

The Socratic Paradox And Its Enemies

This book examines the Socratic method of elenchus, or refutation. Refutation by its very nature is a conflict, which in the hands of Plato becomes high drama. The continuing conversation in which it occurs is more a test of character than of intellect. Dialogue and Discovery shows that, in his conversations, Socrates seeks to define moral qualities—moral essences—with the goal of improving the soul of the respondent. Ethics underlies epistemology because the discovery of philosophic truth imposes moral demands on the respondent. The recognition that moral qualities such as honesty, humility, and courage are necessary to successful inquiry is the key to the understanding of the Socratic paradox that virtue is knowledge. The dialogues receiving the most emphasis are the Apology, Gorgias, Protagoras, and Meno.

Gail Fine presents an original interpretation of a compelling puzzle in ancient philosophy. Meno's Paradox, which is first formulated in Plato's Meno, challenges the very possibility of inquiry. Plato replies with the theory of recollection, according to which we all had prenatal knowledge of some range of things, and what we call inquiry involves recollecting what we previously knew; he also illustrates this with his famous cross-examination of an untutored slave about a geometry problem, whose solution the slave is able to discover through inquiry. Hence, contrary to the paradox, inquiry is possible after all. Plato is not the only philosopher to grapple with Meno's Paradox: so too do Aristotle, the Epicureans, the Stoics, and Sextus. How do their various replies compare with one another, and with Plato's? How good are any of their replies? In a fascinating fragment preserved in Damascius'

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Commentary on the *Phaedo*, Plutarch briefly considers these questions (though for obvious chronological reasons he doesn't discuss Sextus). But Fine's book is the first full-length systematic treatment of the paradox and responses to it. Among the topics discussed are the nature of knowledge; how knowledge differs from mere true belief; the nature of inquiry; varieties of innatism; concepts and meaning; the scope and limits of experience. *The Possibility of Inquiry* will be of interest to anyone interested in ancient epistemology, in ancient philosophy, or in epistemology.

The relation between virtue and knowledge is at the heart of the Socratic view of human excellence, but it also points to a central puzzle of the Platonic dialogues: Can Socrates be serious in his claims that human excellence is constituted by one virtue, that vice is merely the result of ignorance, and that the correct response to crime is therefore not punishment but education? Or are these assertions mere rhetorical ploys by a notoriously complex thinker? Lorraine Smith Pangle traces the argument for the primacy of virtue and the power of knowledge throughout the five dialogues that feature them most prominently—the *Apology*, *Gorgias*, *Protagoras*, *Meno*, and *Laws*—and reveals the truth at the core of these seemingly strange claims. She argues that Socrates was more aware of the complex causes of human action and of the power of irrational passions than a cursory reading might suggest. Pangle's perceptive analyses reveal that many of Socrates's teachings in fact explore the factors that make it difficult for humans to be the rational creatures that he at first seems to claim. Also critical to Pangle's reading is her emphasis on the political dimensions of the dialogues. Underlying many of the paradoxes, she shows, is a distinction between philosophic and civic virtue that is critical to understanding them. Ultimately, Pangle offers a radically unconventional way of reading Socrates's views of human

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excellence: Virtue is not knowledge in any ordinary sense, but true virtue is nothing other than wisdom.

A provocative close reading revealing a radical, proto-phenomenological Socrates. Modern interpreters of Plato's Socrates have generally taken the dialogues to be aimed at working out objective truth. Attending closely to the texts of the early dialogues and the question of virtue in particular, Sean D. Kirkland suggests that this approach is flawed—that such concern with discovering external facts rests on modern assumptions that would have been far from the minds of Socrates and his contemporaries. This isn't, however, to accuse Socrates of any kind of relativism. Through careful analysis of the original Greek and of a range of competing strands of Plato scholarship, Kirkland instead brings to light a radical, proto-phenomenological Socrates, for whom “what virtue is” is what has always already appeared as virtuous in everyday experience of the world, even if initial appearances are unsatisfactory or obscure and in need of greater scrutiny and clarification.

