

This podcast contains a performance of the *Euthydemus* in an English adaptation. The idea behind it was to have a group of faculty and students impersonate Plato's characters but in their own contemporary setting. The group was assembled at Princeton University in 1958, where I made the English version. In Plato's original the main characters are Socrates and two sophists, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, who are visitors to Athens. Socrates here becomes Professor Carl Hempel, at that time doyen of the Princeton Philosophy Department, and the sophists become John Lucas and Richard Sykes who (like me) were young British visitors lodged in the university's Graduate College and pursuing studies in philosophy. Plato's other parts are for interested bystanders, and they get represented here by Professor C.C. Pratt of the Princeton Psychology Department as Socrates' crony Crito, and Donald Clemons, another Graduate College resident (he was studying chemical engineering) as the unconvinced outsider Ctesippus. The sixth and last character, Cleinias, who is Ctesippus' inamorato, was transformed for the sake of verisimilitude into a young woman, but that part could not be taken by a Princeton student because in those days the place was all male. What we did was to recruit the wife of a faculty member to play the part under the assumed name of 'Valerie Stevens'.

The performance took place on 10 April 1958 and was recorded on to a reel-to-reel tape recorder. Its tape has survived, and thanks to modern wizardry has been converted through many stages into what – if you turn up the sound – you will hear. Many have helped in the process of conversion, but acknowledgement and grateful thanks are due especially to Andy Davies of the Oxford Philosophy Faculty, and others at the Oxford University Computing Services where the final product was made. Its age must excuse the sound quality of what emerges from their work. Of the six performers two are no longer alive, but from the others (with two of whom I am happily still in regular contact) it has been possible to gain consent for this project. (It may be pertinent to add that on 14 March 1968 a second performance was arranged at Exeter College, Oxford, adapted for a new cast and setting with the help of my pupil Michael Preston; that performance was recorded too, but its tape is unreadable.)

The version's aim was to convey the intellectual level of Plato's dialogue which, helped along by Socratic 'irony', is often low and declines gradually (but it is hard to say just where) into deliberate badinage. It is no good whatsoever as a version for the study of Plato's thought, for three reasons: the translations that were adopted of some of his key philosophical vocabulary, e.g. *epistasthai*, *adikia*, *esti*, can only be described as carefree (I would certainly change them now); his examples are often distorted for 20th-century effect (e.g. sputnik – then a few months old, Law Professors at the end, and many other instances); and the dramatic purpose has sometimes led to mere paraphrase.

The podcast was made in 2011, but what you have here is a **2017 update**, prompted by discovery of a copy of the typescript from which the 1958 performers read. I had thought that all copies were lost until in 2016 the photocopy of one of them reached me through the kindness of Stephen Menn. That has now been edited and inserted into the podcast as 'Euthydemus English text'. By printing it (40 pages) anyone who chooses may have the words that were spoken in front of them while they listen. (Editing Menn's text did involve a compromise which ought to be confessed, because in the process another copy of the original typescript, once misplaced, turned up in my own records. That copy differs from Menn's in containing contemporary corrections in my own hand. Shirking minute-by-minute collation with the audio, which alone would settle what was in the performers' hands, I have boldly adopted these corrections; and I hope that listeners will not mind if discrepancies turn up now and again. The original pagination has been kept exactly.)

A final preliminary: as you start listening you may be perplexed about Professor Pratt.

The explanation is that he comes in as part of a framework, in which he converses with Professor Hempel at the beginning, middle and end of the dialogue. In between these conversations Hempel—that is, Socrates—switches to reporting in direct speech the substance of the dialogue which he had heard and joined among the other characters. Professor Pratt speaks first.

Christopher Kirwan
Oxford, January 2017

Characters in order of their appearance:

Professor C.C. Pratt	reads the part of	Crito, a crony of Socrates
Professor Carl Hempel	reads the part of	Socrates
John Lucas	reads the part of	Euthydemus, a sophist
Donald Clemons	reads the part of	Ctesippus, a young man
Richard Sykes	reads the part of	Dionysodorus, a sophist
Carlotta Sherwood (as Valerie Stevens)	reads the part of	Cleinias, Ctesippus' beloved

The performance lasts about 70 minutes. In the podcast its recording is divided into tracks of between 3 and 8 minutes each; click to get the starting place you want. Page and section numbers such as '271a' are from an early printed edition by Stephanus, and are listed because they will be found in any modern text of Plato's Greek and also in translations including the podcast's own 'Euthydemus English text' (see above). I repeat the list of tracks here, for any who want to print it.

Track 1	271a 1 – 272d. 6	Pratt asks Hempel about the sophists, Hempel begins to report his encounter with them.
Track 2	272d 7 – 275b 4	Hempel inquires into the sophists' profession.
Track 3	275b 5 – 278e 1	The sophists set to work on Valerie: is learning possible?
Track 4	278e 2 – 282d 3	Hempel questions Valerie: intelligence (sophia) alone is really good.
Track 5	282d 4 – 285a 1	The sophists tackle Hempel; Clemons is nettled.
Track 6	285a 2 – 288b 2	More with Clemons: falsehood is impossible.
Track 7	288b 3 – 290d 8	Hempel resumes with Valerie: which mastery (episteme) is best?
Track 8	290e 1 – 293a 9	Hempel reports to Pratt, and then the reported encounter resumes.
Track 9	293b 1– 296e 3	Hempel, the sophists, Clemons: being competent (epistemon; have ability = epistasthai).
Track 10	296e 4 – 300d 9	The same participants: identity and predication.
Track 11	300e 1 – 304b 5	Hempel is enmeshed.
Track 12	304b 6 – end	Hempel's final comments to Pratt.