



# People as Living Things; The Psychology of Perceptual Control

*Philip Julian Runkel*

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This work by Runkel introduces Perceptual Control Theory, PCT, which is a new conception of how all living organisms function. Runkel links PCT thinking to the psychological literature and discusses it against the background of that literature.

### FROM THE FOREWORD:

Though this book is not academic in the usual sense of repeating what most academic psychologists have believed during the past several decades, I do claim it to be scientific in the sense that a good many of the claims I make about human functioning can be put to experimental test—can be tried out in tangible, physically demonstrable ways that can be reproduced or extended by anyone who takes the trouble.

The theory I offer here is Perceptual Control Theory, or PCT for short. Its core postulates have indeed been tested, the results of the tests have been published in the scientific literature, and the core assumptions are being extended in the designs of further experimental tests. Furthermore, the experimental tests have been far more demanding than the experimentation in the mainstream psychology books, as you will see. I am not saying that everything I say here has been tested empirically, but I do make that claim about the fundamental postulates and about a good many derivations from them.

I will disagree in serious ways with most of the widely accepted psychological theories you encounter in popular literature, in textbooks (of whatever discipline), and in the halls of academe. I will agree with the other theories at some points, but the underlying assumptions of the theory here (Perceptual Control Theory) are not those you will find either printed or implied on many of the pages printed about psychology. In that sense, this book is disputatious. I do not, by the way, claim that those other authors and lecturers are immoral or mentally deficient. I claim only that they are wrong.

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