An examination of Socrates' trial as played out in the *Apology*, *Theaetetus*, *Euthyphro*, *Cratylus*, *Sophist*, and *Statesman*. Finding that the heart of the dialogues is the rivalry between the characters of the Stranger of Elea and Socrates, the author devotes a chapter to each dialogue and explores the Stranger of Elea's criticism that the uncompromising pursuit of knowledge conflicts with the task of weaving together humans into a political community. The melding of the arguments of Socrates and the Stranger of Elea, the author suggests, is the best path to understanding Plato's political philosophy. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

Plato's Moral Psychology is concerned with Plato's account of the soul and its impact on our living well or badly, virtuously or viciously. The core of Plato's moral psychology is his account

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of human motivation, and Rachana Kamtekar argues that throughout the dialogues Plato maintains that human beings have a natural desire for our own good, and that actions and conditions contrary to this desire are involuntary (from which follows the 'Socratic paradox' that wrongdoing is involuntary). Our natural desire for our own good may be manifested in different ways: by our pursuit of what we calculate is best, but also by our pursuit of pleasant or fine things - pursuits which Plato assigns to distinct parts of the soul. Kamtekar develops a very different interpretation of Plato's moral psychology from the mainstream interpretation, according to which Plato first proposes that human beings only do what we believe to be the best of the things we can do ('Socratic intellectualism') and then in the middle dialogues rejects this in favour of the view that the soul is divided into parts with some good-dependent and some good-independent motivations ('the divided soul').

The 13 contributions of this collective offer new and challenging ways of reading well-known and more neglected texts on akrasia (lack of control, or weakness of will) in Greek philosophy (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Plotinus). Lloyd P. Gerson is a 2011 Fellow of The Royal Society of Canada. *Knowing Persons* is an original study of Plato's account of personhood. For Plato, embodied persons are images of a disembodied ideal. The ideal person is a knower. Hence, the lives of embodied persons need to be understood according to Plato's metaphysics of imagery. For Gerson, Plato's account of embodied personhood is not accurately conflated with Cartesian dualism. Plato's dualism is more appropriately seen in the contrast between the ideal disembodied person and the embodied one than in the contrast between mind or soul and body. This study argues that Plato's analysis of

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personhood is intended to cohere with his two-world metaphysics as well as a radical separation of knowledge and belief. Gerson demonstrates that Plato's account of persons plays a key role not just in his theory of mind, but in his theory of knowledge, his metaphysics, and his ethics. A proper understanding of Plato's account of persons must therefore place it in the context of his doctrines in these areas. *Knowing Persons* fills a significant gap by showing the way to such an understanding.

What is the good life for a human being? Aristotle's exploration of this question in the *Nicomachean Ethics* has established it as a founding work of Western philosophy, though its teachings have long puzzled readers and provoked spirited discussion. Adopting a radically new point of view, Ronna Burger deciphers some of the most perplexing conundrums of this influential treatise by approaching it as Aristotle's dialogue with the Platonic Socrates. Tracing the argument of the *Ethics* as it emerges through that approach, Burger's careful reading shows how Aristotle represents ethical virtue from the perspective of those devoted to it while standing back to examine its assumptions and implications. "This is the best book I have read on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is so well crafted that reading it is like reading the *Ethics* itself, in that it provides an education in ethical matters that does justice to all sides of the issues."—Mary P. Nichols, Baylor University

One of very few monographs devoted to Plato's *Meno*, this study emphasizes the interplay between its

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protagonists, Socrates and Meno. It interprets the Meno as Socrates' attempt to persuade his interlocutor, by every device at his disposal, of the value of moral inquiry—even though it fails to yield full-blown knowledge—and to encourage him to engage in such inquiry, insofar as it alone makes human life worth living. Essays from a diverse group of experts providing a comprehensive guide to Socrates, the most famous Greek philosopher.

