

Chapter 1 : The Task of Philosophy in the Anthropocene | Rowman & Littlefield International

*the task of philosophy is a bit more unclear. Different philosophers come to different conclusions about the aim of philosophy and how it should be reached. Different philosophers come to different conclusions about the aim of philosophy and how it should be reached.*

Facebook Twitter Email The challenge begins with how to pronounce his name. Friedrich Nietzsche was born in a quiet village in the eastern part of Germany, where for generations his forefathers had been pastors. He did exceptionally well at school and university; and so excelled at ancient Greek a very prestigious subject, at the time that he was made a professor at the University of Basel when still only in his mid-twenties. He got fed up with his fellow academics, gave up his job and moved to Switzerland and Italy where he lived modestly and often alone. For many years, his books hardly sold at all. When he was forty-four, his mental health broke down entirely. He never recovered and died eleven years later. To this end, he developed four helpful lines of thought: Own up to envy Envy is Nietzsche recognised a big part of life. They seem an indication of evil. This is logically impossible, insisted Nietzsche, especially if we live in the modern world which he defined as any time after the French Revolution. In feudal times, it would never have occurred to the serf to feel envious of the prince. But now everyone compared themselves to everyone else and was exposed to a volatile mixture of ambition and inadequacy as a result. However, there is nothing wrong with envy, maintained the philosopher. What matters is how we handle it. Greatness comes from being able to learn from our envious crises. Nietzsche thought of envy as a confused but important signal from our deeper selves about what we really want. Everything that makes us envious is a fragment of our true potential, which we disown at our peril. We should learn to study our envy forensically, keeping a diary of envious moments, and then sift through episodes to discern the shape of a future, better self. It is not that Nietzsche believed we always end up getting what we want his own life had taught him this well enough. He simply insisted that we must become conscious of our true potential, put up a heroic fight to honour it, and only then mourn failure with solemn frankness and dignified honesty. Pilate, the Roman governor. Christians had wished to enjoy the real ingredients of fulfilment a position in the world, sex, intellectual mastery, creativity but had been too inept to get them. They had therefore fashioned a hypocritical creed denouncing what they wanted but were too weak to fight for while praising what they did not want but happened to have. Never drink alcohol Nietzsche himself drank only water and as a special treat, milk. And he thought we should do likewise. The idea went to the heart of his philosophy, as contained in his declaration: A few drinks usher in a transient feeling of satisfaction that can get fatally in the way of taking the steps necessary to improve our lives. But he recognised the unfortunate but crucial truth that growth and accomplishment have irrevocably painful aspects: You have a choice in life: Despite his reservations about Christianity, Nietzsche did not think that the end of belief was anything to celebrate. Religious beliefs were false, he knew; but he observed that they were in some areas very beneficial to the sound functioning of society. Giving up on religion would mean that humans would be left to find new ways of supplying themselves with guidance, consolation, ethical ideas and spiritual ambition. This would be tricky, he predicted. Nietzsche proposed that the gap left by religion should ideally be filled with Culture philosophy, art, music, literature: Culture should replace Scripture. However, Nietzsche was deeply suspicious of the way his own era handled culture. He believed the universities were killing the humanities, turning them into dry academic exercises, rather than using them for what they were always meant to be: He particularly admired the way the Greeks had used tragedy in a practical, therapeutic way, as an occasion for catharsis and moral education and wished his own age to be comparably ambitious. He accused university and museum-based culture of retreating from the life-guiding, morality-giving potential of culture, at precisely the time when the Death of God had made these aspects ever more necessary. He called for a reformation, in which people newly conscious of the crisis brought on by the end of faith would fill the gaps created by the disappearance of religion with the wisdom and healing beauty of Culture. Conclusion Every era faces particular psychological challenges, thought Nietzsche, and it is the task of the philosopher to identify, and help solve, these. For Nietzsche, the 19th century was reeling under the impact of

two developments: Mass Democracy and Atheism. The first threatened to unleash torrents of undigested envy and venomous resentment; the second to leave humans without guidance or morality. In relation to both challenges, Nietzsche worked up some fascinating and practical solutions “ from which our own times have some highly practical things to learn, as he would dearly have wished.

Chapter 2 : Nietzsche and the Task of Philosophy // CurateND

*The Tasks of Philosophy Posted by David Corfield Kenny Easwaran and I had a brief but interesting exchange, starting here, concerning the detail of mathematical practice into which a philosopher of mathematics should enter.*

From natural philosophy to theories of method Philosophy and natural science The history of philosophy is intertwined with the history of the natural sciences. They were joined in these reflections by the most eminent natural scientists. Galileo " supplemented his arguments about the motions of earthly and heavenly bodies with claims about the roles of mathematics and experiment in discovering facts about nature. Similarly, the account given by Isaac Newton " of his system of the natural world is punctuated by a defense of his methods and an outline of a positive program for scientific inquiry. Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier "94 , James Clerk Maxwell "79 , Charles Darwin "82 , and Albert Einstein " all continued this tradition, offering their own insights into the character of the scientific enterprise. Some philosophers continue to work on problems that are continuous with the natural sciences, exploring, for example, the character of space and time or the fundamental features of life. They contribute to the philosophy of the special sciences, a field with a long tradition of distinguished work in the philosophy of physics and with more-recent contributions in the philosophy of biology and the philosophy of psychology and neuroscience see mind, philosophy of. This is the topic of the present article. Logical positivism and logical empiricism A series of developments in early 20th-century philosophy made the general philosophy of science central to philosophy in the English-speaking world. Inspired by the articulation of mathematical logic, or formal logic , in the work of the philosophers Gottlob Frege " and Bertrand Russell " and the mathematician David Hilbert " , a group of European philosophers known as the Vienna Circle attempted to diagnose the difference between the inconclusive debates that mark the history of philosophy and the firm accomplishments of the sciences they admired. In the light of logic, they thought, genuinely fruitful inquiries could be freed from the encumbrances of traditional philosophy. To carry through this bold program, a sharp criterion of meaningfulness was required. Unfortunately, as they tried to use the tools of mathematical logic to specify the criterion, the logical positivists as they came to be known encountered unexpected difficulties. Again and again, promising proposals were either so lax that they allowed the cloudiest pronouncements of traditional metaphysics to count as meaningful, or so restrictive that they excluded the most cherished hypotheses of the sciences see verifiability principle. Faced with these discouraging results, logical positivism evolved into a more moderate movement, logical empiricism. Many historians of philosophy treat this movement as a late version of logical positivism and accordingly do not refer to it by any distinct name. Logical empiricists took as central the task of understanding the distinctive virtues of the natural sciences. In effect, they proposed that the search for a theory of scientific method " undertaken by Aristotle, Bacon, Descartes, and others " could be carried out more thoroughly with the tools of mathematical logic. Not only did they see a theory of scientific method as central to philosophy, but they also viewed that theory as valuable for aspiring areas of inquiry in which an explicit understanding of method might resolve debates and clear away confusions. Their agenda was deeply influential in subsequent philosophy of science. Discovery, justification, and falsification Logics of discovery and justification An ideal theory of scientific method would consist of instructions that could lead an investigator from ignorance to knowledge. Descartes and Bacon sometimes wrote as if they could offer so ideal a theory, but after the mid-17th century the orthodox view was that this is too much to ask for. There are, however, no such rules that will guide someone to formulate the right hypothesis, or even hypotheses that are plausible or fruitful. Although the idea that there cannot be a logic of scientific discovery often assumed the status of orthodoxy, it was not unquestioned. As will become clear below see Scientific change , one of the implications of the influential work of Thomas Kuhn "96 in the philosophy of science was that considerations of the likelihood of future discoveries of particular kinds are sometimes entangled with judgments of evidence , so discovery can be dismissed as an irrational process only if one is prepared to concede that the irrationality also infects the context of justification itself. Sometimes in response to Kuhn and sometimes for independent reasons, philosophers tried to analyze particular instances of complex scientific

