason will develop the meanings of these suggestions and relation to one another. It will discover whether it can resolve the situation. You may opt out of the window and elevators and take the stairs. But reasoning alone is pragmatically insufficient no matter how attractive it may be for lazy philosophers and armed-chair thinkers.

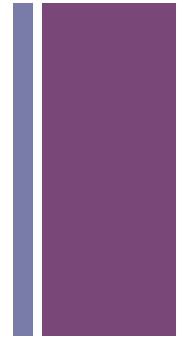
The fourth step of inquiry is in action; you must walk down the stairs and escape the fire.

+ Active Intelligence:

- Intelligence is the power one possesses to cope with one's environment;
- Thinking is not an individual act carried on in private, in isolation from practical problems.
- Thinking, or active intelligence, arises in “problem situations”; thinking and doing are intimately related.
- All thinking has two aspects: A “perplexed, troubled, or confused situation at the beginning and a cleared-up, unified resolved situation at the close.”
- Thinking is not a quest for the “truth” as though truth were a static and eternal quality in things. Thinking, rather, is the act of trying to achieve an adjustment between man and his environment. The best test of any value of philosophy is to ask, “Does it end in conclusions which, when referred back to ordinary life-experiences and their predicaments, render them more significant, more luminous to us and make our dealing with them more fruitful.



+ Intelligence is ours to the extent we use it & accept responsibility for consequences. At the same time our intelligence [MW 14:216].



Knowing emerges as a kind of adaptive activity with some important patterns: Doubt, belief, inquiry, & judgment.

We know what community communicates to us and know according to the habits it forms in us

Intelligence comes from deep unconscious sources & active body of habits appropriate it.

Dewey approaches Belief, knowledge, and truth from an evolutionary standpoint.

Beliefs & proposition is not original. Our intelligence is bound up with the community of life, of which we are a part.

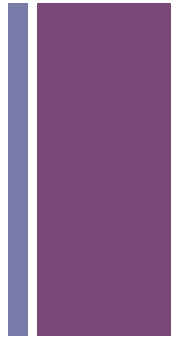
Suggestion becomes an assertion; it is accepted and uttered by us; we act upon it and assume its consequences.

+ What is Instrumentalism?

- Dewey defines his theory “instrumentalism” to emphasize that thinking is always instrumental in solving problems. He abandoned this term toward the end of his career.
- The mind does not know simply individual things; it functions as a mediator between humanity as an organism and its environment.
- The mind spreads itself over a range of things as these bear upon the person’s desires, doubts, and dangers.
- Knowing may very well consist of a “cognitive act,” of an activity in the mind, but the full description of knowing must include the environmental origin of the problem or situation that calls forth the cognitive act.
- In this way, instrumentalism differs from empiricism and rationalism. While they both separate thinking and doing, instrumentalism holds that reflective thought is always involved in transforming a practical situation.

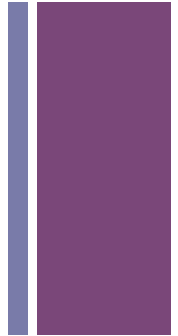
+ What is Instrumentalism?

- Instrumentalism is built around special view of human nature.
- Even though Dewey emphasized social aspect of humanity, he did recognize in people certain inherited structures (e.g., basic human instincts). But these instincts are not a fixed inheritance, but are “highly flexible.”
- “Any impulse may be organized into almost any disposition according to the way it interacts with surroundings.” For example, fear may become cowardice, reverence for superiors, the cause for for accepting superstitions, and so on. Just what an impulse will result in depends upon the way an impulse is interwoven with other impulses and upon the inhibitions and outlets supplied by the environment.
- Dewey’s point is that there is in fact a human psychological structure, that human nature possesses certain inherited capacities. At the same time these capacities are flexible so that given natural impulses will work differently under different social conditions.



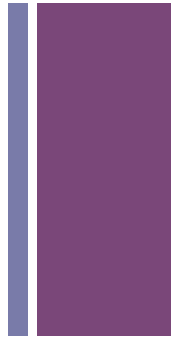
+ What is Instrumentalism?

- If an impulse reflects itself always in the same way time after time, this is not a mechanical necessity but only the product of habit.
- But habit and impulse need to be clearly distinguished.
- Habit is only the way a person deals with certain classes of “stimuli, standing predilections and aversions.” But since habit is only one way of responding to the stimuli of one’s impulses, clearly there is no necessary connection between a person’s natural impulses and any particular response.
- This means that responses are acquired or learned through interaction between human nature and culture.
- If that is the case, then habits do not represent eternal forms of human behavior. They can be singled out, analyzed, and appraised. Habits can be tested for their usefulness, the criterion being whether they support life and generally facilitate the successful adaptation of a person to the environment.



+ What is Instrumentalism?

- For Dewey, evil is not the product of some permanent instinct or impulse in human nature that cannot be altered.
 - Evil is the product of the special ways a culture has shaped and conditioned people's impulses.
 - Evil is the product of the 'inertness of established habit.'
- Intelligence itself is a habit by which the human organism adjusts its relation to its environment.
- Habits therefore include not only ways of reacting to certain stimuli, but also ways of thinking about the environment.
- Since all habits are only established but not necessary modes of behavior, the clue to overcoming personal and social evil is to alter a society's habits, its habits of response and its habits of thought.



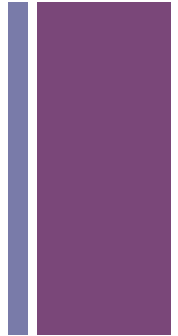
+ What does Dewey mean by “Judgment”?

- Judgment is a function involved in every phase of inquiry, with both facts and ideas:
 - Judgment about how to take the initial problematic situation;
 - Judgment about how to sift, define, and elaborate the fact and ideas proffered as relevant;
 - Judgment in its usual sense, the issue of a final decision that satisfies the initial inquiry while providing a rule or principle for future inquiries.

“Judging is the act of selecting and weighing the bearing of facts and suggestions as they present themselves, as well of deciding whether the alleged facts are really facts and whether the idea used is a sound idea or merely a fancy... [A] person of sound judgment is one who ... is a good judge of relative values; he can estimate, appraise, evaluate, with tact and discernment.”

+ Logic:

- Dewey believed that philosophers had lost touch with the actual methods of inquiry practiced by the experimental sciences.
- The function of instrumental logic is to study the methods by which we most successfully gain and warrant our knowledge. On the basis of this investigation, instrumental logic could specify regulative principles for the conduct of further inquiry.



+ Summary:

Metaphysics: An Event Ontology; Naturalistic philosophical account

- Things experienced empirically ‘are what they are experienced as’.
- Our experience of the world is constituted by our interrelationship with it, a relationship that is imbued with practical import.
- 2 Implications: (1) Though inquiry is aimed at resolving the precarious & confusing aspects of experience to provide a stable basis for action, this doesn’t imply the unreality of the unstable and contingent, nor justify its relegation to the status of mere appearance; (2) The fact that the meanings we attribute to natural events might change in any particular in the future as renewed inquiries lead to more adequate understanding of natural events does not entail that our experience of the world at any given time may as a whole be errant.

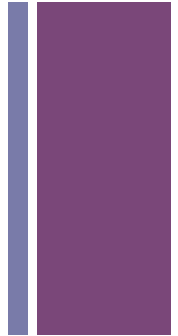
+ Summary:

Metaphysics: An Event Ontology; Naturalistic philosophical account

- Dewey argues for a position that recognizes the real significance of the multifarious richness of human experience.
- The world as we experience it both individually and collectively is an admixture of the precarious, the transitory, and contingent aspects of things, and the stable, the patterned, the regularity of natural processes that allows for prediction and human intervention.
- The world is comprised of happenings or occurrences that admit of both episodic uniqueness and general, structured order of events; this is the general pattern of human life and action. Human life follows the patterns of nature.



Illustration on how things experienced empirically “are what they are experienced as”



- A noise is heard in a darkened room that is initially experienced as fearsome. Subsequent inquiry (e.g., turning on the lights and looking about) reveals that the noise was caused by a shade tapping against a window, and this innocuous. But the subsequent inquiry does not change the initial status of the noise: it was experienced as fearsome, and in fact was fearsome.
- The point stems from the naturalistic roots of Dewey’s logic. Our experience of the world is constituted by our interrelationship with it, a relationship that is imbued with practical import. The initial fearsomeness of the noise is the experiential correlate of the uncertain, problematic character of the situation, an uncertainty that is not merely subjective or mental, but a product of the potential inadequacy of previously established modes of behavior to deal effectively with the pragmatic demands of present circumstances.

+ **Ethics: Based on the capacity of each situation to guide & rectify its own problems & challenges.**

Ethics:

- **Humans are social beings and moral situations are that the center of moral life.**
- **Morality is a social, creative, imaginative, emotional, hypothetical, and experimental process to ameliorate present situations.**
- **Dewey is not anti-theoretical in view of empirical turn but does not offer a criterion for right conduct as traditional theories do. Rather, the validity of generalizations and standards depends on particular moral judgments; judgments are individual acts about, and in, a unique qualitative context that can emerge from engaging in moral deliberation as an imaginative, qualitative, experimental, and social process.**

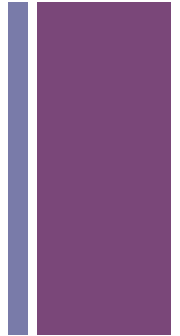
- + **Ethics:** Based on the capacity of each situation to guide & rectify its own problems & challenges.