"If Socrates is essentially an agonistic thinker, Weiss argues, then the things he says and how outrageously he says them cannot be properly interpreted in isolation from the notions he opposes. Viewed in the context of these opposing ideas, the paradoxes emerge as Socrates' means of championing the cause of justice in the face of those who would impugn it. Furthermore, since Protagoras, Hippias, Gorgias, Polus, Callicles, and Meno exhibit different symptoms of the same malady - a fascination with worldly success above all else - Weiss shows how the paradoxes change form as Socrates tailors them to combat these various kinds of resistance to the ideals of justice and temperance. Such an unorthodox reading, ranging over six key dialogues, is sure to spark debate in philosophy, classics, and political theory."--BOOK JACKET.

Socrates' moral psychology is widely thought to be 'intellectualist' in the sense that, for Socrates, every ethical failure to do what is best is exclusively the result of some cognitive failure to apprehend what is best. Until publication of this book, the view that, for Socrates, emotions and desires have no role to play in causing

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such failure went unchallenged. This book argues against the orthodox view of Socratic intellectualism and offers in its place a comprehensive alternative account that explains why Socrates believed that emotions, desires and appetites can influence human motivation and lead to error. Thomas C. Brickhouse and Nicholas D. Smith defend the study of Socrates' philosophy and offer an alternative interpretation of Socratic moral psychology. Their novel account of Socrates' conception of virtue and how it is acquired shows that Socratic moral psychology is considerably more sophisticated than scholars have supposed.

Can God create a stone too heavy for him to lift? Can time have a beginning? Which came first, the chicken or the egg? Riddles, paradoxes, conundrums--for millennia the human mind has found such knotty logical problems both perplexing and irresistible. Now Roy Sorensen offers the first narrative history of paradoxes, a fascinating and eye-opening account that extends from the ancient Greeks, through the Middle Ages, the Enlightenment, and into the twentieth century. When Augustine asked what God was doing before He made the world, he was told: "Preparing hell for people who ask questions like that." A Brief History of the Paradox takes a close look at "questions like that" and the philosophers who have asked them, beginning with the folk riddles that inspired Anaximander to erect the first metaphysical system and ending with such thinkers as Lewis Carroll, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and W.V. Quine. Organized chronologically, the book is divided into twenty-four chapters, each of which pairs a philosopher

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with a major paradox, allowing for extended consideration and putting a human face on the strategies that have been taken toward these puzzles. Readers get to follow the minds of Zeno, Socrates, Aquinas, Ockham, Pascal, Kant, Hegel, and many other major philosophers deep inside the tangles of paradox, looking for, and sometimes finding, a way out. Filled with illuminating anecdotes and vividly written, *A Brief History of the Paradox* will appeal to anyone who finds trying to answer unanswerable questions a paradoxically pleasant endeavor.

Hilarious, deeply moving, mind-bending, original, romantic, and surprising, this debut teen novel by Emil Ostrovski will appeal to fans of John Green, Chris Crutcher, and Andrew Smith. Gary Shteyngart, author of the New York Times bestseller *Super Sad True Love Story*, says: "Do yourself a favor and get inside a car with Emil Ostrovski immediately! *The Paradox of Vertical Flight* is an amazing road trip. You're in for one heck of a ride." An Indie Next Pick! On the morning of his eighteenth birthday, Jack Polovsky kidnaps his own baby, names him Socrates, stocks up on baby supplies at Walmart, and hits the road with his best friend, Tommy, and with the baby's mother, Jess. As they head to Grandma's house (eluding the police at every turn), Jack tells baby Socrates the Greek myths—because all stories spring from those stories, really. Even this one. By turns funny, heart wrenching, and wholly original, this debut novel by Emil Ostrovski explores the nature of family, love, friendship, fatherhood, and myth. "Shares a sense of humor and philosophical bent with such YA

