Socrates Part I



Socrates

- No works
 - Sources:
 - Aristophanes
 - Xenophone
 - Aristotle
 - Plato
 - http://www.philosophypages.com/ph/socr.htm

Plato's Socrates

- Early dialogues
 - Negative outcome: ignorance
- Middle Dialogues: positive (Plato's own views)
- Later Dialogues: Lesser role

Life

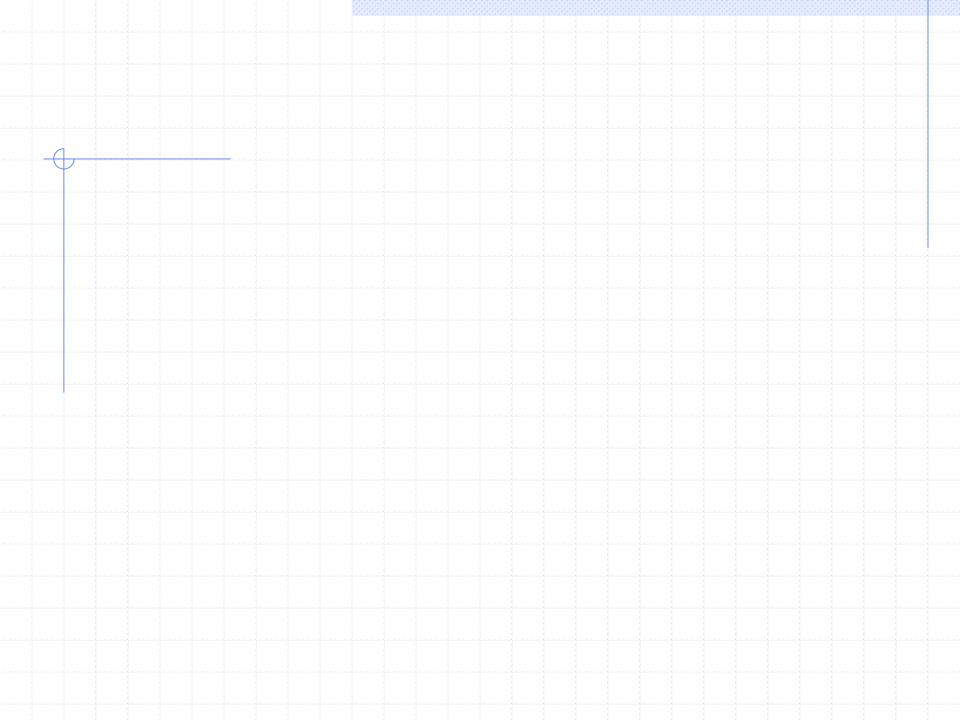
- ◆470/469BC
- Mother was a midwife: maieutic method
 - Recognize bastards
- Ugly
- Humor
- Method: question and answer



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Alcibiades' Socrates

- Cold
- Army
- Drink
- Sex: love make the beloved more virtuous
 - Can't learn self-control if it isn't shown



Is He a Sophist?

- Same Circles
- Same Topics (Arete)
- Differences:
 - Doesn't Teach
 - Takes no pay
 - Highest reward: Good Friend

Goals

- Socrates: Advance Truth
- Sophists: Victory

Dialectic

- Conversation
- Agreement is not always best
- Character
 - Better to be refuted than to refute
 - Saved from error/ ignorance

Requirements for Conversation

- Open and honest
- Not personally wedded to beliefs
- Rejects: wishy-washiness and dogmatism
- If reputation, wealth, winning, being right are more important then you are not a good candidate

What Socrates Knows

- Combination of Conviction and Ignorance
 - We ought to search for the truth
 - Leads to moral improvement
 - Relativism leads to idleness and cowardice

What Socrates Knows II

- Human excellence is knowledge
 - What to do and how to do it
 - Techne Applied Knowledge
 - If neither Socrates nor the Sophists teach it is it knowledge then?

Wrongdoing is due to Ignorance

- To know the right is to do the right
- We always act for some good
- One doesn't knowingly do evil
- We believe to be good what in fact is evil
- We believe the false: ignorance
- Evil is due to ignorance
- Euripides: Phaedra: we know the good but don't do it (laziness, value some pleasure more)

What is most Important

- Care for the soul
- Better to suffer injustice then to do be unjust to another
- A Good person can not be harmed in life or death