discoveries, showing how the scientists involved appear to have followed identifiable methods and strategies. The most ambitious response to the empiricist orthodoxy tried to do exactly what was abandoned as hopeless—to wit, specify formal procedures for producing hypotheses in response to an available body of evidence. So, for example, the American philosopher Clark Glymour and his associates wrote computer programs to generate hypotheses in response to statistical evidence, hypotheses that often introduced new variables that did not themselves figure in the data. These programs were applied in various traditionally difficult areas of natural and social scientific research. Perhaps, then, logical empiricism was premature in writing off the context of discovery as beyond the range of philosophical analysis. In contrast, logical empiricists worked vigorously on the problem of understanding scientific justification. They recognized, of course, that a series of experimental reports on the expansion of metals under heat would not deductively imply the general conclusion that all metals expand when heated—for even if all the reports were correct, it would still be possible that the very next metal to be examined failed to expand under heat. Nonetheless, it seemed that a sufficiently large and sufficiently varied collection of reports would provide some support, even strong support, for the generalization. The philosophical task was to make precise this intuitive judgment about support. During the 1950s, two prominent logical empiricists, Rudolf Carnap (1901–1970) and Carl Hempel (1917–1997), made influential attempts to solve this problem. Carnap offered a valuable distinction between various versions of the question. The comparative problem attracted little attention, but Hempel attacked the qualitative problem while Carnap concentrated on the quantitative problem. Courtesy of the University of California, Los Angeles It would be natural to assume that the qualitative problem is the easier of the two, and even that it is quite straightforward. Many scientists and philosophers were attracted to the idea of hypothetico-deductivism, or the hypothetico-deductive method: An apparently innocuous point about support seems to be that, if E confirms H, then E confirms any statement that can be deduced from H. Suppose, then, that H deductively implies E, and E has been ascertained by observation or experiment. If H is now conjoined with any arbitrary statement, the resulting conjunction will also deductively imply E. Hypothetico-deductivism says that this conjunction is confirmed by the evidence. By the innocuous point, E confirms any deductive consequence of the conjunction. One such deductive consequence is the arbitrary statement. So one reaches the conclusion that E, which might be anything whatsoever, confirms any arbitrary statement. But if one tacks on to Newtonian theory any doctrine one pleases—perhaps the claim that global warming is the result of the activities of elves at the North Pole—then the expanded theory will equally yield the old predictions. On the account of confirmation just offered, the predictions confirm the expanded theory and any statement that follows deductively from it, including the elfin warming theory. Carnap considered artificial systems whose expressive power falls dramatically short of the languages actually used in the practice of the sciences, and he hoped to define for any pair of statements in his restricted languages a function that would measure the degree to which the second supports the first. Despite the failure of the official project, however, he argued in detail for a connection between confirmation and probability, showing that, given certain apparently reasonable assumptions, the degree-of-confirmation function must satisfy the axioms of the probability calculus. Bayesian confirmation That conclusion was extended in the most prominent contemporary approach to issues of confirmation, so-called Bayesianism, named for the English clergyman and mathematician Thomas Bayes (1702–1761). The guiding thought of Bayesianism is that acquiring evidence modifies the probability rationally assigned to a hypothesis. For a simple version of the thought, a hackneyed example will suffice. As the evidence comes in, one forms a probability that is conditional on the information one now has, and in this case the evidence drives the probability upward. This need not have been the case: Bayes is renowned for a theorem that explains an important relationship between conditional probabilities. But how should scientists conclude that the probability of an interesting hypothesis takes on a particular value or that a certain evidential finding would be extremely improbable if the interesting hypothesis were false? The simple example about drawing from a deck of cards is potentially misleading in this respect, because in this case there seems to be available a straightforward means of calculating the probability that a specific card, such as the king of hearts, will be drawn. There is no obvious analogue with respect to scientific hypotheses. It would seem foolish, for example, to suppose that there is some list of potential scientific hypotheses, each of which is equally likely to hold true

of the universe. Bayesians are divided in their responses to this difficulty. The only limits on rational choice of prior probabilities stem from the need to give each truth of logic and mathematics the probability 1 and to provide a value different from both 0 and 1 for every empirical statement. The former proviso reflects the view that the laws of logic and mathematics cannot be false; the latter embodies the idea that any statement whose truth or falsity is not determined by the laws of logic and mathematics might turn out to be true or false. On the face of it, subjective Bayesianism appears incapable of providing any serious reconstruction of scientific reasoning. One begins by assigning the Newtonian hypothesis a small but significant probability; the other attributes a probability that is truly minute. For the first scientist it approaches 1. The second, however, has begun with so minute a probability that, even with a large body of positive evidence for the Newtonian hypothesis, the final value assigned is still tiny. From the subjective Bayesian perspective, both have proceeded impeccably. Yet, at the end of the day, they diverge quite radically in their assessment of the hypothesis. No subjective Bayesian can tolerate this diagnosis, however. The Newtonian hypothesis is not a logical or mathematical truth or a logical or mathematical falsehood, and both scientists give it a probability different from 0 and 1. By subjective Bayesian standards, that is all rational inquirers are asked to do. The orthodox response to worries of this type is to offer mathematical theorems that demonstrate how individuals starting with different prior probabilities will eventually converge on a common value. Indeed, were the imaginary investigators to keep going long enough, their eventual assignments of probability would differ by an amount as tiny as one cared to make it. In the long run, scientists who lived by Bayesian standards would agree. Eliminativism and falsification Subjective Bayesianism is currently the most popular view of the confirmation of scientific hypotheses, partly because it seems to accord with important features of confirmation and partly because it is both systematic and precise. But the worry just outlined is not the only concern that critics press and defenders endeavour to meet. Among others is the objection that explicit assignments of probabilities seem to figure in scientific reasoning only when the focus is on statistical hypotheses. A more homely view of testing and the appraisal of hypotheses suggests that scientists proceed by the method of Sherlock Holmes: Unlike Bayesianism, this approach to scientific reasoning is explicitly concerned with the acceptance and rejection of hypotheses and thus seems far closer to the everyday practice of scientists than the revision of probabilities. But eliminativism, as this view is sometimes called, also faces serious challenges. The first main worry centres on the choice of alternatives. In the setting of the country-house murder, Sherlock Holmes or his counterpart has a clear list of suspects. In scientific inquiries, however, no such complete roster of potential hypotheses is available. For all anyone knows, the correct hypothesis might not figure among the rivals under consideration. How then can the eliminative procedure provide any confidence in the hypothesis left standing at the end? Eliminativists are forced to concede that this is a genuine difficulty and that there can be many situations in which it is appropriate to wonder whether the initial construction of possibilities was unimaginative. If they believe that inquirers are sometimes justified in accepting the hypothesis that survives an eliminative process, then they must formulate criteria for distinguishing such situations. By the early 21st century, no one had yet offered any such precise criteria. An apparent method of avoiding the difficulty just raised would be to emphasize the tentative character of scientific judgment. This tactic was pursued with considerable thoroughness by the Austrian-born British philosopher Karl Popper <sup>1992</sup>, whose views about scientific reasoning probably had more influence on practicing scientists than those of any other philosopher. That criterion was linked to his reconstruction of scientific reasoning: Popper thus envisaged an eliminative process that begins with the rival hypotheses that a particular group of scientists happen to have thought of, and he responded to the worry that the successful survival of a series of tests might not be any indicator of truth by emphasizing that scientific acceptance is always tentative and provisional. Philosophers, however, were less convinced. For however much he emphasized the tentative character of acceptance, Popper <sup>1992</sup> like the scientists who read him <sup>1992</sup> plainly thought that surviving the eliminative process makes a hypothesis more worthy of being pursued or applied in a practical context. A second major worry about eliminativism charged that the notion of falsification is more complex than eliminativists including Popper allowed. As the philosopher-physicist Pierre Duhem <sup>1953</sup> pointed out, experiments and observations typically test a bundle of different hypotheses. A particularly striking

example of this situation comes from the early responses to the Copernican system. Astronomers of the late 16th century, virtually all of whom believed in the traditional view that the heavenly bodies revolved around the Earth, pointed out that if, as Copernicus claimed, the Earth is in motion, then the stars should be seen at different angles at different times of the year; but no differences were observed, and thus Copernicanism, they concluded, is false.