Ethics:

- Moral decision making is situational whereby reasonable moral judgments and decisions come from intelligently exploring and assessing the situation in its qualitative uniqueness.
- Faith in experience; the proper starting point should be morality as it is experienced, i.e., as it is pre-theoretically given in the midst of our lives. But it is not a blind trust in experience; it requires balance between reflective criticism and sensitivity (cultured naivete; LW 1:40).

+ What is Cultured Naivete?

- “Such cultivated naivete can be acquired by an education that fosters the habits to be critical, and also the habits needed to listen, not just to others, but also to situations that we are in and in which we experience problems. We must take situation seriously, letting it speak for itself, instead of trying to impose some theory or some comforting universal answer that fits all moral problems.” Gregory Pappas, *John Dewey’s Ethics*, 302.



+ Ethics: Based on the capacity of each situation to guide & rectify its own problems & challenges.

Ethics:

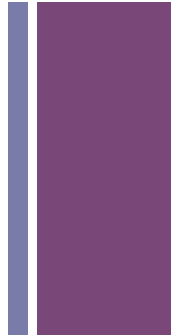
- Though there is no area of our experience that is exclusively or essentially moral, situations are essentially moral –those that have the pervasive quality of demanding of the agent that one discover what one morally ought to do among conflicting moral forces or demands.
- Individual satisfaction and achievement can be realized only within the context of social habits and social institutions that promote it.
- A satisfying life is one that (a) harmonization of experience (the resolution of conflicts of habits and interest both within the individual and within society; (2) the release from tedium in favor of the enjoyment of variety and creative action; (3) the expansion of meaning (the enrichment of the individual appreciation of his or her circumstances within human nature and culture at large.
- Open-ended, flexible, and experimental approach to problems of practice aimed at the determination of the conditions for the attainment of human good and a critical examination of the consequences of means adopted to promote them, an approach he called the “method of intelligence.”

+ What does it mean to be a moral being?

- “To exist as a moral being is be aware that choice is an ever-present obligation; in order to fulfill this obligation in a way that propels us toward growth (or authenticity), we must hone the ability to devise distinction that makes a difference to future practice.” David Hildebrand, *Dewey*, 72.
- Criticism of Traditional ethics:
 - 1. They neglect the uncertain character of moral experience;
 - 2. They disregard the complexities of moral experience;
 - 3. They exaggerate their confidence that philosophy could address living moral issues with overarching and monocausal explanations.

+ Melioristic Motive:

1. Philosophical questions about knowledge and truth can never be completely walled off from efforts to create and preserve value.
2. Meliorism is the belief that this life is neither perfectly good nor bad; it can be improved only through human effort.
3. Philosophy's motive for existing, then, is to make life better. This is no blind faith, tossed off sentimentally by Dewey; it is a working hypothesis, drawn from experience.
4. The proper purpose of intellectual inquiry is to search for ways (ideas, practices) to improve this life rather than to look for absolute value or reality per se. If philosophy is more than intellectual recreation, it must somehow engage with "the problems of men." This is Dewey's touchstone. Dewey's entreaties—that philosophy start from lived experience (practically), motivated by moral ends (meliorism)—are prescriptive but necessarily vague.



+ Distinctiveness of Dewey's Ethics:

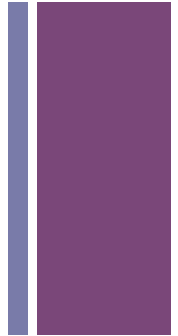
- It is not consequential, deontological, or virtue ethics but considers as multiple, contributing factors in moral experience.
- He tries to recover some key insights of these views: means and ends are two names for the same reality.
- This recovery is developed by a reconstruction that abandons the metaphysical and methodological assumptions that ground debates between competing views in ethical theory.
- “If philosophers could curb their theoretical and self-serving tendency to latch on to one aspect of moral experience and make it primary, they may be able to embrace a pluralistic and richer view of morality” [Ibid., 303].
- Emphasizes both the individual without falling into atomistic individualism and social relationships without falling into communitarianism.

+ Distinctiveness of Dewey's Ethics:

- Dewey attempts to recapture the personal character of morality without centering it on the self.
- Seeks to protect the dignity and autonomy of morality (as a distinctive mode of experience) without abandoning its continuity with everyday life and the subject matter of natural sciences.
- Moral values are real and capable of intelligent criticism but he does not presuppose absolutism and universalism associated with objectivism.
- He rejects God's eye view and affirms that the agent is one of the conditions of moral experience, but does not fall into subjective or cultural relativism.
- "Moral life is, at its very core, full of irreducible tensions that are conflicted, uncertain, and sometimes even tragic. For Dewey, dealing with irreducible tensions is the reality of living according to the values of democracy.... Those things that bring freedom, openness, and diversity to moral life are always in tension with those that bring order and stability" [Ibid., 304].

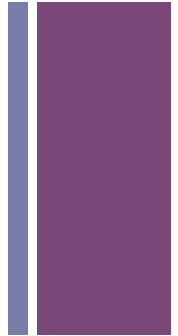
+ What should an ethical theory do and be?

- It should enlighten and guide choice and action by revealing alternatives including what is entailed when we choose one alternative rather than another:
 - It includes the functional phases of deliberation and choice;
 - It recognizes regular patterns of moral inquiry;
 - Find yourself in a morally problematic situation;
 - You engage in a process of moral deliberation;
 - You arrive at a judgment that results in a choice;
 - There is an awareness of moral tension; the consequences at stake; and one's duty to safeguard important principles and values.
 - Moral inquiry is predominantly hypothetical and prospective.
 - General hypothetical approach (commonly found in everyday life, science, and technological innovation, is also appropriate to moral inquiry.
 - All past moral solutions-laws, rules, prescriptions-are provisional, and their surviving depends upon how they perform in future inquiries addressing new problems.



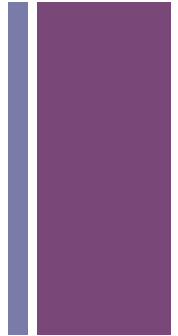
+ What should an ethical theory do and be? Science focused on moral situations, range of broad data, and reflective:

- Understood as a science focused on moral situations (rather than rules, duties, calculative procedures, or moral agents) the range and quantity of empirical data necessary to construct a rich characterization of such situations is far greater than ever before. Examples of relevant scientific research might begin with “biology, physiology, hygiene and medicine, psychology and psychiatry, as well as statistics, sociology, economics, and politics [LW7:179].



+ What should an ethical theory do and be? Science focused on moral situations, range of broad data, and reflective:

- Genuine morality should be an inquiry with a range of data extraordinarily broad when compared with traditional ethics for it draws upon the content of many scientific disciplines, incorporates lessons of social custom, jurisprudence, biographical texts, the rereading of philosophy's great moral systems in view of the wealth of variety of thoughtful moral positions, and even imagine and rehearse dialogue, visualization, imagining of motor responses, and how others might react to a deed done.
- Genuine morality should also be reflective (always evaluating, imagining, etc).





Experience is the complex interplay and transaction of one-as-participant-and-product of the world. Being ethical requires one understand what moral inquiry is and then engage in it.

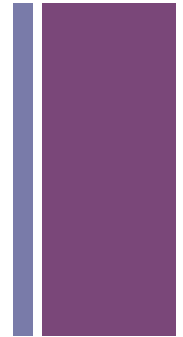
- 1. Moral life is tragic. If moral theory begins from practical starting point, we see that living consistently involves us in situations that are both precarious and stable. Prosperity is shattered by adversity and a struggle to adjust ensues. Change, conflict, contingency, uncertainty, and struggle are the very heart of moral experience.
- 2. “Only deliberate actions, conduct into which reflective choice enters, is distinctly moral, for only then does there enter the question of better or worse” [MW 14:193]. The gravity of the choice does not help discriminate “moral” from “non-moral.” A momentous decision (e.g., kill someone) , given the right circumstances, may raise no moral issues while a more trivial diversion (e.g., to privilege an older child over their siblings) may be rife with moral implications.
- 3. Do not identify moral choices with affecting motives, consequences, or aspects of character. Rather, conduct as moral is defined as as activity called forth and directed by ideas of values or worth, where the values concerned are so mutually incompatible as to require consideration and selection before an overt action is entered upon.
- Habits are sets of function that embody previous chosen ends; habits are largely responsible for the continuity of conduct. What makes an experience especially moral is that habits necessary to resolve the problem are missing (or underdeveloped), yet one is aware that a choice for the better must be made. One needs to know what to do and how to keeping doing it.



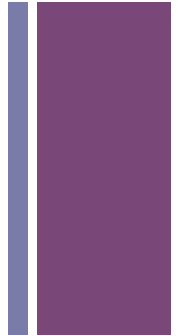


Does Dewey's ethics deny the importance of principles, ideals, and habits?

- “Dewey's ethics does not deny the importance of having, using, and carrying forward our inherited moral knowledge in the form of principles, ideals, and habits. What should be dethroned are not moral generalizations per se, but a way of using them that discourages moral sensitivity and precludes the genuine exercise of moral judgment. The most important instrumentalities for morality, the cardinal virtues, are the traits of character that can improve moral habits, and more importantly, better assist us in determining what morality requires here and now. Dewey's contextualism thus advances a view about which habits better enable a person to confront moral situations, even it does not prescribe beforehand what to do in the moral situation. Such habits include sensitivity, conscientiousness, sympathy, and open-mindedness. These are habits Dewey identifies as contributing to moral intelligence, which is required to become aesthetically engaged in moral reconstruction.



