**John Locke**

John Locke (born 1632, died 1704) was a British philosopher, Oxford academic and medical researcher/*výzkumník*/. Much of Locke’s work is characterized by opposition to authoritarianism/*autoritářství*/. For the individual person, Locke wants each of us to use reason /*rozum*/ to search after truth rather than simply accept the opinion of authorities.

### **Locke’s Life**

His father was a country lawyer who served in a cavalry company on the Puritan side in the early stages of the English Civil War. His father’s commander became the local MP and it was his help which allowed the young John Locke to gain an excellent education. In 1647 Locke went to Westminster School in London, which was the most important English school. From Westminster school he went to Christ Church, Oxford at the age of twenty. Christ Church was the most important Oxford college. After finishing studies, Locke qualified as a Master of Arts and was elected a Senior Student of Christ Church College. Later Locke decided to become a doctor.

In 1667 Locke moved to London becoming Lord Ashley’s personal physician. Living with him Locke found himself at the very heart of English politics in the 1670s and 1680s.(1)

Locke is often classified as the first of the great English empiricists /*empirik*/ This reputation rests on Locke’s greatest work, the monumental An Essay Concerning Human Understanding /Esej o toleranci/. Perhaps the most important of his goals is to determine the limits of human understanding.(2)

John Locke in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* stated the importance of  the experience of the senses over speculation and sets out the case that the human mind at birth is a complete, but receptive/*vnímavý*/, blank slate/*prázdná tabulka*/ (tabula rasa ) upon which experience imprints knowledge.

Locke argued that people acquire knowledge from the information about the objects in the world that our senses bring. People begin with simple ideas and then combine them into more complex ones.(3)

## Locke’s Major Works on Education

Locke’s Some Thoughts Concerning Education /*Několik myšlenek o výchově* /and his Conduct of the Understanding/Vedení rozumu/ form a nice bridge between An Essay Concerning Human Understanding /*Esej o toleranci*/and his political works. (2)

Some Thoughts Concerning Education was first published in 1693. This book collected together advice that Locke had been giving his friend Edward Clarke about the education of Clarke’s son (and also his daughters).

The Thoughts focuses on the education of children by their parents, whereas the Conduct addresses the self-education of adults. The Thoughts is addressed to the education of the sons and daughters of the English gentry/*nižší šlechta*/ in the late 17th century. It is in some ways more limited to its time and place than the Conduct. He insists on/*trvá na*/ children‘s inculcating/*vštěpování*/ such good qualities/*dobré vlastnosti*/ as justice/*spravedlnost*/, respect for the rights of others/*úcta k právům druhých lidí*/, civility/*zdvořilost*/, humanity/*lidskost*/, self-denial/*sebezapření*/, thrift/*spořivost*/, courage/*odvaha*/ and truthfulness/*pravdomluvnost*/. Locke wants them to be against prejudice/*aby byli proti předsudkům*/, blind listening to authorities/proti slepému naslouchání *autoritám*/ and one’s own self-interest /a proti *zaujetí sebou*/.

Locke’s Thoughts represents the culmination of a century of what has been called “the discovery of the child”. In the Middle Ages the child was regarded as only a simple plaything/*hračka*/, as a simple animal, or a miniature adult who dressed, played and was supposed/*předpokládalo se*/ to act like his elders…Their ages were unimportant. Their education was undifferentiated/*vzdělání bylo* *neodlišené*/, either by age, ability or intended occupation /*ať podle věku, schopností nebo zamýšleného zaměstnání*/.

Locke treated children as human beings /*zacházel s dětmi jako lidskými bytostmi*/ in whom the gradual development of rationality /*postupný rozvoj rozumu*/ needed to be fostered /*pěstována*/ by parents. Locke urged parents /*apeloval na rodiče*/ to spend time with their children and tailor their education /*přizpůsobit jejich vzdělání na míru*/ to their character, to develop both a body and character, and not to use rote learning or punishment /*mechanické učení nebo tresty*/. His own experience in the church boarding school was not good, so he rather recommends to have a tutor /*indiv. učitel*/ for a child at home.

He also urges learning languages by learning to converse in them /*naléhal na učení jazyků konverzováním*/ before learning rules of grammar. He refuses learning ‘dead languages‘ like Ancient Greek/*starořečtina*/. He suggests learning a foreign language in the country where it is spoken, having conversation with native speakers. A language useful for trade is for him e.g. French.

Locke also suggests /*navrhuje*/that the child should learn at least one manual trade /*ruční řemeslo*/. He emphasizes practical use of education, its usefulness – it is called Utilitarianism [juːtɪˈlɪarɪsm] *Utiliarismus*.

Locke was preparing people to effectively make decisions in their own lives and to participate in the government of their country. (2)

The Conduct /Vedení rozumu/ reveals the connections Locke sees between reason, freedom and morality. *Reason* is required for good self-government because reason is free from prejudice/*předsudek*/, intolerance/*nesnášenlivost*/ and passion/*vášeň*/, and leads to fair judgment /*férové posouzení*/and action/*čin, akce*/. We have a responsibility/*odpovědnost*/ to cultivate reason/*kultivovat rozum*/ in order to avoid the moral failings /*abychom se* *vyhnuli se* *morálnímu selhání*/ of passion, prejudice and so on. This is, sometimes called, Locke’s education for liberty/*Lockova výchova ke svobodě*/.(2)

**Vocabulary**

education – výchova, vzdělání

cause - záležitost, věc

concerning [kənˈsɜːnɪŋ] týkající se

authority [ɔːˈθɒrɪtɪ] autorita, mocná osoba (hlavně úřední)

authoritarianism [ɔːˌθɒrɪˈtereənɪsm] autoritářství, prosazování autority, moci

level [ˈlevl] úroveň

institution [ˌɪnstɪˈtjuːʃən] instituce, zařízení, organizace

distinguish [dɪˈstɪŋgwɪʃ] rozlišit

gentry [ˈdʒentrɪ] nižší šlechta

insistence on [ɪnˈsɪstəns]trvání na

virtue [ˈvɜːtjuː] dobrá vlastnost,počestnost, mravnost

thrift [θrɪft] spořivost

courage [ˈkʌrɪdʒ] odvaha

truthfulness [ˈtruːθfəlnɪs] pravdomluvnost

inculcate [ˈɪnkʌlˌkeɪt]vštěpovat

civility [sɪˈvɪlɪtɪ] zdvořilost, uctivost

self-denial - sebezapření

liberal society [ˈlɪberəl ˌsəˈsaɪətɪ] liberální, svobodomyslná společnost

reason – rozum

freedom - svoboda

morality – morálka, mravnost

Sources

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2. <https://theses.cz/id/9h2hde/Bakalsk_prce-K_nkterm_pedagogickm_nzorm_Johna_Locka.pdf>
3. <https://www.age-of-the-sage.org/philosophy/john_locke_tabula_rasa.html>