*Whereas ancient philosophers learned to let a theory grow out of their concrete existence, the task today is the opposite: to free ourselves from our prefabricated principles and to impart to theory once again the enactive and enthusiastic energies of existence.*

See Article History Philosophy of education, philosophical reflection on the nature, aims, and problems of education. The philosophy of education is Janus -faced, looking both inward to the parent discipline of philosophy and outward to educational practice. This dual focus requires it to work on both sides of the traditional divide between theory and practice, taking as its subject matter both basic philosophical issues e. These practical issues in turn have implications for a variety of long-standing philosophical problems in epistemology , metaphysics , ethics , and political philosophy. In addressing these many issues and problems, the philosopher of education strives for conceptual clarity, argumentative rigour, and informed valuation. Principal historical figures The history of philosophy of education is an important source of concerns and issuesâ€”as is the history of education itselfâ€”for setting the intellectual agenda of contemporary philosophers of education. Equally relevant is the range of contemporary approaches to the subject. Although it is not possible here to review systematically either that history or those contemporary approaches, brief sketches of several key figures are offered next. The Western philosophical tradition began in ancient Greece , and philosophy of education began with it. The major historical figures developed philosophical views of education that were embedded in their broader metaphysical , epistemological, ethical , and political theories. This view of the central place of reason in education has been shared by most of the major figures in the history of philosophy of education, despite the otherwise substantial differences in their other philosophical views. In his dialogue Republic he set out a vision of education in which different groups of students would receive different sorts of education, depending on their abilities, interests, and stations in life. PlatoPlato, marble portrait bust, from an original of the 4th century bce; in the Capitoline Museums, Rome. Detail of a Roman copy 2nd century bce of a Greek alabaster portrait bust of Aristotle, c. Unlike Plato, Rousseau also prescribed fundamentally distinct educations for boys and girls, and in doing so he raised issues concerning gender and its place in education that are of central concern today. While these Deweyan themes are strongly reminiscent of Rousseau, Dewey placed them in a far more sophisticatedâ€”albeit philosophically contentiousâ€”context. He emphasized the central importance of education for the health of democratic social and political institutions, and he developed his educational and political views from a foundation of systematic metaphysics and epistemology. Of course, the history of philosophy of education includes many more figures than Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, and Dewey. Peters in Britain and Israel Scheffler in the United States , have also made substantial contributions to educational thought. It is worth noting again that virtually all these figures, despite their many philosophical differences and with various qualifications and differences of emphasis, take the fundamental aim of education to be the fostering of rationality see reason. No other proposed aim of education has enjoyed the positive endorsement of so many historically important philosophersâ€”although, as will be seen below, this aim has come under increasing scrutiny in recent decades. Problems, issues, and tasks There are a number of basic philosophical problems and tasks that have occupied philosophers of education throughout the history of the subject. The aims of education The most basic problem of philosophy of education is that concerning aims: What are the proper criteria for evaluating educational efforts, institutions, practices, and products? All such proposed aims require careful articulation and defense, and all have been subjected to sustained criticism. Both contemporary and historical philosophers of education have devoted themselves, at least in part, to defending a particular conception of the aims of education or to criticizing the conceptions of others. Clarification of educational concepts A perennial conception of the nature of philosophy is that it is chiefly concerned with the clarification of concepts, such as knowledge, truth , justice , beauty, mind, meaning, and existence. One of the tasks of the philosophy of education, accordingly, has been the elucidation of key educational concepts, including the concept of education itself, as well as related concepts such as teaching, learning, schooling, child rearing, and

indoctrination. Such analysis seeks not necessarily, or only, to identify the particular meanings of charged or contested concepts but also to identify alternative meanings, render ambiguities explicit, reveal hidden metaphysical, normative, or cultural assumptions, illuminate the consequences of alternative interpretations, explore the semantic connections between related concepts, and elucidate the inferential relationships obtaining among the philosophical claims and theses in which they are embedded. Rights, power, and authority There are several issues that fall under this heading. What justifies the state in compelling children to attend schoolâ€”in what does its authority to mandate attendance lie? What is the nature and justification of the authority that teachers exercise over their students? Is the freedom of students rightly curtailed by the state? Is the public school system rightly entitled to the power it exercises in establishing curricula that parents might find objectionableâ€”e. Should parents or their children have the right to opt out of material they think is inappropriate? Should schools encourage students to be reflective and critical generallyâ€”as urged by the American philosophers Israel Scheffler and Amy Gutmann, following Socrates and the tradition he establishedâ€”or should they refrain from encouraging students to subject their own ways of life to critical scrutiny, as the American political scientist William Galston has recommended? The issue of legitimate authority has been raised recently in the United States in connection with the practice of standardized testing, which some critics believe discriminates against the children of some racial, cultural, religious, or ethnic groups because the test questions rely, implicitly or explicitly, on various culturally specific cues or assumptions that members of some groups may not understand or accept. In such controversial cases, what power should members of allegedly disadvantaged groups have to protect their children from discrimination or injustice? The answer to this question, as to the others raised above, may depend in part on the status of the particular school as public state-supported or private. But it can also be asked whether private schools should enjoy more authority with respect to curricular matters than public schools do, particularly in cases where they receive state subsidies of one form or another. These questions are primarily matters of ethics and political philosophy, but they also require attention to metaphysics e. Critical thinking Many educators and educational scholars have championed the educational aim of critical thinking. It is not obvious what critical thinking is, and philosophers of education accordingly have developed accounts of critical thinking that attempt to state what it is and why it is valuableâ€”i. These accounts generally though not universally agree that critical thinkers share at least the following two characteristics: Beyond this level of agreement lie a range of contentious issues. One cluster of issues is epistemological in nature. What is it to reason well? What makes a reason, in this sense, good or bad? More generally, what epistemological assumptions underlie or should underlie the notion of critical thinking? These questions have given rise to other, more specific and hotly contested issues. Do standard accounts of critical thinking in these ways favour and help to perpetuate the beliefs, values, and practices of dominant groups in society and devalue those of marginalized or oppressed groups? Is reason itself, as some feminist and postmodern philosophers have claimed, a form of hegemony? Other issues concern whether the skills, abilities, and dispositions that are constitutive of critical thinking are general or subject-specific. In addition, the dispositions of the critical thinker noted above suggest that the ideal of critical thinking can be extended beyond the bounds of the epistemic to the area of moral character, leading to questions regarding the nature of such character and the best means of instilling it. Indoctrination A much-debated question is whether and how education differs from indoctrination. Many theorists have assumed that the two are distinct and that indoctrination is undesirable, but others have argued that there is no difference in principle and that indoctrination is not intrinsically bad. Theories of indoctrination generally define it in terms of aim, method, or doctrine. Thus, indoctrination is either: These ways of characterizing indoctrination emphasize its alleged contrast with critical thinking: But this apparent contrast depends upon the alleged avoidability of indoctrination, which itself is a philosophically contested issue. The individual and society A number of interrelated problems and issues fall under this heading. What is the place of schools in a just or democratic society? Should they serve the needs of society by preparing students to fill specific social needs or roles, or should they rather strive to maximize the potentialâ€”or serve the interestsâ€”of each student? When these goals conflict, as they appear inevitably to do, which set of interestsâ€”those of society or those of individualsâ€”should take precedence? Should educational institutions strive to treat all students