+ Proper Cultivation of Character:



“Moral anarchy and chaos are not avoided by fixing moral rules, but by the proper cultivation of character. Dewey invites us to drop legalistic or absolutist models of moral conduct and to look instead to art as the paradigm of an activity that can steer between living aimlessly and living mechanically.... Habits are our best tools, but they are not all there is to moral experience.... For Dewey, the locus of moral activity is in what is present and unique, and not on tool-building or the future. The moral end is not growth... but is simply the consummatory resolution of a morally problematic situation” [pp. 302-3].



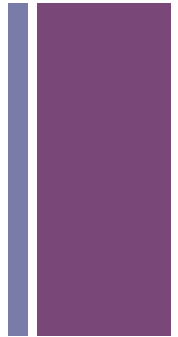
Proper Cultivation of Character: Character leads to consequences, but those consequences also shape character in the process:

What is a good character if people and environments are diverse and changeable?

Dewey contends that there is no single template or portrait of a good character, and one to emulate, but if we will be guided by the criterion of growth, it can describe what makes character strong or weak.

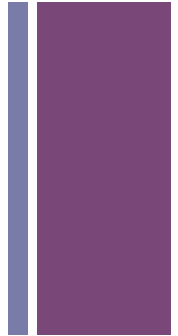
Dewey defines character as the “interpenetration of habits.” Thus, to understand a person’s character, we can investigate how well their habits are working to unify elements of the various situations life is dealing with them (MW 14:29). People with strong characters are those whose habits support and embody one another; they are integrated.

“a weak habit is an unstable, vacillating character is one in which different habits alternate with one another rather than embody one another. The strength, solidity of a habit is not its own possession but is due to reinforcements by the force of other habits, which it absorbs into itself” (MW: 14:30).



+ Value in a world of fact:

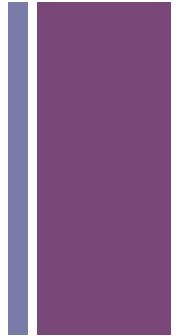
- Dewey's Theory of Knowledge: The mind discovers values the same way it discovers facts: IN EXPERIENCE.
- Values do not exist as eternal entities some place to be discovered by the theoretical mind.
- Every person experiences the problem of choosing between 2 or more possibilities.
- The question about values arises in these experiences where choices have to be made.
- Intelligence discovers the best solution when the problem is analyzed in its specific practical context.



+ Value in a world of fact:

- Dewey rejected any theory of values that stated that the standard of value, whether moral, social, political, or economic is to be found either in the “essences” of things or in some form of transcendent eternal truth.
- There is no way to grasp in any neat formula just how any act will terminate.
- Values must always mean that behavior or consequences are satisfactory.
- But it will not be possible to decide beforehand upon a limited number of consequences that will be called good.
- Life is too dynamic and the circumstances of behavior too diverse to permit the making of any kind of list of rules.

+ Value in a world of fact:



- There is “only relative, not absolute, impermeability and fixity of structure,” and “new individuals with novel ends emerge.”
- Darwin’s influence on Dewey’s thinking about value, for value is the quality of satisfactoriness in the pursuit of successfully controlling life in his environment;
- Set the problems of values into the concrete events of daily life.
- The seat of value must be located in human desire and its satisfaction.
- A moral choice will begin with a person’s or a society’s desire, but a desire must be submitted to the critical power of intelligence.
- Values are to be worked out in concrete experience but are not wholly relative because they are subject to critical scrutiny.



Dewey is not advocating relativism:

Dewey:

- The authority is life is the basis.
 - Moral theorizing emerges from the actual affairs of life;

Individual relativism:

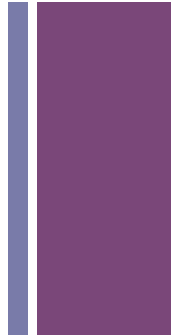
- Rests on the assumptions that the self is essentially atomistic

Social or Cultural Relativism:

- Rests on the Assumption that atomism of communities.

+ Consider this comment by David Hildebrand:

“Dewey...believes there is good evidence that neither the individual self nor the social group are atomistic in the ways assumed. But even if they were, Dewey could still point out that the conception of experience informing his ethics is not one which assumes that experience must always align with our fancies. Like physical forces that drag us to the ground, moral experience confronts us; in its face we are not little gods, but creatures struggling with a world not entirely of our own making nor under our absolute control. Therefore, doing ethics from a practical starting point means, in part, nipping in the bud those epistemological fantasies that give rise to ‘the problem of relativism’ or ‘the problem of subjectivism.’ Doing ethics requires that one observe the phenomenon of growth in one’s own life so one might use their observation to help shape the development of moral criteria” [Dewey, 87-8].



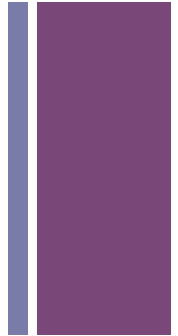
+ Accusing Dewey of Relativism is a failure to understand Dewey:

- To cite relativism is a failure to understand Dewey on his own terms:
 - Dewey is both subjective-objective;
 - Dewey is both conventional-informative;
 - Dewey is pluralistic, not relativistic;
 - Dewey embraces naturalistic referentialism;
 - Dewey embraces informed differentialism;
 - Dewey embraces meaningful meanings;
 - Dewey is pro-authority & optimistic (democratic inclusivism).

Dewey affirms authority, reason, meaning, and value within the qualitative context of personal and social experience.

+ Dewey is both subjective-objective:

- Dewey combines both subject and object together qualitatively into an inclusive democratic (social-individual) process that involves perception, analysis, and experimentation. Thus, while we can only start where we are (contextualization), the more we inquire and investigate our environment the more informed we become; thus Dewey may be pluralistic (plurality of values), but he is not relativistic (all values are relative).

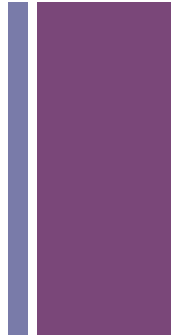


+ Dewey is both subjective-objective:

- Dewey rejects the theoretical starting point of classical philosophy whereby there is a knowable distinction between the objective and subjective, the old and the new, the actual and the potential, whereby people are able to observe and analyze from an Archimedean, absolute, and passive point of view. Though he attacks this distinction between reality and experience whereby the intellect is able to theoretically rationalize, draw inferences, and make conclusions divorced from the interaction of the world, surrounding, environment, and everyday life (from as passive posture), he argues not for a relativistic position but one of transformative experience that involves the continual activities of “doing” (which gives variety and movement) and “undergoing” (which supplies unity), integration within, demarcation from others, completing at every stage, retaining, and summing up what has gone before.

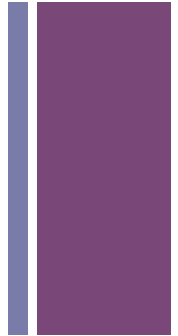
+ Dewey is both conventional-informative:

- Dewey's qualitative method is both conventional and informative. Since Dewey acknowledges that our starting point cannot be a-historical, but should be a practical starting point where we examine experience as it is, meaning is both objective and subjective, for it involves an objective-transactional process of doing and undergoing in the context of a situation because there is no separation between reality and experience. Thus, the more we strive, the more informed we become about our environment and our particular and collective situation; it is a transformative inclusive activity of both the world and we who live in it and by means of it. This is vastly different from that of a relativist who would never include the object element into their approach. Dewey contends for contextualization.



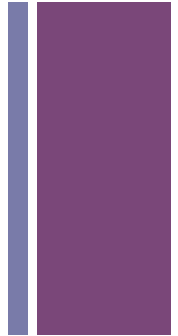
+ Dewey is a Pluralist:

- Dewey does not reduce or redefine moral values locally. Rather, experience informs us of the values of moral decisions, past, present, and future. Dewey's qualitative method allows us the values of our past to inform our present situation and foster new opportunities. While we are able to create, determine, and judge moral values in view of instrumentalism, going from an indeterminate situation to a determinate one, we are always open to further inquiry. In fact, we are able to determine what is better or worse by considering cultural context, rereading philosophy, habit and sentiments, person and social experimentation, and coherency. However, we can't begin outside of our environment or explore or critique from a bird's eye view. Rather, we must begin where we are and allow the transformative experience to inform our past, impact our present circumstances (involving both tension and resolution), and be open to future potentialities.



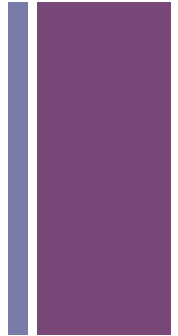
+ Dewey: Informed Differentialism:

For Dewey, while we cannot escape the limits of our biases we can acknowledge what they are. This is different from those who say we are scripted by our subculture, and thus blinded by our fixed biases and preunderstandings. Rather, the doing and undergoing, always returning to our original primary experience, will challenge them. Thus, the discovery of our biases is “a conversion within.” Thus, while our starting point cannot be ahistorical, the more we strive the more informed we become about us and our environment, both personally and socially.