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authors as John Green and Chris Crutcher. But the story and likable characters are Ostrovsky's own, a delightful mix of quirky, intelligent, naive, well-intentioned, and just plain dumb teens. A delightful success."—ALA Booklist

These two volumes collect the author's published work from the period up to 2000. Together they will enable all working in the field of ancient philosophy to reassess the contribution of one of its liveliest and most original minds. In Plato's Republic, Socrates contends that philosophers make the best rulers because only they behold with their mind's eye the eternal and purely intelligible Forms of the Just, the Noble, and the Good. When, in addition, these men and women are endowed with a vast array of moral, intellectual, and personal virtues and are appropriately educated, surely no one could doubt the wisdom of entrusting to them the governance of cities. Although it is widely-and reasonably-assumed that all the Republic's philosophers are the same, Roslyn Weiss argues in this boldly original book that the Republic actually contains two distinct and irreconcilable portrayals of the philosopher. According to Weiss, Plato's two paradigms of the philosopher are the "philosopher by nature" and the "philosopher by design." Philosophers by design, as the allegory of the Cave vividly shows, must be forcibly dragged from the material world of pleasure to the sublime realm of the intellect, and from there back down again to the "Cave" to rule the beautiful city envisioned by Socrates and his interlocutors. Yet philosophers by nature, described earlier in the Republic, are distinguished by their natural yearning to encounter the transcendent realm of pure Forms, as well as by a

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willingness to serve others—at least under appropriate circumstances. In contrast to both sets of philosophers stands Socrates, who represents a third paradigm, one, however, that is no more than hinted at in the Republic. As a man who not only loves "what is" but is also utterly devoted to the justice of others—even at great personal cost—Socrates surpasses both the philosophers by design and the philosophers by nature. By shedding light on an aspect of the Republic that has escaped notice, Weiss's new interpretation will challenge Plato scholars to revisit their assumptions about Plato's moral and political philosophy.

Socratic dialogue is a genre of prose literary works developed in Greece at the turn of the fourth century BC, preserved today in the dialogues of Plato in which characters discuss moral and philosophical problems, illustrating a version of the Socratic method. Socrates is often the main character. This edition contains the Later dialogues (written in the period between 361 and his death in 347) consisting of Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, and Phaedo, all written by Plato. Plato (circa 424–348 BC) was a Classical Greek philosopher, mathematician, writer of philosophical dialogues, and founder of the Academy in Athens, the first institution of higher learning in the Western world. Along with his mentor, Socrates, and his student, Aristotle, Plato helped to lay the foundations of Western philosophy and science.

Compiled by a prominent educator and author, this volume presents an intriguing mix of mathematical paradoxes — phenomena with surprising outcomes that can be resolved mathematically. Students and puzzle

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enthusiasts will get plenty of enjoyment mixed with a bit of painless mathematical instruction from 30 conundrums, including The Birthday Paradox, Aristotle's Magic Wheel, and A Greek Tragedy.

What is democracy really? What do we mean when we use the term? And can it ever truly exist? Astra Taylor, hailed as a “New Civil Rights Leader” by the Los Angeles Times, provides surprising answers. There is no shortage of democracy, at least in name, and yet it is in crisis everywhere we look. From a cabal of plutocrats in the White House to gerrymandering and dark-money campaign contributions, it is clear that the principle of government by and for the people is not living up to its promise. The problems lie deeper than any one election cycle. As Astra Taylor demonstrates, real democracy—fully inclusive and completely egalitarian—has in fact never existed. In a tone that is both philosophical and anecdotal, weaving together history, theory, the stories of individuals, and interviews with such leading thinkers as Cornel West and Wendy Brown, Taylor invites us to reexamine the term. Is democracy a means or an end, a process or a set of desired outcomes? What if those outcomes, whatever they may be—peace, prosperity, equality, liberty, an engaged citizenry—can be achieved by non-democratic means? In what areas of life should democratic principles apply? If democracy means rule by the people, what does it mean to rule and who counts as the people? Democracy's inherent paradoxes often go unnamed and unrecognized. Exploring such questions, *Democracy May Not Exist* offers a better understanding of what is

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possible, what we want, why democracy is so hard to realize, and why it is worth striving for.