equally? If so, should they seek equality of opportunity or equality of outcome? Should individual autonomy be valued more highly than the character of society? These questions are basically moral and political in nature, though they have epistemological analogues, as noted above with respect to critical thinking. Moral education Another set of problems and issues has to do with the proper educational approach to morality. Should education strive to instill particular moral beliefs and values in students? If the latter, how should educators distinguish between good and bad ways to think about moral issues? Or are all these approaches problematic in that they inevitably involve indoctrination of an undesirable kind? Moral psychology and developmental psychology are also highly relevant to the resolution of these questions. Teaching, learning, and curriculum Many problems of educational practice that raise philosophical issues fall under this heading. Which subjects are most worth teaching or learning? What constitutes knowledge of them, and is such knowledge discovered or constructed? Should there be a single, common curriculum for all students, or should different students study different subjects, depending on their needs or interests, as Dewey thought? If the latter, should students be tracked according to ability? Should less-able students be directed to vocational studies? Is there even a legitimate distinction to be drawn between academic and vocational education? More broadly, should students be grouped together according to age, ability, gender, race, culture, socioeconomic status, or some other characteristic or should educators seek diversity in the classroom along any or all of these dimensions? Whatever the curriculum, how should students be taught? How, more generally, should teaching be conceived and conducted? Should all students be expected to learn the same things from their studies? If not, as many argue, does it make sense to utilize standardized testing to measure educational outcome, attainment, or success? What are the effects of grading and evaluation in general and of high-stakes standardized testing in particular? Some have argued that any sort of grading or evaluation is educationally counterproductive because it inhibits cooperation and undermines any natural motivation to learn. If these claims are correct, how should the seemingly legitimate demands of parents, administrators, and politicians for accountability from teachers and schools be met? These are complex matters, involving philosophical questions concerning the aims and legitimate means of education and the nature of the human mind, the psychology of learning and of teaching, the organizational and political demands of schooling, and a host of other matters to which social-scientific research is relevant. Finally, here fall questions concerning the aims of particular curriculum areas. For example, should science education aim at conveying to students merely the content of current theories or rather an understanding of scientific method, a grasp of the tentativeness and fallibility of scientific hypotheses, and an understanding of the criteria by which theories are evaluated? Should science classes focus solely on current theories, or should they include attention to the history, philosophy, and sociology of the subject? Should they seek to impart only beliefs or also skills? Similar questions can be asked of nearly every curriculum area; they are at least partly philosophical and so are routinely addressed by philosophers of education as well as by curriculum theorists and subject-matter specialists. Educational research A large amount of research in education is published every year; such research drives much educational policy and practice. But educational research raises many philosophical issues. How is it best conducted, and how are its results best interpreted and translated into policy? Should it be modeled on research in the natural sciences? In what ways if any does competent research in the social sciences differ from that in the natural sciences?

### Chapter 4 : Ethics | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

*Welcome to the Philosophers Task Force, a task force of WikiProject Philosophy and WikiProject Biography. The task force is a group of pages in the "Wikipedia" article namespace which are devoted to the management of a specific topic or family of topics within Wikipedia; and, simultaneously, a group of editors who use those pages to collaborate.*

To be, or not to be: This is our choice when we speak of no more unprioritized tasks or no more missed deadlines, or no more pain in taking decisions. This is a poetic way to explain how GTD method was born as an attempt to shorten time from decision taking to productive activity. In order to focus, GTD suggests two important steps to take: Define your task list Define your priorities Start completing tasks The third step, the activity itself, turns out to be more productive as the result of the prior planning step based on data accumulation step 1. By saying this, in most cases, when speaking of corporate segment, we mean Microsoft products, most often Outlook , Nevertheless, software industry tends to offer newer products due to OS renovations and updates, and emergency of new technologies that makes it possible to implement new features, like it is the case, for example of visual control with touch screen devices. This all better adapts newer getting things done Outlook add-ins to the user demand of comfort. It had its time to grow mature in functionality and design, and it uses benefits of new technologies for the user satisfaction. It is quick, neat in design, adapted to the point of seamless integration with Outlook, and it is build on GTD principles. What can you do with TaskCracker? This Outlook GTD add-in presents tasks in a conceptually new kind of view: It is a form of a form of visual Urgent-Important matrix suggested by Stephen Covey for prioritisation purposes 2 step of GTD application. This visual view is interactive: You can drag and drop your task with the mouse, or you can use touch devices as well. The visual prioritization method provided by TaskCracker Outlook GTD add-in makes it possible for you to minimize time to action, the time you need to spread your tasks over your time. And it turns out to be really quick with the visual control, while the neat interface is rid of any kind of design complication, and it fast and debugged. That is how you save your time. Small TaskCracker button within our Outlook becomes your little helpmate once you install the Outlook plug-in. When you hit it, you go to the visual presentation of your current Outlook tasks. If you have already done it in Outlook, TaskCracker shows it to you on the matrix with the relevant colour code according to the priorities you have set for your tasks by that time. As you can see, the initial situation here reveals that your work day is overloaded to the point that you need multiple you to cope with the current task list. The issue can be resolved either by hiring more people, or by wisely spreading your workload over your time. This is what you can see in the next five minutes. It is rather easy to notice here that the desired work-time balance is achieved in this visual presentation. Now you can switch to your normal to-do list Outlook view and start completing your tasks one by one. At the same time we, at TaskCracker, normally keep working the visual presentation, as the neat and tidy interface makes it possible to assess the current workload situation at a glance. Besides, the application functionality is good-looking itself. Once a pioneering Soviet aircraft designer, Andrei Tupolev, speaking of aircraft functionality, said that if an aircraft is beautiful, it flies well.

*The so-called anthropocene is one of the most widely discussed concepts in philosophy and critical theory at the moment. This volume takes a broad historical view of the topic, bringing together high profile theorists, including Luce Irigaray and Adria.*

As against the special sciences, which deal only with particular aspects, philosophy deals with those aspects of the universe which pertain to everything that exists. In the realm of cognition, the special sciences are the trees, but philosophy is the soil which makes the forest possible. Who Needs It , 2 Philosophy is the science that studies the fundamental aspects of the nature of existence. The task of philosophy is to provide man with a comprehensive view of life. This view serves as a base, a frame of reference, for all his actions, mental or physical, psychological or existential. This view tells him the nature of the universe with which he has to deal metaphysics ; the means by which he is to deal with it, i. The Anti-Industrial Revolution , 45 In order to live, man must act; in order to act, he must make choices; in order to make choices, he must define a code of values; in order to define a code of values, he must know what he is and where he isâ€”i. He cannot escape from this need; his only alternative is whether the philosophy guiding him is to be chosen by his mind or by chance. Your only choice is whether you define your philosophy by a conscious, rational, disciplined process of thought and scrupulously logical deliberationâ€”or let your subconscious accumulate a junk heap of unwarranted conclusions, false generalizations, undefined contradictions, undigested slogans, unidentified wishes, doubts and fears, thrown together by chance, but integrated by your subconscious into a kind of mongrel philosophy and fused into a single, solid weight: Who Needs It , 5 The men who are not interested in philosophy need it most urgently: The men who are not interested in philosophy absorb its principles from the cultural atmosphere around themâ€”from schools, colleges, books, magazines, newspapers, movies, television, etc. Who sets the tone of a culture? A small handful of men: Others follow their lead, either by conviction or by default. Who Needs It , 6 Philosophy is a necessity for a rational being: The events of any given period of history are the result of the thinking of the preceding period. The role of chance, accident, or tradition, in this context, is the same as their role in the life of an individual: It is, therefore, by reference to philosophy that the character of a social system has to be defined and evaluated. It is philosophy that has brought men to this stateâ€”it is only philosophy that can lead them out. And if you make an error, you retain the means and the frame of reference necessary to correct it. But what will you accomplish if you advocate honesty in ethics, while telling men that there is no such thing as truth, fact or reality? What will you do if you advocate political freedom on the grounds that you feel it is good, and find yourself confronting an ambitious thug who declares that he feels quite differently? Who Needs It , 12 Philosophy provides man with a comprehensive view of life. In order to evaluate it properly, ask yourself what a given theory, if accepted, would do to a human life, starting with your own. Who Needs It , 16 Man came into his own in Greece, some two-and-a-half thousand years ago. The birth of philosophy marked his adulthood; not the content of any particular system of philosophy, but deeper: Philosophy is the goal toward which religion was only a helplessly blind groping. The grandeur, the reverence, the exalted purity, the austere dedication to the pursuit of truth, which are commonly associated with religion, should properly belong to the field of philosophy. Aristotle lived up to it and, in part, so did Plato, Aquinas, Spinozaâ€”but how many others? It is earlier than we think. The Anti-Industrial Revolution , 45 The foundation of any culture, the source responsible for all of its manifestations, is its philosophy. What does modern philosophy offer us? With a hysterical virulence, strange in advocates of skepticism, they insist that there can be no valid philosophical systems i. Who Needs It , 18 Even though philosophy is held in a today well-earned contempt by the other college departments, it is philosophy that determines the nature and direction of all the other courses, because it is philosophy that formulates the principles of epistemology, i. The influence of the dominant philosophic theories permeates every other department, including the physical sciences. The Anti-Industrial Revolution , 82 Philosophy is the foundation of science; epistemology is the foundation of philosophy. It is with a new approach to epistemology that the rebirth of philosophy has to begin. For information address New American Library. Reprinted with permission