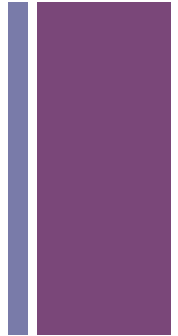
+ Dewey: Naturalistic Referentialism:

Dewey's qualitative method embraces a referentialism of a Deweyan sort. While there may not be perfect reference, there is indeed a naturalistic correspondence of the particular; it is not a universal timeless reference or a quest for certainty whereby we can leave our biases aside. Rather, we start where we are, acknowledging our biases. This is different than postmodern referentialism whereby meaning is ultimately untransferable between the "artist" and the "interpreter."



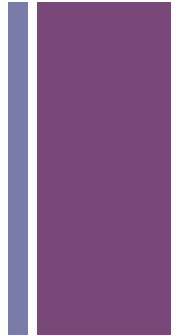
+ Dewey: Meaningful Meanings:

- While he may acknowledge that we will never exhaust all possible meanings (semantic progressivism), we do differentiate (make value judgments), determining which meaning (s) is better or worse than others-for not all views are equal, though dependent upon situation. Said differently, while we may acknowledge that there is no outside perspective that is a-historical, and we may never exhaust all possible meanings, we are able to do and make value judgments, depending upon context/situation because of our past experiences. Thus, we are able to do and make value judgments.



+ Dewey: Pro-Authority & Optimistic:

- Dewey advocates democratic inclusivism (social and personal, the one and the many). Democratic inclusivism offers possibilities since it is not negligent towards outsiders, the misfortunate, or ill-respected, and opens doors for progress that is not bound to the abuses of fascist type personalities, elitism, imperialism, communism, or objective, fixed values. Thus, we are able to be optimistic regarding the future we create; we are free.



+ Summary:

The Mind:

- In contrast to analytic approaches that rely on physically-based causes (e.g., neurological brain states) for explanations of conduct's meaning, Dewey's theories of mind, body, and behavior start from an expanded and meaningful standpoint, a practical starting point.
- Human experience is what it is because it already consists of shared meanings, produced with language in acts of biological participation. Human experience is tied up with meaning, and meaning is by its nature social and pragmatic.

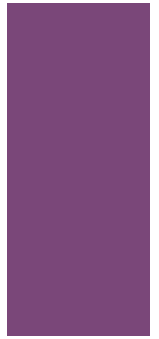
+ Summary:

The Mind:

- The mind is an emerging aspect of cooperative activity mediated by linguistic communication.
- Consciousness is the organism's readjustment to the challenge of novel conditions where the meanings and attitudes that formulate habitual behavioral responses to the environment fail to be adequate.
- Mind is an emergent issue of natural processes, more particularly the web of interactive relationships between humans and the world in which they live.



Aesthetic Criticism: Dewey approaches art experimentally: look to practical experience for its subject matter, criteria, & experimental validation for its conclusions; the function of art in experience is its overriding concern.



What is good or beautiful?

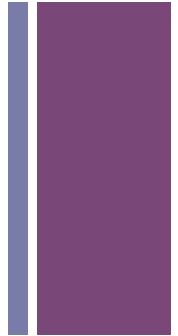
- Dewey, having rejected universalist /essentialist approaches to criticism (e.g., Bell and Fry who argue for Form), contends that art must be understood as a phenomenon of human communication, taking place within a biological, historical, and cultural context.
- Artworks are only meaningful through their transactions with people, and people's sense of meaning arises through historical and cultural experience.
- Artworks are expressive not through the artists' mere imitation or representation of abstract universals, but by them "selecting and ordering the energies in virtue of which things act upon us and interest us" (LW 10:189).

Practical Starting Point:

- Just as the painter approaches his subject with an active mind, filled with biases, tendencies, and past experiences, so does the viewer. If a work's shapes, lines, and colors are expressive, it is not because they reproduce an eternal 'significant form' but because "they integrated into a general body of coordinated, funded responses" [Alexander, 230].

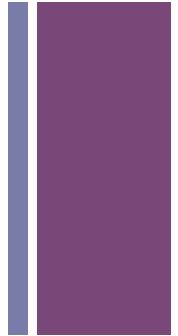
+ Art and Experience:

- Dewey objected to the sharp division between the theoretical sciences and practical arts that had its explicit source in Aristotle and had later influenced so much later philosophy.
- Dewey maintained that Aristotle's analysis of the practical disciplines is more fruitful for developing an adequate theory of inquiry than is his description of the theoretical sciences of knowing.
- Not only is inquiry an art, but all life is, or can be, artistic.
- The so-called fine arts differ in degree, not in kind, from the rest of life.



+ Art and Experience:

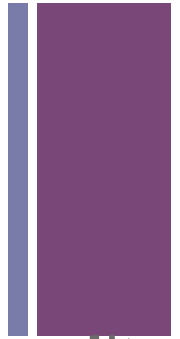
- The immediate, pervasive aesthetic quality is not restricted to a special type of experience but is a distinctive feature of anything that is properly called “an experience.”
- The primary unit of life is an experience, a natural transaction of act, suffering, enjoying, knowing.
- It has both temporal development and spatial dimension and can undergo internal change and reconstruction.





By virtue of what does an experience, situation, or context have a unity than enables one to distinguish from other experiences?

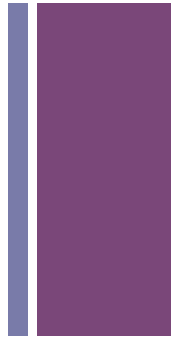
- Everything that is an experience has immediacy or pervasive quality that binds the complex constituents of the experience.
- This immediacy or pervasive quality can be directly felt or had but it is not merely subjective feelings or exist independently of any experiencer.
- These qualities are properly predicated of the experience or situation as a whole. Within an experiential transaction we can institute distinctions between what is subjective and what is objective. But such distinctions are relative to, and dependent on, the context in which they are made.
- Within an experiential transaction we can institute distinctions between what is subjective and what is objective. But such distinctions are relative, to and dependent on, the context in which they are made.





By virtue of what does an experience, situation, or context have a unity than enables one to distinguish from other experiences?

- An experience or a situation is a whole in virtue of its immediate pervasive qualities, and each occurrence of these qualities is unique.
- As examples of such pervasive qualities, Dewey mentions the qualities of distress or cheer that mark existent situations, qualities that are unique in their occurrence and inexpressible in words but capable of being directly experienced. Thus, when you directly experience a frightening situation, it is the situation that is frightening and not merely the experience.
- These pervasive or “tertiary” qualities are what he calls aesthetic qualities.



+ By virtue of what does an experience, situation, or context have a unity than enables one to distinguish from other experiences?

Within an experience, the pervasive quality can guide the development of the experience, and it can also be transformed, and enriched as the experience is reconstructed.

Aesthetic quality can be funded with new meaning, ideas, and emotions.

A situation that is originally indeterminate can be transformed into that is determinate, harmonious, and funded with meaning; this type of reconstructed experience is “consummation.”

Such experiences are reconstructed by the use of intelligence. For example, when you are confronted with a specific problematic situation that demands resolution, one can reconstruct the situation by locating its problematic features and initiating a course of action that will resolve the situation. Consummations are characteristic of the most mundane practical tasks as well as the most speculative inquiries.

+ Art and Experience:

- The meaning and role of art and aesthetic quality are crucial for understanding Dewey's views on logic, education, democracy, social philosophy, and technology.
- Knowing or inquiry is an art requiring active experimental manipulation and testing.
- Knowing does not consist of the contemplation of the eternal forms, essence, or universals. The "spectator theory of knowledge" which has plagued philosophy from its inception, is mistaken.

"Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the plane of meaning, the union of sense, need, impulse and action characteristic of the live creature. The intervention of consciousness adds regulation, power of selection, and redistribution. Thus it varies the arts in ways without end. But its intervention also leads in time to the idea of art as a conscious idea-the greatest intellectual achievement in the history of humanity" [LW 10:31].

+ Aesthetics:

Restore Continuity Between Works of Art and the Everyday Life

- Since art is separate, categorized, classified, and isolated from humans the conditions that created it from the first place in actual life-life experience (such as events, doings, and sufferings), we must restore the continuity between object and the subject by returning to the conditions and factors that make aesthetic qualities a necessary and developing aspect of the normal processes of everyday living. The process of restoring that continuity will begin by examining the conditions and factors that make an ordinary experience complete since artistic and aesthetic quality is implicit in every normal experience.

Discover the aesthetic qualities that enhance ordinary experience by recognizing ourselves as the “live creature”.

“Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the plane of meaning, the union of sense, need, impulse and action characteristic of the live creature. The intervention of consciousness adds regulation, power of selection, and redispotion. Thus it varies the arts in ways without end. But its intervention also leads in time to the idea of art as a conscious idea-the greatest intellectual achievement in the history of humanity” [LW 10:31].



- + Dewey Criticism: aesthetics has become isolated from everyday life, placed in a realm of their own whereby they are disconnected from common everyday experience.

A Perversion Has Occurred:

- Works of art are separated from human experience, the very basis where art is created.
- Art is identified apart from human experience;
- Art is isolated from human experience (e.g., fresh insights and by location).
- When art is isolated from culture they become weak or colorless to the mass of people; aesthetic hunger is likely to seek the cheap and the vulgar.
- Art, separated from experience, deeply affects the practice of living.
- While we may appreciate art in museums, we do not understand them because of this isolation.

