

# **State of Mankind**

How much do you know?

Excerpts from

***How the Specter of Communism Is Ruling Our World***

(66)

John Dewey is the father of American progressive education and was greatly influenced by the ideas of the eighteenth-century French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Rousseau believed that people were good by nature and that social ills were responsible for moral decline. He said that man was free and equal at birth and that given a natural environment, everyone would enjoy their innate rights. Inequality, privilege, exploitation, and the loss of man's innate kindness were all products of civilization, he claimed. For children, Rousseau advocated a model of "natural education"

that would leave them to their own devices. This education was to be absent of religious, moral, or cultural teaching.

In fact, humanity is endowed with both benevolence and wickedness. Without nurturing benevolence, the wicked aspects of human nature will predominate to the point where people consider no method too base and no sin too evil. With his elegant rhetoric, Rousseau attracted many misguided followers. The deleterious influence his pedagogical theory has had on Western education is hard to overestimate.

About a century later, Dewey picked up where Rousseau had left off and furthered his destructive work. According to Dewey, who was influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution, children should be weaned from the traditional tutelage of parents, religion, and culture and allowed the freedom to adapt to their environments. Dewey was a pragmatist and moral relativist. He believed that there was no unchanging morality and that people were free to act and behave as they saw fit. The concept of moral relativism is a critical first step in leading humanity away from the moral rules set by God.

Dewey was one of 33 people who signed their names onto The Humanist Manifesto, penned in 1933. Unlike the humanists of

the Renaissance, twentieth-century humanism is at its core a kind of secular religion rooted in atheism. Based on modern concepts such as materialism and the theory of evolution, it regards a human being as a machine, or the sum of a biochemical process.

In this calculus, the object of education is to mold and guide subjects according to the educator's wishes — something not fundamentally different from Marx's "new socialist man." Dewey himself was a democratic socialist.

American philosopher Sidney Hook said, "Dewey had supplied Marxism with the epistemology and social philosophy that Marx had half seen for himself and had half sketched out in his early works but had never adequately spelled out."

*From Chapter Twelve: Sabotaging Education*