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Chapter 6 : Wikipedia:WikiProject Philosophy/Philosophers - Wikipedia

*Abstract. This dissertation is an attempt to reorient the study of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche around metaphilosophical questions: what is the proper task of philosophy, and, consequently, what relationship should philosophy bear to science?*

Reviewed by Hartwig Wiedebach, University of Zurich In , Franz Rosenzweig published his philosophical-theological opus magnum: Consequently, four years later, Rosenzweig published "additional remarks" regarding the book. He explained that SE was not a Jewish book in the common understanding of the term. Almost provocatively, Rosenzweig wrote: The presentation is clear and understandable and particularly accessible because of its wise use of cross-references and frequent restatements of the main theses. That is manifest, for example, in looking at the question of what actually motivated Rosenzweig to engage in constructing a system. In , Rosenzweig wrote his dissertation, which was published eight years later as *Hegel und der Staat*. Hegel and Schelling seized on this in particular, and formulated their systems as responses to the new challenge. A century later, however, the landscape of philosophical questioning had substantially changed: In philosophy, the form of system has pretty much faded from general debate since the flowering of neo-Kantianism in the first third of the 20th century. Over against this decline in system thinking in philosophy there looms a veritable boom in building systems in other spheres. Today we seem to encounter concepts of system wherever the description and theory of certain sub-spheres of the world, life or human existence are concerned: However, the systems theories in biology, sociology or the information sciences, for example, do not regard themselves as direct descendants of those older efforts in philosophy to contemplate the "unity of the One and All" in the framework of a system. The anarchic element inherent in these tendencies, and more generally the consciousness of the fragmentary nature of everything that can be done and achieved, would appear, at least in the realm of philosophy, to be in direct opposition to the form of thought of a grand system. Rosenzweig formulated a system that does not deny those anarchic elements. On the contrary, it draws its sustenance from them. With his system, Rosenzweig wishes to lead us on to the threshold of everyday thought in its concrete simplicity. But more than just discursive thought is important here. The concrete experience of what is thought plays its decisive role in life with the same weight cf. Three fundamental realities that have stamped Western thought since classical antiquity shape the initial approach: God, the world and man. In Jewish-Christian revelation, a system of linking events overlays this "pagan" trinity: The experience of revelation is wrapped in the erotic experience of the moment of love. And we discern a prolepsis of future redemption in the active fulfilment of the demands of what and who is nearest to an individual. This duplex trinity, in the shape of two overlaid triangles, forms the Jewish Star of David. Initially, in the religious liturgies of Judaism and Christianity, but ultimately in a vision of mystical unity overarching these two traditions, the "All" itself is experienced, and with it the unlimited multiplicity of human and worldly things. Pollock intimates that Rosenzweig ultimately could only claim this for himself, i. Such an approach to system and its building stands as a provocation for all previous academic philosophy. The undistorted facticity of the anarchic and threatening element must be endured. At the center lies the human being, whose anchorage lies not in the discursive interconnection of ideas but, on the contrary, in the fear of death, which is manifest every day, even if it is often suppressed. Along with constructive methodology, his educational principle is a strictly orchestrated total picture of experiences of thought and faith. From the "middle" of life, "in experiencing ourselves as existing parts of the world, as individual free personal selves, called upon to act in the world, we experience system" p. SE consists of three parts. In each, the ways or types in which argument is built differ, and most particularly the type of speech, or discourse. Rosenzweig drafts Part I of SE as a formal language of mathematical structures, remaining to an extent silent, speechless. In Part II we deal with articulated language, real spoken discourse. The experience of the world as creation guides the "language of perception and knowledge", the experience of the moment as revelation is heard in the "language of love", and the experience of the future forces the human being to a pragmatic "language of the deed". In Part III, a language of gestures appears through religious services, in the linguistic-bodily immediacy of

liturgy. Precisely in relation to the peak experience of the "All" in counterplay with the "singularities" it contains, this language of gesture has something more essential to "say", something different from everything uttered by human tongue. As Pollock states, there is no architectonic or dialectical logicity that bridges from one part to the next p. For the "transition" from Part I to Part II, the "possibility of experiencing the miracle" is necessary, and over the "threshold" between Part II to Part III leads the "possibility of entreating the messianic kingdom". Clear here is the intimate relation between philosophy and religious experience. Philosophizing in the form of a system means traversing a path leading through several metamorphoses of speech. Pollock does not deal with these metamorphoses. Naturally he is quite aware of that, postponing this desideratum to future inquiry pp. Yet precisely to examine and explain this special "system of philosophy" requires a philosophy of speech and speaking as an integral element. It is not some sort of condiment one can reserve to grace later explanations. I will mention only one of the important sources for this. Both dimensions in turn form one pair of correlating vectors: In space, an internal will to express oneself stands over against the force of external influences; on the plane of time, there is the closed linguistic heritage of the past and the open linguistic creation of the future. Four ways of speaking correspond to this: In these, human beings relate to other humans, to the world, and ultimately to God. He does not provide an answer to the question whether a new philosophizing in the form of a system, based on Rosenzweig, is possible and can be meaningful. The systems of philosophy of German idealism from the past, but also the designs created in his own time, especially by neo-Kantianism for example, Hermann Cohen and Heinrich Rickert, pursue very different paths, at least at first glance. Among the Romantics, a central concern was to derive nonetheless a system of a vision of totality from a fundamental experience of the world and life grounded on the fragmentary Novalis, Friedrich Schlegel. Whether that is possible is decided not only by the coherence of an author of a system in terms of its exposition and conceptions. Its possibility is also determined by the success or failure of an attitude toward the realities of everyday life and death acquired through experience along its way. The Star of Redemption, tr. U of Wisconsin Press Philosophical and Theological Writings, trs. Franks and Michael L. Patmos; and Peter Eli Gordon: Between Judaism and German Philosophy. U of California Press Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts.

**Chapter 7 : The Great Philosophers 4: Nietzsche | Philosophers' Mail**

*Pages in category "Philosophers task force articles" The following pages are in this category, out of approximately 6, total. This list may not reflect recent changes ().*