A Chasm has occurred between Ordinary and Aesthetic Experience

- Philosophy of art is located in regions separated from its origins;
- Confusion of values has entered in to accentuate the separation;
- Aesthetics has become adventitious.
- Criticism has become affected in that while there may be an appreciation for it, there is poor capacity for aesthetic perception, a failure to understand.
- Art has become compartmentalized in view nationalism, imperialism, every capitol seeking to exhibit the greatness of its artistic past; conquest of nations; nationalization of temples; collectors; cultural elitism;
- Lack of appreciation for natural, indigenous expression;
- Marginalization of the artist & artist responds with a non-conformist eccentricity.



Since art has been separated from experience, which deeply affects the practice of living, driving away aesthetic perceptions that are necessary ingredients of happiness, reducing them to pleasurable, transient excitations, what are we to do? Go back to the essentials of human experience:

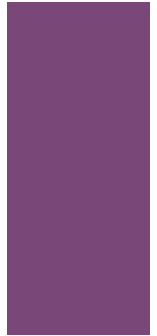


Recognize the following:

- Experience must be the starting point: Because of the actual world, in which we live, life is a combination of movement and culmination, of breaks and re-unions, the experience of a living creature is capable of aesthetic quality; the live being recurrently loses and reestablishes equilibrium with his surroundings;
- Life occurs in an environment through intimate interactions and interchange;
- Life is enriched by the state of disparity and resistance;
- Balance and harmony attained through rhythm;
- Equilibrium comes about because of tension; form is arrived when equilibrium is reached;
- Inner harmony is attained only, when, by some means, terms are made with the environment;



- Adaptation through expansion;
- Order is not imposed from without but is made out of relations of harmonious interaction that energizes and relates to one another.
- The rhythm of loss of integration with environment and recovery of union becomes conscious with him; its conditions are material out of which he forms purposes;
- Emotion is a conscious sign of a break, actual, or impending;
- Discord is the occasion that induces reflection;
- Direct experience comes from the interaction of nature and man;
- In the process of living, attainment of a period of equilibrium is at the same time the imitation of anew relation to the environment, one that brings with it potency of new adjustments to be made through struggle.
- The time of consummation is also of beginning anew; consummation never reaches perfection or finality; it is always in process.





What is Art? Since Dewey is an anti-essentialist (art is not simply located in isolated objects, subjects, or events), how does he define art?



What is art?

“The product of art-temple, painting, statue, poem-is not the work of art. The real work of art is the building up of an integral experience out of the interaction of organic and environmental conditions and energies... The work takes place when a human being cooperates with the product so that the outcome is an experience that is enjoyed because of its liberating and ordered properties” LW 10:70, 218].

“Since art is a process, a way of experiencing, it cannot be explained by a subject-object correspondence any more than knowing can” [Hildebrand, 168].

What denotes Art?

- For Dewey, art denotes the result of a process, the interaction of a thing (for example, a painting) and an appreciator (viewer).
- While an art product is a thing, artworks are “active and experienced...what the product does, its working [LW 10:167].
- They involve both physical and conceptual elements in an active relation.
- Art is not static but a “cumulative series of interactions” that take time [LW 10:223].
- For Dewey, “The task of the artist is to make the medium expressive so that the appreciator who encounters it will interact with it in such a way as to have an organized and emotional response-the emotion must be articulated as well as evoked by the medium” [Alexander, 221]



Bad Work of Art vs. Good Work of Art:



What is a bad work of art?

- It fails to evoke any aesthetic experience;
- The emotion present fails to organize the elements to achieve a coherent effect;
- It fails to enrich community;

What makes a good work of art?

- Adaptive fitness is demonstrated by its enduring expression of meaning to individual and societies over generations;
- Achieves balance between order and disorder;
- Engenders consummatory experience;
- Utilizes unity and variety to evoke experience that involves us because it seems so alive.
- Subject matter is of sufficient scope and weight.
- It lends itself to other, future uses and further consummatory experiences. There is not merely stimulation; there is growth, personally and socially.

+ Enemies of Aesthetics:

The Enemies of Aesthetics:

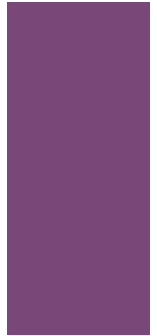
“The enemies of the esthetic are neither the practical nor the intellectual. They are the hndrum; slackness of loose ends; submission to convention in practice and intellectual procedure. Rigid abstinence, coerced submission, tightness on one side and dissipation, incoherence and aimless indulgence on the other, are deviations in opposite directions from the unity of experience” [LW 10:47].

Unified aesthetic experience may be preempted or dissolved by:

- 1. Interruption (e.g., phone calls, alarms, advertizing);
- 2. Hyperactivity (over-stimulated, incessant multi-tasking, demanding bosses);
- 3. Passivity (habits of laziness, procrastination, the desire to “be entertained”).
- 4. To flourish, aesthetic experience must attain unity and integration; it must be granted the conditions that make possible a natural back-and-forth of doing and undergoing. Such a rhythm can shape an overall experience with its thematizing, emotional quality.

+ Art Criticism: What are the Steps to Being a Deweyan Art Critic?

- Sensitive perceiver [LW 10:302];
- Be able to describe the properties of the object that could account for the experience he or she just had; do not offer any final evaluation;
- Remain closely tied to the artwork itself, 'with the objective properties of the object under consideration-if a painting, with its colors, lights, placings, volumes, in their relation to one another [LW 10:312]
- Analyze the artwork: you may categorize the properties by such names as symmetry, harmony, rhythm, measure, and proportion [LW 5:251].
- Lastly, criticize: It is a form of inquiry; it is empirical and ends in judgment; it reflects the critic's perspective. It is never final.



+ Consider this quote:

“In the end, art and art criticism are concerned with something of momentous value. For the overarching impact of a present life’s dysfunctional routines is a deadening of the live creature and a profoundly felt loss of meaning. As we give up a healthy balance between doing and undergoing, life alternately races and drags. It passes, but without accumulating meaning, as present, past, and future seem increasingly disconnected. Such living conditions deserve, as much as anything else, the label ‘existential.’...Dewey urged philosophers to improve conditions by helping the public reconsider art’s nature and function. Changes in public perceptions of art could enable artworks to intermix more boldly with the routines of contemporary life, while simultaneously enlarging the public vision of how ordinary routines can be made more aesthetic. These are the keys to a better future. ‘Only imaginative vision elicits the possibilities that are interwoven within the texture of actual. The first stirring of dissatisfaction and the first intimations of a better future are always found in works of art’ [LW 10:348]” [Hildebrand, *Dewey*, 182].

+ By virtue of what does an experience, situation, or context have a unity that enables one to distinguish from other experiences?

The enemies of the aesthetic are lazy at one extreme and the rigid and fixed at the other.

The type of aesthetic experience people normally single out is a heightened consummation in which aesthetic qualities dominate.

Life is a rhythmic movement from experiences qualified by conflict, doubt, and indeterminateness toward experiences qualified by their integrity, harmony, and fulfilled aesthetic quality.

We are constantly confronted with problematic and indeterminate situations and insofar as we use our intelligence to reconstruct these situations successfully we achieve consummation. He was concerned both with delineating the methods by which we could most intelligently resolve the conflicting situations in which we inevitably find ourselves and with advocating social reforms requires so that life for all men would become fulfilled with enriched meaning and increased aesthetic quality.

+ Critique of the History of Philosophy:

Empirical Failure:

- Failure to acknowledge primary experience as the non-cognitive context of philosophical inquiry.
- Often denied experiential context of their own investigations and took the products of their inquiries to replace experience as it is lived.
- They defended notions of thinking as devoid of all context.
- They construed experience narrowly, as a sensation or perception had by a subject.
- Because their goal was to achieve knowledge, philosophers have followed a strong inclination to view experience through the prism of this objective.



In *Quest for Certainty*, Dewey argues that the philosophical quest through history is characterized by an interrelated & systematically misguided set of epistemological, metaphysical, and methodological commitments:

Misguided Epistemology:

- The quest for the attainment of certain knowledge

Misguided Metaphysics:

- The attempt to locate the proper objects of knowledge in a higher reality.

Misguided Methodology:

- A method of inquiry that completely rejects any substantive role for practical activity.

+ Views of Experience by Traditional Philosophy:

Plato, Descartes:

- Viewed experience as a remorseless flux, untrustworthy for the purpose of scientific or metaphysical knowledge.

Locke, Hume:

- Celebrated the sensory flux of experience, because it at least it provides something observable and measurable.

Dewey:

- An organism's experience cannot be reduced to the contents of consciousness.
- If philosophers could set aside their predetermined, theoretical objectives, they could appreciate that scrutiny of experience can reveal much more than sensation or intellectual thought.
- Experience is "double-barreled, shot through with meaning, inference, inquiry."

+ Why Empirical Failure?

- Modern philosophers tend to start with inquiries with the features qua known and not as they are experienced in their robust and raw character. We cannot ignore the crudities of life just because they are crude.
- For Dewey, the pre-theoretical (i.e., primary experience) is the more primitive level because it encompasses the theoretical and because it is where things are present in their brute and direct qualitative givenness and thereness. We need to begin and end experientially guided inquiries on this level.

+ Dewey was opposed to “Spectator Knowledge”: To see something is to have an idea of it.

Spectator versus Experience

- Chief problem with earlier philosophy was that it had confused true nature & function of philosophy. They assumed that thinking refers to fixed things in nature, that for each idea there is a corresponding something in reality.
- Even among rationalists: To have a clear idea is to guarantee that the object of thought exists in reality.
- In either case, the mind was viewed as an instrument for considering what is fixed and certain in nature. Nature is one thing and the mind is another, and knowing is the relatively simple activity of looking, as a spectator does, at what is there.