This volume presents a survey exploring the profound influence of Socrates on the history of Western philosophy. It also discusses the life of Socrates and key philosophical doctrines associated with him.

In *The Socratic Paradox and Its Enemies*, Roslyn Weiss argues that the Socratic paradoxes—no one does wrong willingly, virtue is knowledge, and all the virtues are one—are best understood as Socrates' way of combating sophistic views: that no one is willingly just, those who are just and temperate are ignorant fools, and only some virtues (courage and wisdom) but not others (justice, temperance, and piety) are marks of true excellence. In Weiss's view, the paradoxes express Socrates' belief that wrongdoing fails to yield the happiness that all people want; it is therefore the unjust and immoderate who are the fools. The paradoxes thus emerge as Socrates' means of championing the cause of justice in the face of those who would impugn it. Her fresh approach—ranging over six of Plato's dialogues—is sure to spark debate in philosophy, classics, and political theory. “Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees with Weiss, it would be hard not to admire her extraordinarily penetrating analysis of the many overlapping and interweaving arguments running through the dialogues.”—Daniel B. Gallagher, *Classical Outlook* “Many scholars of Socratic philosophy . . . will wish they had written Weiss's book, or at least will wish that they had long ago read it.”—Douglas V. Henry, *Review of Politics*

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In this work, the author contends that contrary to prevailing notions, Plato's 'Crito' does not show an allegiance between Socrates & the state that condemned him. Weiss brings to light numerous indications that Socrates & the Laws are not partners.

Socratic Moments: How the Socratic Method Engenders Authentic Educational Encounters explicates how educators learn to implement the Socratic Method in various teaching and learning situations. The author investigates ways teachers leverage this instructional strategy to enhance critical thinking, learning styles, leadership, and social and emotional learning for today's students.

"In this extraordinary meditation, Eva Brann takes us to the fierce core of Heraclitus's vision and shows us the music of his language. The thought and beautiful prose in *The Logos of Heraclitus* are a delight."—Barry Mazur, Harvard University "An engaged solitary, an inward-turned observer of the world, inventor of the first of philosophical genres, the thought-compacted aphorism," "teasingly obscure in reputation, but hard-hittingly clear in fact," "now tersely mordant, now generously humane." Thus Eva Brann introduces Heraclitus—in her view, the West's first philosopher. The collected work of Heraclitus comprises 131 passages. Eva Brann sets out to understand Heraclitus as he is found in these passages and particularly in his key word, *Logos*, the order that is the cosmos. "Whoever is captivated by the revelatory riddlings and brilliant obscurities of what remains of Heraclitus has to begin anew—accepting help, to be sure, from previous readings—in a spirit of

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receptivity and reserve. But essentially everyone must pester the supposed obscurantist until he opens up. Heraclitus is no less and no more pregnantly dark than an oracle...The upshot is that no interpretation has prevailed; every question is wide open.”

In this book, Jeremy Kirby analyzes Book Gamma of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and introduces the debates (or paradoxes as he refers to them) such as relativism versus the idea of a ready-made world, the possibility of true contradictions, the nature and possibility of metaphysics, the limits of thought, and logic.

Gareth Matthews suggests that we can better understand the nature of philosophical inquiry if we recognize the central role played by perplexity. The seminal representation of philosophical perplexity is in Plato's dialogues; Matthews examines the intriguing shifts in Plato's attitude to perplexity and suggests that these may represent a course of philosophical development that philosophers follow even today.