At the age of five, he was entered at Montecassino where his studies began. When the monastery became a battle site—“not for the last time”—Thomas was transferred by his family to the University of Naples. Returned to Paris, he completed his studies, became a Master and for three years occupied one of the Dominican chairs in the Faculty of Theology. The next ten years were spent in various places in Italy, with the mobile papal court, at various Dominican houses, and eventually in Rome. From there he was called back to Paris to confront the controversy variously called Latin Averroism and Heterodox Aristotelianism. After this second three year stint, he was assigned to Naples. In , on his way to the Council of Lyon, he fell ill and died on March 7 in the Cistercian abbey at Fossanova, which is perhaps twenty kilometers from Roccasecca. They were one of the principal conduits of the liberal arts tradition which stretches back to Cassiodorus Senator in the 6th century. The arts of the trivium grammar, rhetoric, logic and those of the quadrivium arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy were fragments preserved against the ruinous loss of classical knowledge. They constituted the secular education that complemented sacred doctrine as learned from the Bible. When Thomas transferred to Naples, his education in the arts continued. Here it would have been impressed upon him that the liberal arts were no longer adequate categories of secular learning: With the attainment of the Master of Arts at about the age of 20, one could go on to study in a higher faculty, law, medicine or theology. Extensive and progressively more intensive study of the scriptures, Old and New Testament, and of the summary of Christian doctrine called the Sentences which was compiled by the twelfth century Bishop of Paris, Peter Lombard. These close textual studies were complemented by public disputations and the even more unruly quodlibetal questions. With the faculty modeled more or less on the guilds, the student served a long apprenticeship, established his competence in stages, and eventually after a public examination was named a master and then gave his inaugural lecture. His commentary on the Sentences put the seal on his student days and many of his very early commentaries on Scripture have come down to us. But from the very beginning Thomas produces writings which would not have emerged from the usual tasks of the theological master. Some of his disputed questions date from his first stint as regius master at Paris. When he returned to Italy his productivity increased. He finished the Summa contra gentiles, wrote various disputed questions and began the Summa theologiae. In , at Rome, he began the work of commenting on Aristotle with On the Soul, and during the next five or six years commented on eleven more Aristotelian works not all of these are complete. During this time he was caught up in magisterial duties of unusual scope and was writing such polemical works as On the Eternity of the World and On There Being Only One Intellect. At Naples, he was given the task of elevating the status of the Dominican House of Studies. This was soon lifted, he was canonized and eventually was given the title of Common Doctor of the Church. But the subtle and delicate assimilation of Aristotle that characterized his work in both philosophy and theology did not survive his death, except in the Dominican Order, and has experienced ups and downs ever since. Philosophy and Theology Many contemporary philosophers are unsure how to read Thomas. He was in his primary and official profession a theologian. Nonetheless, we find among his writings works anyone would recognize as philosophical and the dozen commentaries on Aristotle increasingly enjoy the respect and interest of Aristotelian scholars. Even within theological works as such there are extended discussions that are easily read as possessing a philosophical character. How can a theological work provide grist for philosophical mills? How did Thomas distinguish between philosophy and theology? Sometimes Thomas puts the difference this way: The philosopher considers what belongs to their proper natures, while the believer considers only what is true of creatures insofar as they are related to God, for example, that they are created by God and are subject to him, and the like. The first and major formal difference between philosophy and theology is found in their principles, that is, starting points. The presuppositions of the philosopher, that to which his discussions and arguments are ultimately driven back, are in the public domain, as it were. They are things that everyone in

principle can know upon reflection; they are where disagreement between us must come to an end. These principles are not themselves the products of deductive proof—which does not of course mean that they are immune to rational analysis and inquiry—and thus they are said to be known by themselves per se, as opposed to per alia. This is proportionately true of each of the sciences, where the most common principles just alluded to are in the background and the proper principles or starting points of the particular science function regionally as the common principles do across the whole terrain of thought and being. The fact that they are known per se does not imply that they are easily known to just anyone who considers them. A good deal of experience of the world and inquiry, not to mention native intelligence, and the ability to avoid intellectual distraction, may be required for anyone in particular to actually apprehend their truth. By contrast, the discourse of the theologian is ultimately driven back to starting points or principles that are held to be true on the basis of faith, that is, the truths that are authoritatively conveyed by Revelation as revealed by God. Some believers reflect on these truths and see other truths implied by them, spell out their interrelations and defend them against the accusation of being nonsense. Theological discourse and inquiry look like any other and is, needless to say, governed by the common principles of thought and being; but it is characterized formally by the fact that its arguments and analyses are taken to be truth-bearing only for one who accepts Scriptural revelation as true. This provides a formal test for deciding whether a piece of discourse is philosophical or theological. If it relies only on truths anyone can be expected upon sufficient reflection to know about the world, and if it offers to lead to new truths on the basis of such truths, and only on that basis, then it is philosophical discourse. On the other hand, discourse whose cogency—not formal, but substantive—depends upon our accepting as true such claims as that there are three persons in one divine nature, that our salvation was effected by the sacrifice of Jesus, that Jesus is one person but two natures, one human, one divine, and the like, is theological discourse. Any appeal to an authoritative scriptural source as the necessary nexus in an argument is thereby other than philosophical discourse. More will be said of this contrast later, but this is the essential difference Thomas recognizes between philosophy and theology. To conclude, consider a passage in which Thomas summarizes his position. He is confronting an objection to there being any need for theological discourse. Whatever can be the object of inquiry will qualify as a being of one sort or another; but the philosophical disciplines seem to cover every kind of being, indeed there is even a part of it which Aristotle calls theology. So what need is there for discourse beyond philosophical discourse? The astronomer and the natural philosopher both conclude that the earth is round, but the astronomer does this through a mathematical middle that is abstracted from matter, whereas the natural philosopher considers a middle lodged in matter. Thus there is nothing to prevent another science from treating in the light of divine revelation what the philosophical disciplines treat as knowable in the light of human reason. The world is understood in that light. Philosophical discourse begins with knowledge of the world. If it speaks of God what it says is conditioned by what is known of the world. But even given the distinction between the two, Aquinas suggests here that there are in fact elements of what God has revealed that are formally speaking philosophical and subject to philosophical discussion—though revealed they can be known and investigated without the precondition of faith. In other words, even something that is as a matter of fact revealed is subject to philosophical analysis, if religious faith is not necessary to know it and accept it as true. So it may happen that concerning certain subjects, as for example the nature of God, the nature of the human person, what is necessary for a human being to be good and to fulfill his or her destiny, and so on, there can be both a theological and a philosophical discussion of those subjects, providing for a fruitful engagement between the theological and the philosophical. Christian Philosophy It will be observed that the formal distinction between philosophical and theological discourse leaves untouched what has often been the mark of one who is at once a believer and a philosopher. It is not simply that he might on one occasion produce an argument that is philosophical and at another time one that is theological; his religious beliefs are clearly not put in escrow but are very much in evidence when he functions as a philosopher. Many of the questions that can be raised philosophically are such that the believer already holds a position on the answers to them from his religious faith. How then can he be thought to be ready to follow the argument whither it listeth, as an objector might put it? Furthermore, the inquiries in which the believer who philosophizes engages will often indicate his

religious interests. When such observations turn into objections, perhaps into the accusation that a believer cannot be a proper philosopher, there is often an unexamined notion of what a proper philosopher looks like. The proper philosopher may be thought to be someone—perhaps merely some mind—without antecedents or history who first comes to consciousness posing a philosophical question the answer to which is pursued without prejudice. But of course no human being and thus no philosopher is pure reason, mind alone, without previous history as he embarks on the task of philosophizing. One has necessarily knocked about in the world for a long time before he signs up for Philosophy. He has at hand or rattling around in his mind all kinds of ready responses to situations and questions. He very likely engaged in some kind of inquiry about whether or not to begin the formal study of philosophy in the first place. This may be acknowledged, but with the proviso that step one in the pursuit of philosophy is to rid the mind of all such antecedents. They must be put in the dock, put in brackets, placed in doubt, regarded with suspicion. Only after appropriate epistemological cleansing is the mind equipped to make its first warranted knowledge claim. Knowledge thus becomes a deliverance of philosophy, a product of philosophizing. Outside of philosophy there is no knowledge. The preceding paragraph has been meant to capture the salient note of much modern philosophy since Descartes. Philosophy is first of all a search for defensible knowledge claims, and for the method according to which it will be found. As opposed to what? As opposed to the view of philosophy described in paragraph 2, Thomas understands philosophizing to depend upon antecedent knowledge, to proceed from it, and to be unintelligible unless, in its sophisticated modes, it can be traced back to the common truths known to all. The pre-philosophical—I refer to the formal study of philosophy—outlook of the believer will be characterizable in a given way, a way suggested above. It is more difficult to characterize the pre-philosophical attitudes and beliefs out of which the non-believer philosophizes. Let us imagine that he holds in a more or less unexamined way that all events, including thinking, are physical events. If as a philosopher he should happen take up the question of the immortality of the soul, he is going to regard with suspicion those classical proofs which rely on an analysis of thinking as a non-physical process. The Christian, on the other hand, will be well-disposed towards efforts to prove the immortality of the human soul and will accordingly approach descriptions of thinking as non-physical sympathetically. He is unlikely to view with equanimity any claim that for human beings death is the utter end. The importance of this is that a believer runs the risk of accepting bad proofs of the non-physical character of thinking and thus of the human soul. On the other hand, a committed physicalist may be too quick to accept a bad proof that thinking is just a physical process. He may be just as likely to run the risk of accepting bad proofs of the entirely physical character of thought as is the believer of the opposed claim. Such antecedent stances are often the reason why philosophical agreement is so hard to reach. Does it make it impossible? Do such considerations destroy any hope of philosophical objectivity on either side? Surely not in principle. Believers and non-believers should be able to agree on what counts as a good proof in a given area even if they expect different results from such a proof. Thinking either is or is not merely a physical process and antecedent expectations do not settle the question, however much they influence the pursuit of that objective resolution. But the important point is that antecedent dispositions and expectations are the common condition of philosophers, believers and unbelievers alike. Of course believers hold that they have an advantage here, since the antecedents that influence them are revealed truths, not just hearsay, received opinion, the zeitgeist, or prejudice. In addition they may be much more likely to be aware of and acknowledge those antecedents, insofar as they are explicitly held and inquired into.