+ For Dewey, intelligence is the power one possesses to cope with one's environment.

Spectator versus Experience

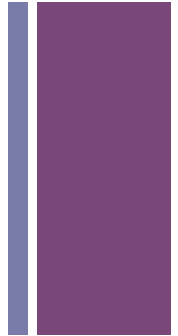
- Spectator view is “Too static; too mechanical”;
- Influenced by Darwin's theories, Dewey looked upon humanity as a biological organism. Thus, humans are best understood in relation to their environment. As any other biological organism, a person struggles for survival. Rather, humanity is enmeshed in a natural environment. In experience, whereby humans who are dynamically related to their precarious environment, it is clear that a simple spectator-type theory of knowledge will not work.
- Intelligence is not a fixed substance; knowledge is not a set of static concepts. Intelligence is the power one possesses to cope with one's environment.
- Thinking is not an individual act carried on in private, in isolation from practical problems. Thinking, or active intelligence, arises in “problem situations; thinking and doing are intimately related.

+ Why Empirical Failure?

- Dewey's moral philosophy is revolutionary because he tries to avoid all the mistaken theoretical starting point and begins with moral experience as it is lived. This includes what we immediately experience in the midstream of our everyday engagements:

Sense perception (but is not just sense perception as is presupposed by some modern theories of knowledge)

- Anticipations;
- Relations;
- Novelty;
- Location;
- Flow;
- Qualities, etc.





Critique of Traditional Ethics:



Traditional Morality:

- Morality is something imposed by external source, whether it be a transcendental authority such as God, Nature, or Reason, or supra-individual custom such as society, religion, cultural traditions).
- Moral experience is understood as something radically different from everyday experiences of domestic and industrial relations.
- There is a special moral realm that is deserving specialized study of moral theorists.
- We ask and attempt to answer the question, “Why be moral?”

Dewey’s Morality:

- Looking at everyday life, one sees how moral concerns permeate much of experience and require nearly constant deliberation and choice of action, whether issues or minute or momentous.
- Dewey reconstructs ethics in a way that emphasizes the integral connections between people, nature, and society.
- No man is self-sufficient for each person’s identity exists only in virtue of social interaction.
- Interests, needs, and desires are meaningful only as understood within the social and historical contexts that help form them.
- Dewey finds “Why be moral?” as a central question to be absurd.



Critique of Traditional Ethics: Experience is the complex interplay and transaction of one-as-participant-and-product of the world.

Traditional Morality:

- It is inadequate for moral theories to depict moral agents as inert atoms, pushed around the gravity of custom;
- It is not appropriate to vest in each agent a moral universe unto itself;
- Traditional theoretical choices (objective realism or subjective idealism) falsify & obscure moral experience's model of human nature and conduct;
- Trad. theories err by seeking a moral theory that aspires to rigor of Newtonian physics.
- These models are too abstract, spectatorial, and fixated on certainty to be of use to real people with problems.
- These theories and attitudes have impoverished moral life.

Critique:

- “If moral theory is *in* and *for* our moral life then one cannot determine what an adequate theory will be without considering what kind of moral theory works better within our actual moral lives.” Pappas, *Dewey*, 65.
- Dewey criticizes ethical systems (made up fixed rules, absolute values, natural virtue, & utilitarian consequences) because they are systems driven by the overarching imperative of certainty (comprehensiveness, ultimacy, monocausality). This imperative, Dewey believes, actually renders theory less effective at resolving moral inquiry, and so in the end these moral systems fail-morally.
- They are also driven by assumptions about human beings. Instead, we should not be considered fundamentally separate, from nature or other persons a person subsists and flourishes in a context of environment, social and natural.



One of Dewey's most compact criticisms of traditional ethics is "Three Independent Factors in Morals" (1930): Why be moral? If this is the central question, then the answer (if found) should provide an answer that can clarify the conflictual nature of moral problems in a way that is absolute, objective, and certain.

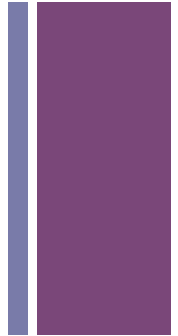
- **Virtue Ethics:** Makes character or virtue central; morality is a system of praise and blame organized around the development of a healthy character living a meaningful life.
- **3. Deontological Ethics:** We take rights (or duty) as central to morality; since a moral agent is a rational being, the morality of any choice is not determined not by looking at consequences or character, but by evaluating whether the choice itself was an exclusively rational expression of the agent.
- **Consequentialism:** Make consequences paramount; an actions' worth is estimated by relating it the amount of pleasure created for the maximum number of persons.
- **For Dewey, "conduct is always shared; this is the difference between it and a physiological process. It is not an ethical 'ought' that conduct *should* be social. It is social, whether good or bad" (MW 14:16).**





One of Dewey's most compact criticisms of traditional ethics is "Three Independent Factors in Morals" (1930): Why be moral? If this is the central question, then the answer (if found) should provide an answer that can clarify the conflictual nature of moral problems in a way that is absolute, objective, and certain.

- They presume a reality that transcends ordinary experience which is derived from an age-old quest for certainty. This view is irresponsible intellectually because seeking to produce a single explanation tends to set theoretical camps against one another, foster a lack of cooperation, and prevents philosophers from developing multi-causal and empirically sensitive explanations, which may be the only form a solution can take.
- They are also irresponsible in practice because they are typically unable to address morally complex issues and so they waste precious opportunities to alleviate human misery. Because of their commitment to a certain principle that believe is decisive, they neglect the complexities of a situation, refusing to give empirical scrutiny to situation and separate ethics from everyday affairs.

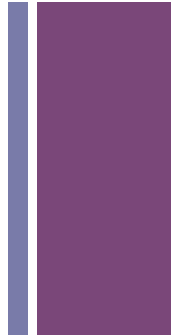




Dewey's Criticisms of Traditional Ethics: Moral Progress comes down to process—the degree to which we habitually inquire in nuanced and scrupulous ways.

“Such notions have a dual bad effect. First they get in the way of observation of conditions and consequences. They divert into side issues. Secondly, while they confer a morbid exaggerated quality upon things which are viewed under the aspect of morality, they release the larger part of the acts of life from serious, that is, moral, survey. Anxious solicitude for the few acts which are deemed moral is accompanied by edicts of exemption and baths of immunity for most acts. A moral moratorium prevails for everyday affairs (MW 14:194).

[M]oral progress and the sharpening of character depend on the ability to make delicate distinctions, to perceive aspects of good and evil not previously noticed, to take into account the fact that doubt and the need for choice impinge at every turn. Moral decline is on par with the loss of that ability to make delicate distinctions, with the blunting and hardening of the capacity of discrimination.”



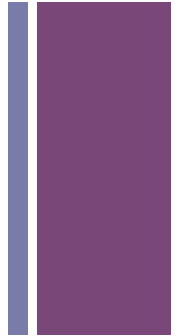
+ Dewey's Criticisms:

- **Why, Dewey asks, should each successive generation of philosophers accept these theoretical assumptions? Why should it be assumed that there is, for example, a single overarching principle of morality—or a dualism between subject and object in perception? Such predeterminations are unfounded; moreover, Dewey argues, they lead philosophical inquiry into insoluble problems and dead ends. They divert philosophical talent away from addressing practical problems.**
- **Professionalized philosophers, who tend to respond by demanding specifics: Which cherished philosophical problems should be abandoned—and when? Where should philosophical investigations be focused instead? What happens to the identity of philosophy once it abandons traditional problems? Dewey's general retort to such responses is "look around." Philosophy can discover new problems in the crucible of common life if its parishioners have the courage and emotional intelligence to trade certain answers for questions which aim to make life better.**

- + All concepts and conclusions are provisional, capable of revision, or rejections, including those of American Pragmatism.

“We also have to remember that if pragmatism is to be an honest philosophy, like Dewey says, “it must take its own medicine” by always being aware that their own concepts and conclusions are provisional, capable of revision, or rejection.”

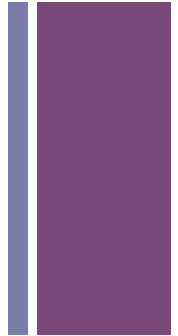
David Hildebrand, *Dewey*, 62.



+ Critique of Philosophy in view of Experience:

- We failed to attend the actual nature of experience. So philosophy has become with trivial artificial problems. They can't be solved and they should be abandoned.

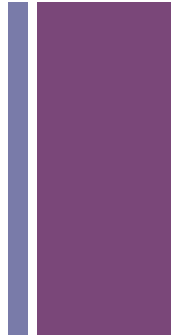
“What has been completely divided into philosophical discourse into man and world, inner and outer, self and not-self, subject and object, individual and social, private and public, etc. are in actuality parties in life transactions. The philosophical problem of trying to get them together is artificial on the basis of fact it needs to be replaced by consideration of the conditions under which they occur as distinctions and of the special uses served by the distinctions.” ~ Dewey.



+ Critique of Philosophy in view of Experience:

This has revolutionary implications:

The traditional metaphysical categories of philosophy such as subject, object, mind, body, experience, nature, fact, and value are merely distinctions made by reflection. They have no metaphysical status in reality; not metaphysically different things in the world. So, Dewey, drawing on the work of Pierce and James, insists that experience is a unified exchange or transaction between organism and environment; it is an active unity of subject and object.



