

Theaetetus (Oxford Worlds Classics)

By Plato, John McDowell, Lesley Brown

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'What exactly is knowledge?'

The *Theaetetus* is a seminal text in the philosophy of knowledge, and is acknowledged as one of Plato's finest works. Cast as a conversation between Socrates and a clever but modest student, Theaetetus, it explores one of the key issues in philosophy: what is knowledge? Though no definite answer is reached, the discussion is penetrating and wide-ranging, covering the claims of perception to be knowledge, the theory that all is in motion, and the perennially tempting idea that knowledge and truth are relative to different individuals or states. The inquirers go on to explore the connection between knowledge and true judgement, and the famous threefold definition of knowledge as justified true belief. Packed with subtle arguments, the dialogue is also a work of literary genius, with an unforgettable portrait of Socrates as a midwife of wisdom.

This new edition uses the acclaimed translation by John McDowell. It includes a valuable introduction that locates the work in Plato's *oeuvre*, and explains some of the competing interpretations of its overall meaning. The notes elucidate Plato's arguments and draw connections within the work and with other philosophical discussions.

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Editorial Review

Review
strongly recommended for undergraduates and anyone with a serious interest in Plato. Colin Leach, Classics for All

About the Author

John McDowell taught at University College, Oxford before moving to Pittsburgh in 1986. He was the John Locke Lecturer at the University of Oxford in 1991. His publications include *Mind and World* (1994), *Mind, Value, and Reality* (1998), and *Meaning, Knowledge, and Reality* (1998), all Harvard University Press. His edition of Plato's heaetetus was published in the Clarendon Plato series in 1973.

Lesley Brown was Centenary Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy at Somerville College, and a University Lecturer in the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Oxford; she is now an emeritus fellow. She has published widely on Plato's dialogues, notably the *Theaetetus* and *Sophist*, as well as on Aristotle. She wrote the Introduction and Notes for the new edition of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* in OWC (2009).

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