**Chapter 8 : The Task of Philosophy – “ Becoming Integral: Notes on Planetary Coexistence**

*Along with that considerable practical problem, combining philosophers with rulers sounds as if it would violate the Republic's rule that each person is best suited to performing a single task or job.*

The extant sources agree that Socrates was profoundly ugly, resembling a satyr more than a man – and resembling not at all the statues that turned up later in ancient times and now grace Internet sites and the covers of books. He had wide-set, bulging eyes that darted sideways and enabled him, like a crab, to see not only what was straight ahead, but what was beside him as well; a flat, upturned nose with flaring nostrils; and large fleshy lips like an ass. Socrates let his hair grow long, Spartan-style even while Athens and Sparta were at war, and went about barefoot and unwashed, carrying a stick and looking arrogant. Something was peculiar about his gait as well, sometimes described as a swagger so intimidating that enemy soldiers kept their distance. He was impervious to the effects of alcohol and cold weather, but this made him an object of suspicion to his fellow soldiers on campaign. We can safely assume an average height since no one mentions it at all, and a strong build, given the active life he appears to have led. Against the iconic tradition of a pot-belly, Socrates and his companions are described as going hungry Aristophanes, *Birds* – In the late fifth century B. Although many citizens lived by their labor in a wide variety of occupations, they were expected to spend much of their leisure time, if they had any, busying themselves with the affairs of the city. Other forms of higher education were also known in Athens: One of the things that seemed strange about Socrates is that he neither labored to earn a living, nor participated voluntarily in affairs of state. Rather, he embraced poverty and, although youths of the city kept company with him and imitated him, Socrates adamantly insisted he was not a teacher Plato, *Apology* 33a – b and refused all his life to take money for what he did. The strangeness of this behavior is mitigated by the image then current of teachers and students: Because Socrates was no transmitter of information that others were passively to receive, he resists the comparison to teachers. Rather, he helped others recognize on their own what is real, true, and good Plato, *Meno*, *Theaetetus* – a new, and thus suspect, approach to education. He was known for confusing, stinging and stunning his conversation partners into the unpleasant experience of realizing their own ignorance, a state sometimes superseded by genuine intellectual curiosity. Socrates claimed to have learned rhetoric from Aspasia of Miletus, the de facto spouse of Pericles Plato, *Menexenus*; and to have learned erotics from the priestess Diotima of Mantinea Plato, *Symposium*. Socrates was unconventional in a related respect. Athenian citizen males of the upper social classes did not marry until they were at least thirty, and Athenian females were poorly educated and kept sequestered until puberty, when they were given in marriage by their fathers. It was assumed among Athenians that mature men would find youths sexually attractive, and such relationships were conventionally viewed as beneficial to both parties by family and friends alike. A degree of hypocrisy or denial, however, was implied by the arrangement: What was odd about Socrates is that, although he was no exception to the rule of finding youths attractive Plato, *Charmides* d, *Protagoras* a – b; Xenophon, *Symposium* 4. Socrates also acknowledged a rather strange personal phenomenon, a daimonion or internal voice that prohibited his doing certain things, some trivial and some important, often unrelated to matters of right and wrong thus not to be confused with the popular notions of a superego or a conscience. The implication that he was guided by something he regarded as divine or semi-divine was all the more reason for other Athenians to be suspicious of Socrates. Socrates was usually to be found in the marketplace and other public areas, conversing with a variety of different people – young and old, male and female, slave and free, rich and poor – that is, with virtually anyone he could persuade to join with him in his question-and-answer mode of probing serious matters. Socrates pursued this task single-mindedly, questioning people about what matters most, e. He did this regardless of whether his respondents wanted to be questioned or resisted him. Who was Socrates really? The difficulties are increased because all those who knew and wrote about Socrates lived before any standardization of modern categories of, or sensibilities about, what constitutes historical accuracy or poetic license. All authors present their own interpretations of the personalities and lives of their characters, whether they mean to or not, whether they write fiction or biography or philosophy if the philosophy they write has

characters, so other criteria must be introduced for deciding among the contending views of who Socrates really was. One thing is certain about the historical Socrates: His comedy, *Clouds*, was produced in when the other two writers of our extant sources, Xenophon and Plato, were infants. In the play, the character Socrates heads a Think-o-Rama in which young men study the natural world, from insects to stars, and study slick argumentative techniques as well, lacking all respect for the Athenian sense of propriety. The actor wearing the mask of Socrates makes fun of the traditional gods of Athens lines 48, 24, mimicked later by the young protagonist, and gives naturalistic explanations of phenomena Athenians viewed as divinely directed lines 33; cf. *Theaetetus* e, d, a; *Phaedo* 96a. Worst of all, he teaches dishonest techniques for avoiding repayment of debt lines 6 and encourages young men to beat their parents into submission lines 6. Thus, what had seemed comical a quarter century earlier, Socrates hanging in a basket on-stage, talking nonsense, was ominous in memory by then. Comedy by its very nature is a tricky source for information about anyone. A good reason to believe that the representation of Socrates is not merely comic exaggeration but systematically misleading is that *Clouds* amalgamates in one character, Socrates, features now well known to be unique to other particular fifth-century intellectuals Dover, xxxii-lvii. That Socrates eschewed any earning potential in philosophy does not seem to have been significant to the great writer of comedies. Aristophanes did not stop accusing Socrates in when *Clouds* placed third behind another play in which Socrates was mentioned as barefoot; rather, he soon began writing a revision, which he published but never produced. Aristophanes appears to have given up on reviving *Clouds* in about 400, but his attacks on Socrates continued. Xenophon was a practical man whose ability to recognize philosophical issues is almost imperceptible, so it is plausible that his Socrates appears as such a practical and helpful advisor because that is the side of Socrates Xenophon witnessed. Although Xenophon tends to moralize and does not follow the superior conventions introduced by Thucydides, still it is sometimes argued that, having had no philosophical axes to grind, Xenophon may have presented a more accurate portrait of Socrates than Plato does. But two considerations have always weakened that claim: He left Athens in on an expedition to Persia and, for a variety of reasons mercenary service for Thracians and Spartans; exile, never resided in Athens again. And now a third is in order. Plato was about twenty-five when Socrates was tried and executed, and had probably known the old man most of his life. The extant sources agree that Socrates was often to be found where youths of the city spent their time. The dialogues have dramatic dates that fall into place as one learns more about their characters and, despite incidental anachronisms, it turns out that there is more realism in the dialogues than most have suspected. It does not follow, however, that Plato represented the views and methods of Socrates or anyone, for that matter as he recalled them, much less as they were originally uttered. There are a number of cautions and caveats that should be in place from the start. Even when a specific festival or other reference fixes the season or month of a dialogue, or birth of a character, one should imagine a margin of error. Although it becomes obnoxious to use circa or plus-minus everywhere, the ancients did not require or desire contemporary precision in these matters. All the children born during a full year, for example, had the same nominal birthday, accounting for the conversation at *Lysis* b, odd by contemporary standards, in which two boys disagree about who is the elder. This is a way of asking a popular question, Why do history of philosophy? One might reply that our study of some of our philosophical predecessors is intrinsically valuable, philosophically enlightening and satisfying. The truly great philosophers, and Plato was one of them, are still capable of becoming our companions in philosophical conversation, our dialectical partners. Because he addressed timeless, universal, fundamental questions with insight and intelligence, our own understanding of such questions is heightened. That explains Plato, one might say, but where is Socrates in this picture? Is he interesting merely as a predecessor to Plato? That again is the Socratic problem. Inconsistencies among the dialogues seem to demand explanation, though not all philosophers have thought so Shorey. Most famously, the *Parmenides* attacks various theories of forms that the *Republic*, *Symposium*, and *Phaedo* develop and defend. In some dialogues e. There are differences on smaller matters as well. A related problem is that some of the dialogues appear to develop positions familiar from other philosophical traditions e. Three centuries of efforts to solve the Socratic problem are summarized in the following supplementary document: Contemporary efforts recycle bits and pieces including the failures of these older attempts. The