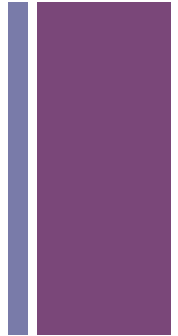
+ Philosophy as a Method Only:

- Philosophical issues must be framed in terms drawn from actual experience and conclusions must be stated in terms of experience and they must be verified or falsified in experience. Theories become instruments, not final answers to enigmas.
- Using the empirical philosophical method in philosophy provides no positive guarantees. Still, it means we can prove on the on the interminable disagreements and pseudo-problems of non-empirical philosophy.
- We can see the benefits of the empirical method in the great successes in the natural and social philosophy which stands in great contrast in the lack of advance in philosophy. Progress in philosophy awaits a similar adoption.
- The value of the empirical method is practical. It lets us predict consequences and reach our goals. So, in Dewey's concept, philosophy doesn't simply develop intelligent methods of inquiry, it actively reconstructs America society.



Philosophy as a Method Only:

- The process of experience is more important than what special result achieved.
- Every other form of moral and social faith rests upon the idea that experience must be subjected at some point or the other to some form of external control, to some authority alleged to exist outside the process of experience. Democracy is faith that the process of experience is more important than any special result attained. So the special results achieved are of ultimate value only as they are used to enrich and order the on-going process. Since the process of experience is capable to be educative, faith in democracy is all one with faith in experience and education.



+ Experience and Action

- Dewey's theory of experience stands at the center of philosophy
- It is based upon his experimental method of philosophical inquiry
- It stands in sharp contrast to earlier empirical philosophers like Aristotle, Locke, and Hume.
- Remember, philosophy is inherently criticism.
- We can't derive from what we think by rules of logic or rules of reason; rather our epistemology must be derived from our actions, not metaphysics. In fact,
 - Action is primary of pragmatism not pondering.
 - Any deficiencies of inquiry can be corrected only by further inquiry; inquiry can improve itself by itself.
 - A pattern of inquiry may illuminate and improve actual inquiries but it can't abstractly deduce or pre-judge them.

+ He critiqued traditional philosophy for their misguided commitments to:

Epistemology:

- Misguided commitment to a quest for the attainment of “certain” knowledge.

Metaphysics:

- Misguided commitment to locate the proper objects of knowledge in a higher reality, an unchanging realm of pure being.

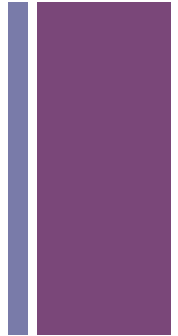
Methodology:

- Misguided method of inquiry that completely rejects any substantive role for practical activity.
- Practical activity is by nature uncertain for it deals with individualized situations are never exactly duplicable. All such activity essentially involve change.

+ Dewey's attack on Traditional Philosophy:

- In *Experience and Nature*, Dewey argues that there is no unchanging realm of being, no antecedent reality, which it is the unique office of philosophy to uncover.
- It is this commitment to a reality transcending the realm of practical activity which has systematically skewed most, if not all, of the defining dualisms of traditional metaphysics, including those between subject and object, mind and body, form and matters, and appearance and reality.
- Dewey's metaphysical writings are thus largely taken up in efforts to demonstrate that these dualisms are dualisms both components of which can be comprehended within the natural realm of practical activity, not dualisms between one component within the natural realm (e.g., body) and another existing in some higher realm (e.g., mind).

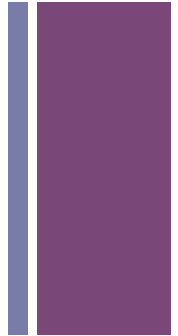
+ Dewey on History of Philosophy:



- In *Quest for Certainty*, Dewey argues that the philosophical quest through history is characterized by an interrelated and systematically misguided set of epistemological, metaphysical, and methodological commitments.
- Method of philosophical inquiry he rejected was focusing on the certain knowledge of an uncertain realm that is accessible only through reason and pure intellection.
- While he argues against 17th century modern philosophers for continuing to endorse traditional metaphysical, epistemological, and methodological commitments of the Greeks, he did appreciate the fact they abandoned the Greeks' teleological approach to science, an approach governed by a method of inquiry divorced from practical activity, in favor of modern science. It is the scientific method that holds the key to unlocking the systematic errors of traditional philosophy.



Critique of Traditional Philosophy:



- “The life of all thought is to effect a junction at some point of the new and the old, of deep-sunk customs and unconscious dispositions, that are brought to the light of attention by some conflict with newly emerging directions of activity” (LW 3:6).
- Knowledge, for Dewey, must go beyond epistemology and logic, semantics and what is symbolic, to the biological and cultural aspects of life.
- Truth, for Dewey is a label characterizing what inquiry has come up with-in that situation, for those purposes. He uses the phrase, “warranted assertibility”: Truth is always tentative as new discoveries are made; it is a progressive while identifying with assertions that have proved useful or reliable. We confront obstacles, formulate problems, devise solutions and act experimentally. Knowing and living are connected.

Empiricism:

- Stress role of sense experience. Knowledge originates in sense experience.
- The mind starts out as a receptive blank slate on which the physical world in inscribes its replica, in the form of ideas.
- The association of ideas generates knowledge; with luck, mind becomes the mirror of nature.
- Big concern for scientific progress; it needs to divorce itself from speculation and take perceptual encounters more seriously.
- They maintain that an objective, external world writes its story elements in our mind; when we can express that story in an order that corresponds to the world, there is objective knowledge.

Rationalism:

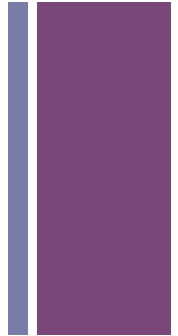
- Sense experience could never produce knowledge.
- Genuine knowledge is unchanging, self-evident, and certain.
- We must not draw upon a fluctuating, external world.
- We should rely on certain, inner concepts.
- Rational epistemology is abstract, deductively certain, and an end in itself not tied to any practical purpose.
- Knowledge is produced by the mind, an immaterial entity with a capacity to reason & thinking that is innate, independent of its temporary housing, the material body.
- Knowledge is not an inner-outer correspondence but a coherence of inner concepts; this harmony is grasped not by the senses but by the introspective light of consciousness shining on its own conceptual landscape.

Immanuel Kant

- Philosophy should rein in its ambition & stop pretending it can transcend the limits of experience.
- Philosophy's proper inquiry is to discover what can possibly be known in experience.
- He refused to assign a predominant role to either perceptions or concepts; instead he argued that we have a (1) permanent intellectual apparatus & (2) set of categories that constrain how we can take up new sensory experiences.
- The mind does not make the world, nor does the mind make the mind.
- There is freedom in how we think the world, but it is constrained & not absolute.
- One cannot appeal to things beyond possible experience as sources of knowledge and yet he also posits-without sufficient justification-an ideal realm of things-in-themselves that exists beyond possible experience.
- This noumenal realm central to Kant's project, makes possible free will, morality, & sensory appearances as well.

+ Dewey's Critique of Kant:

- Kant fails to adequately address the problems of rationalism & empiricism. How? By (1) retaining traditional notions such as the (a) sharp distinction between intellect and nature & (b) knowledge must be certain, and (2) maintaining the idea that the mark of knowledge resides in an idea's faithful mirroring of realities beyond experience.



+ Dewey's Critique of Kant:

First, while Kant is right in criticizing the “zealotry” of rationalism and empiricism, **he retains** the schools' sharp distinction between intellect and nature by simply moving an absolute authority (of, say, Platonic Forms or God), into the universal structure of rational mind and the traditional assumption that knowledge must be certain

- This latter claims results in a deeply inconsistent view of knowledge. Kant argues that one cannot appeal to things beyond possible experience as sources of knowledge and yet he also posits, *without sufficient justification*, an ideal realm of things-in-themselves that exists beyond possible knowledge.

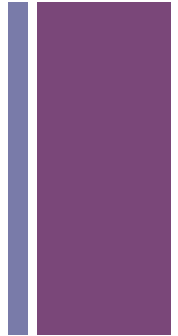
And second, Kant argues that sensation, which are necessary ingredients of knowledge, are initially inchoate or vague. This sensory flux is never observed because it must first be formatted by mental categories to be experienced at all.

- But by what argument, Dewey objects, can we assume that sensation is initially like this? Dewey finds no satisfactory answer.

+ Dewey's Critique of Kant:

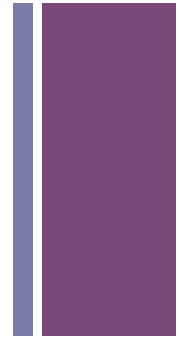
- While Kant's active model was a clear improvement, Kant maintains the traditional perspective that the mark of knowledge resides in an idea's faithful mirroring of realities beyond experience.
- Kant fails to push far enough toward a philosophical perspective that can merge concept and perception, reason and nature, theory and practice.
- Dewey came to believe that only a whole-hearted naturalism—an ecological conception of experience could improve upon rationalism, empiricism, and Kantianism. Dewey's naturalism makes experience central to living (as well as knowing) by enlarging and activating it.

+ Education: The Key to Remolding a Society.