This book focuses on death as life's paradox in order to test, to put on trial, what it means for us human beings to exist. No one of us chooses to be born. Yet, having been born, we must choose to have been born, to live, to exist. To exist is to choose to exist. To choose to exist is to live with our choices. This text argues that death is the limit of life, that we can live freely and lovingly, at once justly and compassionately, solely within the limit of death. It shows that we can develop a comprehensive conception of life, and also of death, solely insofar as we learn to overcome the dualistic opposition between philosophy and theology that continues today to falsify our

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understanding of not only the secular, but also the sacred.

Reading a new Socratic dialogue that reflects a time traveler's argument with the great philosopher that he can escape death by traveling to the future, graduate student Sierra is astonished when the elderly scholar who showed her the document disappears, an event that prompts her search for answers through time with the help of her boyfriend, Max. Reprint.

An innovative and insightful exploration of the passionate early life of Socrates and the influences that led him to become the first and greatest of philosophers Socrates: the philosopher whose questioning gave birth to the ideas of Western thought, and whose execution marked the end of the Athenian Golden Age. Yet despite his pre-eminence among the great thinkers of history, little of his life story is known. What we know tends to begin in his middle age and end with his trial and death. Our conception of Socrates has relied upon Plato and Xenophon – men who met him when he was in his fifties and a well-known figure in war-torn Athens. There is mystery at the heart of Socrates' story: what turned the young Socrates into a philosopher? What drove him to pursue with such persistence, at the cost of social acceptance and ultimately of his life, a whole new way of thinking about the meaning of existence? In this revisionist biography, Armand D'Angour draws on neglected sources to explore the passions and motivations of young Socrates, showing how love transformed him into the philosopher he was to become. What emerges is the figure of Socrates as never

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previously portrayed: a heroic warrior, an athletic wrestler and dancer – and a passionate lover. Socrates in *Love* sheds new light on the formative journey of the philosopher, finally revealing the identity of the woman who Socrates claimed inspired him to develop ideas that have captivated thinkers for 2,500 years.

This volume contains a new translation, with a historical introduction by the translators, of two works written under the pseudonym Johannes Climacus. Through Climacus, Kierkegaard contrasts the paradoxes of Christianity with Greek and modern philosophical thinking. In *Philosophical Fragments* he begins with Greek Platonic philosophy, exploring the implications of venturing beyond the Socratic understanding of truth acquired through recollection to the Christian experience of acquiring truth through grace. Published in 1844 and not originally planned to appear under the pseudonym Climacus, the book varies in tone and substance from the other works so attributed, but it is dialectically related to them, as well as to the other pseudonymous writings. The central issue of Johannes Climacus is doubt. Probably written between November 1842 and April 1843 but unfinished and published only posthumously, this book was described by Kierkegaard as an attack on modern speculative philosophy by "means of the melancholy irony, which did not consist in any single utterance on the part of Johannes Climacus but in his whole life. . . . Johannes does what we are told to do--he actually doubts everything--he suffers through all the pain of doing that, becomes cunning, almost acquires a bad conscience. When he has gone as far in that

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direction as he can go and wants to come back, he cannot do so. . . . Now he despairs, his life is wasted, his youth is spent in these deliberations. Life does not acquire any meaning for him, and all this is the fault of philosophy." A note by Kierkegaard suggests how he might have finished the work: "Doubt is conquered not by the system but by faith, just as it is faith that has brought doubt into the world!."

The Socratic Turn addresses the question of whether we can acquire genuine knowledge of good and evil, right and wrong. Reputedly, Socrates was the first philosopher to make the attempt. But Socrates was a materialistic natural scientist in his youth, and it was only much later in life—after he had rejected materialistic natural science—that he finally turned, around the age of forty, to the examination of ordinary moral and political opinions, or to moral-political philosophy so understood. Through a consideration of Plato's account of Socrates' intellectual development, and with a view to relevant works of the pre-Socratics, Xenophon, Aristotle, Hesiod, Homer, and Aristophanes, Dustin Sebell reproduces the course of thought that carried Socrates from materialistic natural science to moral-political philosophy. By doing so, he seeks to recover an all but forgotten approach to the question of justice, one still worthy of being called scientific.

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