Twentieth Century Until relatively recently in modern times, it was hoped that confident elimination of what could be ascribed purely to Socrates would leave standing a coherent set of doctrines attributable to Plato who appears nowhere in the dialogues as a speaker. Many philosophers, inspired by the nineteenth century scholar Eduard Zeller, expect the greatest philosophers to promote grand, impenetrable schemes. Nothing of the sort was possible for Socrates, so it remained for Plato to be assigned all the positive doctrines that could be extracted from the dialogues. In the latter half of the twentieth century, however, there was a resurgence of interest in who Socrates was and what his own views and methods were. The result is a narrower, but no less contentious, Socratic problem. Two strands of interpretation dominated views of Socrates in the twentieth century Griswold ; Klagge and Smith Although there has been some healthy cross-pollination and growth since the mid s, the two were so hostile to one another for so long that the bulk of the secondary literature on Socrates, including translations peculiar to each, still divides into two camps, hardly reading one another: The literary-contextual study of Socrates, like hermeneutics more generally, uses the tools of literary criticismâ€”typically interpreting one complete dialogue at a time; its European origins are traced to Heidegger and earlier to Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. The analytic study of Socrates, like analytic philosophy more generally, is fueled by the arguments in the textsâ€”typically addressing a single argument or set of arguments, whether in a single text or across texts; its origins are in the Anglo-American philosophical tradition. Hans-Georg Gadamer â€” was the doyen of the hermeneutic strand, and Gregory Vlastos â€” of the analytic. Thus terms, arguments, characters, and in fact all elements in the dialogues should be addressed in their literary context. For both varieties of contextualism, the Platonic dialogues are like a brilliant constellation whose separate stars naturally require separate focus. Marking the maturity of the literary contextualist tradition in the early twenty-first century is a greater diversity of approaches and an attempt to be more internally critical see Hyland Analytic developmentalism[ 6 ] Beginning in the s, Vlastos , 45â€”80 recommended a set of mutually supportive premises that together provide a plausible framework in the analytic tradition for Socratic philosophy as a pursuit distinct from Platonic philosophy. The evidence Vlastos uses varies for this claim, but is of several types: Finally, Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates only what Plato himself believes at the time he writes each dialogue. The result of applying the premises is a firm list contested, of course, by others of ten theses held by Socrates, all of which are incompatible with the corresponding ten theses held by Plato , 47â€” Many analytic ancient philosophers in the late twentieth century mined the gold Vlastos had uncovered, and many of those who were productive in the developmentalist vein in the early days went on to constructive work of their own see Bibliography. To use them in that way is to announce in advance the results of a certain interpretation of the dialogues and to canonize that interpretation under the guise of a presumably objective order of compositionâ€”when in fact no such order is objectively known. And it thereby risks prejudicing an unwary reader against the fresh, individual reading that these works demand. As in any peace agreement, it takes some time for all the combatants to accept that the conflict has endedâ€”but that is where we are. In short, one is now more free to answer, Who was Socrates really? In the smaller column on the right are dates of major events and persons familiar from fifth century Athenian history. Although the dates are as precise as allowed by the facts, some are estimated and controversial Nails When Socrates was born in , a Persian invasion had been decisively repulsed at Plataea, and the Delian League that would grow into the Athenian empire had already been formed. Assuming that his stoneworker father, Sophroniscus, kept to the conventions, he carried the infant around the hearth, thereby formally admitting him into the family, five days after he was born, named him on the tenth day, presented him to his phratry a regional hereditary association and took responsibility for socializing him into the various institutions proper to an Athenian male. Athens was a city of numerous festivals, competitions, and celebrations, including the Panathenaea which attracted visitors to the city from throughout the Mediterranean. Like the Olympics, the Panathenaea was celebrated with special splendor at four-year intervals. After an initial battle, a long siege reduced the population to cannibalism before it surrendered Thucydides 2. As the army made its way home, it engaged in battle near Spartolus and suffered heavy losses Thucydides 2.

**Chapter 9 : Saint Thomas Aquinas (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)**

*Every era faces particular psychological challenges, thought Nietzsche, and it is the task of the philosopher to identify, and help solve, these. For Nietzsche, the 19th century was reeling under the impact of two developments: Mass Democracy and Atheism.*

Even admitting that it has been established that all theorems can be deduced by purely analytical processes, by simple logical combinations of a finite number of axioms, and that these axioms are nothing but conventions, the philosopher would still retain the right to seek the origin of these conventions, and to ask why they were judged preferable to the contrary conventions. The pragmatist position to be developed will lead to an essentially similar, but more complete and clear point of view. A philosopher, however, wants to understand why exactly these axioms and no other were chosen. In particular, the philosopher is concerned with the question whether the chosen axioms actually grasp the intended model. This question is justified since formal definitions are not automatically sufficient to grasp the intention of a concept; at the same time, the question is methodologically very hard, since ultimately a concept is available in mathematical proof only by a formal explication. At any rate, it becomes clear that the task of the philosopher is related to a criterion problem. It is a fact of experience that one can be honest about such matters! It was seldom the work of professional philosophers and often the byproduct of the actual mathematical work to point out such discrepancies. Following Kant, one defines the task of epistemology thus: It is meant that we have an insight into the truth of propositions about the objects we can then speak about the propositions as facts ; and epistemology asks what are the conditions for the possibility of such an insight. Hence, epistemology is not concerned with what objects are ontology , but with what and how we can know about them ways of access. This notwithstanding, both things are intimately related, especially, in the Peircean stream of pragmatist philosophy. The 19th century in particular Helmholtz stressed against Kant the importance of physiological conditions for this access to objects. Nevertheless, epistemology is concerned with logic and not with the brain. Pragmatism puts the accent on the means of cognition " to which also the brain belongs. Kant in his epistemology stressed that the object depends on the subject, or, more precisely, that the cognition of an object depends on the means of cognition used by the subject. For him, the decisive means of cognition was reason; thus, his epistemology was to a large degree critique of reason. Other philosophers disagreed about this special role of reason but shared the view that the task of philosophy is to criticise the means of cognition. Reichenbach decomposes the task of epistemology into different parts: Indeed, the question why just certain axioms and no others were chosen is obviously a question concerning the guiding principles of cognition: Which definitions should we make? Which theorems should we try to prove? Epistemology, has all the task to evoke these criteria " used but not evoked by the researchers themselves. For after all, these criteria cannot be without effect on the conditions for the possibility of cognition of the objects which one has decided to consider. In turn, the conditions for this possibility in general determine the range of objects from which one has to choose. However, such an epistemology has not the task to resolve the criterion problem normatively that means to prescribe for the scientist which choices he has to make.