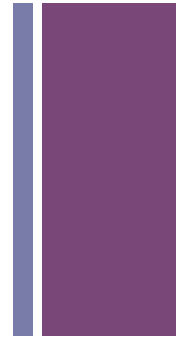
- Nothing is more important for Dewey than education in remolding a society.
- If a person is a creature of habit, then education should provide the conditions for developing the most useful and creative habits.
- Dewey regrets that in the past progress was achieved only when catastrophe or major social upheaval broke the spell of long-standing habits.
- He preferred a more controlled approach to change, and nothing provides a person with more power to control than knowledge.
- Instead of revolution, change should be achieved through the skillful alteration of habits through education.
- “We

+ Education: The Key to Remolding a Society.



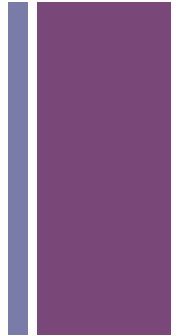
- Indeed, the “chief means of continuous, graded, economical improvement and social rectification lies in utilizing the opportunities of educating the young to modify prevailing types of thought and desire.”
- The spirit of education should be experimental, because the mind is fundamentally a problem-solving instrument, and it is therefore more important to try alternative means for successfully solving problems than to pursue neat theoretical formulations.
- Thus, Dewey’s instrumentalism was governed by presuppositions of science. Like science, education should recognize the intimate dynamic connection between action and thought, experiment and reflection.

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+ Education: We learn by doing!

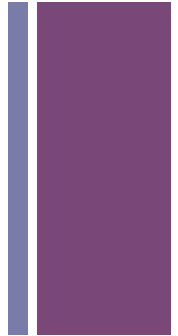


- Education is, or ought to be, a continuous reconstruction of experience in which there is a development of immature experience toward experience funded with the skills and habits of intelligence.
- The slogan, “Learn by Doing” was not intended as a credo for anti-intellectualism but, on the contrary, was meant to call attention to the fact that the child is naturally an active, curious, and exploring creature.
- A properly designed education must be sensitive to this active dimension of life and must guide the child, so that through his participation in different types of experience his creativity and autonomy will be cultivated rather than stifled.
- Function of education is to encourage habits and dispositions that constitute intelligence.

+ Education: We learn by doing!

- There is great stress on creating a proper type of environmental condition for eliciting and nurturing these habits.
- Education as the continuous reconstruction and growth of experience also develops the moral character of the child.
- Virtue is taught not by imposing values but by cultivating fair-mindedness, objectivity, imagination, openness to new experiences, and the courage to change one's mind in the light of further experience.

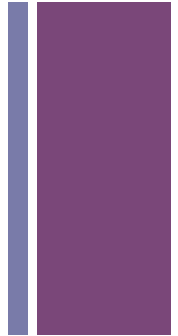
+ Education: The Key to Remolding a Society.



- Achieving knowledge is a continuous process; it is a struggle to fashion theory in the context of experiment and thought. But if education is the key to social improvement, and if experiment is the best way to discover the instrumental means for solving problems, the crucial questions concern the problem of ends.
- Improvement presumes a scale of values, and means are employed toward ends.
- How does humanity or society discover its ends or the foundations of its values?
- How do we relate facts to values, science to morality, and in the process develop a new theory of values?

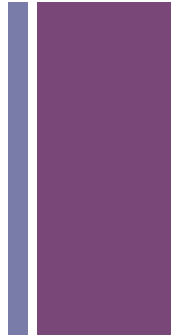
+ Democracy:

- Democracy itself represented Dewey's faith in the capacities of human intelligence. Dewey believed that apart from "pooled and cooperative experience" there is no reliable source of knowledge, wisdom, or guidance for collective action.
- "[For Dewey] the state is not the march of God on earth, nor is it a utility maximizing machine; it is a collection of officials whose individual tasks vary enormously but whose *raison d'être* is to enable the infinitely various projects of the citizenry to flourish alongside and in interaction with one another." Ryan, 218.



+ Democracy:

- “Ideals are important, Dewey believes, but the they are important because they function as tools. Once we remove the ideals from the dynamic and human environment (e.g., elevating them as ‘the Good’ or ‘Justice they become idols, inert to the analysis and improvement of pressing problems, the close inquiry rather than enlarge it.”~ Hildebrand, *Dewey*, 97.



Dewey's Criticism of Politics: Understanding Dewey's practical

+ starting point, he criticisms of politics include:

Rejected Traditional Models:

- Rejects a prior objects or criteria as ingredients in inquiry such as the idea of a human essence and human nature such as “noble savage”
- Rejects claims regarding inevitable historical destinies (economic, rational, etc);
- Rejects assumptions concerning human rights (e.g., they are inherent or inalienable);
- Rejects any political philosophy that binds various parts to a single monocausal explanation whether it is utility, duty, or virtue.
- While ideals are important only as they function as tools.

Reconstructed Classical Liberalism

- Dewey reconstructs classical liberalism. He rejected Mill, Kant, Locke, Hobbes, and Smith for having a (1) conception of human nature; (2) a political theory based on that nature (we are not atomistic and prior to social or political relations with others). In fact, rights are not essences (embedded in human nature. Instead a right is a cluster of fundamental yet processive, social powers.
- Essential to human nature, liberals argued was rational agency. While they may have disagreed regarding the definition of rationality, it was considered ontologically distinct from human physicality.
- He rejected their assumption of a normative hierarchy to the dualism that the mental-rational capacities were superior because they (not the physical emotional ones) enable human beings to choose actions, means, ends, and values.
- He rejected a high suspicion of governmental power (left over from American Revolution) and argued that we enact a govt. that is thoroughly by and for the people.
- Advocated a sort of liberalism that can be deployed in cooperative inquiry and measured by effective action; he demanded an experimental and hypothetical approach. Thus, rights and powers are social powers.



Dewey's Criticism of Politics: Understanding Dewey's practical starting point, he criticisms of politics include:

Individuality is expressed in a social context:

- One becomes an individual by virtue of social engagements with communities just as the talent of a musician happens through performances, before a crowd with other musicians.
- Only in social groups does a person have a chance to develop individuality.
- The philosophical reconstruction of “individual” vs. “society” and “self” vs. “other”, is erased, and is replaced with the outlook that I’m not removed or distinct from my social context in which I act.
- By accepting the corporate and industrial world in which we live, and by thus fulfilling the pre-condition for interaction with it, we, who are also parts of the moving present, create ourselves as we create an unknown future.

Aims, Methods, & Values come from Experience Itself.

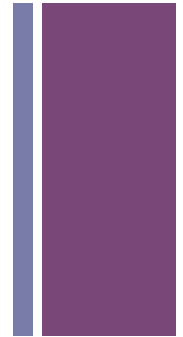
- By rejecting the idea to explain politics as “monocausal” individualism, laissez-faire, or monocausal collectivism (Marxist; Fascist), we remain open to more complex explanations of political experience.
- He is wanting a multicausal, culturally and historically sensitive functional mindset for a liberal-democratic society that is based on a socialized economy.
- Genuine community has a central core of common felt values which operate as significant values for the community. Having common values, aims, beliefs, aspirations, & knowledge is not a passive affair. Rather, it requires a range of ongoing activities, particularly communication. Only with communication can community sustain itself.
- We conceive of the public and the state by starting empirically with human behavior and practice.
- Democracy is more than a form of govt; it is primarily a mode of associated living; it arranges life and optimizes meaningful growth. Every generation has to accomplish democracy for itself.

+ Other Important Observations:

- The spirit that pervades Dewey's entire philosophy is that of a reformer, a reconstructor, not the revolutionary.
- He was skeptical of panaceas and grand solutions for eliminating existing evils and injustices.
- He firmly believed that with a realistic scientific knowledge of existing conditions and with a cultivated imagination, men could improve and ameliorate the human condition.
- To allow ourselves to drift in the course of events or to fail to assume our responsibility for continuous reconstruction of experience inevitably leads to the dehumanization of man.

+ Other Important Observations:

- The entire universe consists of multifarious variety of natural transactions.
- Man is at once continuous with the rest of nature & exhibits distinctive patterns of behavior that distinguish him from the rest of nature. His experience is also pervaded with qualities that are not reducible to less complex natural transactions.
- Dewey attempted to place man within the context of the whole of nature.
- Dewey was sensitive to the varieties of the human experience. He sought to delineate the distinctive features of different aspects of experience, ranging from the mundane practical experience to the religious dimension of experience. Within the tradition of philosophy Dewey may be characterized as a robust naturalist or a humanist naturalist; he is both an optimist and realist.
- There will always be conflicts, problems, & competing values within our experience, but with the cont. development of “creative intelligence” we can strive for & realize new ends & goals.



+ Other Important Observations:

- The function of philosophy is to effect a junction of the new & the old, to articulate the basic principles and values of a culture, and to reconstruct these into a more coherent and imaginative vision.
- Philosophy is essentially critical, and as such, will always have work to do.
- For as the complex of traditions, values, accomplishments, and aspirations that constitute a culture changes, so must philosophy change.
- Indeed, in pointing the way to new ideals and in showing how these may be effectively realized, philosophy is one of the means for changing a culture.
- Philosophy is continually faced with the challenge of understanding the meaning of evolving cultures and civilizations and of articulating new projected ideals.
- The motif of reconstruction dominates his conception of the role of philosophy in civilization. He gave philosophy a more modest function than those who claimed that philosophy reveals an eternal reality.