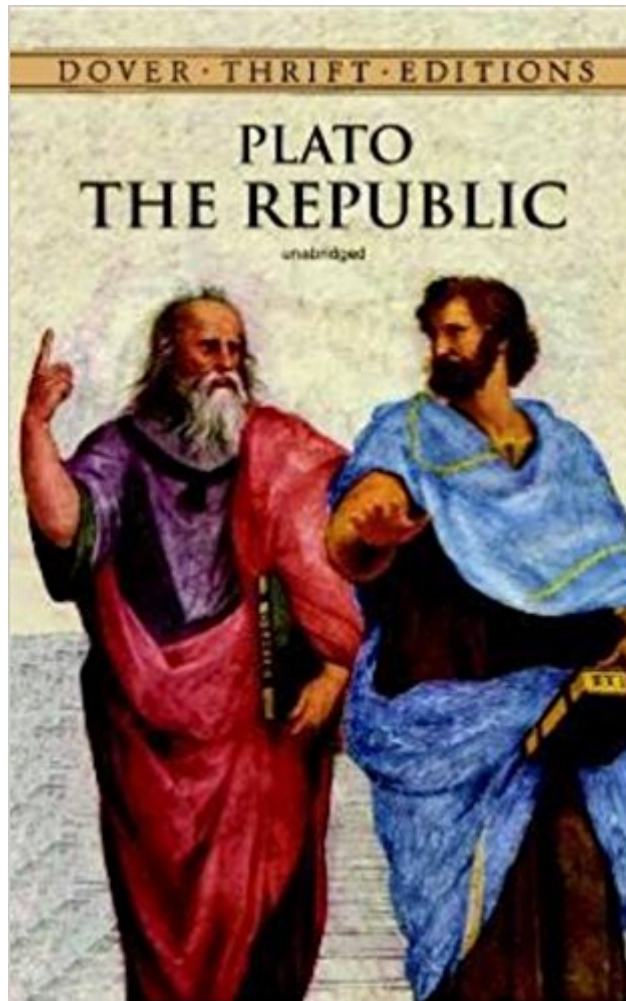




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The Republic (Dover Thrift Editions)



Synopsis

Often ranked as the greatest of Plato's many remarkable writings, this celebrated philosophical work of the fourth century B.C. contemplates the elements of an ideal state, serving as the forerunner for such other classics of political thought as Cicero's *De Republica*, St. Augustine's *City of God*, and Thomas More's *Utopia*. Written in the form of a dialog in which Socrates questions his students and fellow citizens, *The Republic* concerns itself chiefly with the question, "What is justice?" as well as Plato's theory of ideas and his conception of the philosopher's role in society. To explore the latter, he invents the allegory of the cave to illustrate his notion that ordinary men are like prisoners in a cave, observing only the shadows of things, while philosophers are those who venture outside the cave and see things as they really are, and whose task it is to return to the cave and tell the truth about what they have seen. This dynamic metaphor expresses at once the eternal conflict between the world of the senses (the cave) and the world of ideas (the world outside the cave), and the philosopher's role as mediator between the two. High school and college students, as well as lovers of classical literature and philosophy, will welcome this handsome and inexpensive edition of an immortal work. It appears here in the fine translation by the English classicist Benjamin Jowett.

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Plato's Republic is unparalleled in its coverage of all areas of life. While Plato addresses metaphysical issues, he does so with language and analogies that most people can grasp with studious reading. But Plato talks about much more than metaphysics. Marriage, music, war, kings, procreation and more are all topics of discussion for Plato's dialog. In addition to the teachings about life, this book also offers a great introduction to philosophy. The famous "cave story" illustrates not only the purpose of philosophy, but also the inherent difficulties. While this book is absolutely necessary for students of philosophy and religion, I think there are golden truths for all people no matter what they do. So, why this particular translation of the work? This translation offers the best ease in reading while maintaining a tight grasp of the original Greek meanings of Plato's text. Besides, it isn't that expensive. This book is clearly a timeless classic, and if you can't read classical Greek, this translation is probably the best you will get.

You get what you pay for I suppose. Starts with a very long introduction or maybe you would call it a lecture about the book and Plato. If you want to just read the book itself you need to jump all the way to location 3948. Really needs at least a table of contents with 2 entries; one for the intro and one for the actual start of the book.

I won't waste time trying to summarize Plato's "The Republic". Most people (I would guess nine out of ten) who have read this colossus of classical philosophy, read it because they were forced to by their college instructors. This is unfortunate because "The Republic" is a compelling and enduring philosophy of how life should be lived, how justice should be approached, and how leaders should lead. What recommends this book, really, is the bargain price: under five bucks. As one of those college instructors who makes their students read this, I always recommend this edition. Sterling and Scott's translation is as good as anyone else's, so why not save my students a few bucks? And, if you're one of those one out of ten who is considering reading this on your own, you've only got five bucks to lose, but an awful lot of rewarding reading to gain! Rocco Dormarunno College of New Rochelle

The only way to navigate this version of the Kindle edition of Plato's Republic is by PAGING through it or searching for keywords you already know. Get the mobile version instead. It has a table of contents with working links.

I've been using the Oxford World's Classics edition of Republic for three years now to teach freshmen, and Waterfield's translation and endnotes are great. His choice to render dikaiosyne as "morality" rather than "justice" allows a range of discussion with American students that travels outside the courtroom and into the purpose of life and what translation means, and his crankiness in the endnotes (he talks about Plato as an old lover talks about his beloved) allows some great lessons about editorial practices and what's involved in the production of a scholarly edition. Perhaps more important to my students than anything, this edition of Plato is right at ten bucks, a steal compared to their other textbooks and an invitation to mark up, use, and abuse the margins. I'm sitting at my desk, my battered copy of the 1998 printing sitting next to my keyboard, and I'm thinking that perhaps this fall I'll pick up a copy of this blue-sky beauty.

This translation, the Grube-Reeve, was recommended to me along with Bloom's. I chose this. It is very readable with chapter summaries by the author. The physical quality of this edition was a bit of a disappointment. Hackett puts out editions cheaper than most, but usually they are of better quality than this. The paper is one step from newsprint. Not awful, but I would have liked something better.

In the "Republic," Plato may or may not have accomplished what he set out to do, which is to define justice and prove that it is superior to injustice, irregardless of either's consequences. However, what he DID do is set the foundation for over two thousand years of thought. Read this work slowly; within each of the seemingly-simple discussions there is a world of thought to be discovered. Anyone with the least bit of background in philosophical readings can literally read page-by-page, discovering the sources of many of the greatest philosophers of all-time. The "Republic" is not so much a work of literature as it is an explosion of thought; a ten-book brainstorm of one of the greatest minds of all-time. By the work's end, whether or not you feel Socrates to have successfully answered Glaucon's challenge is almost irrelevant, for the argument will have already left your mind reeling.

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