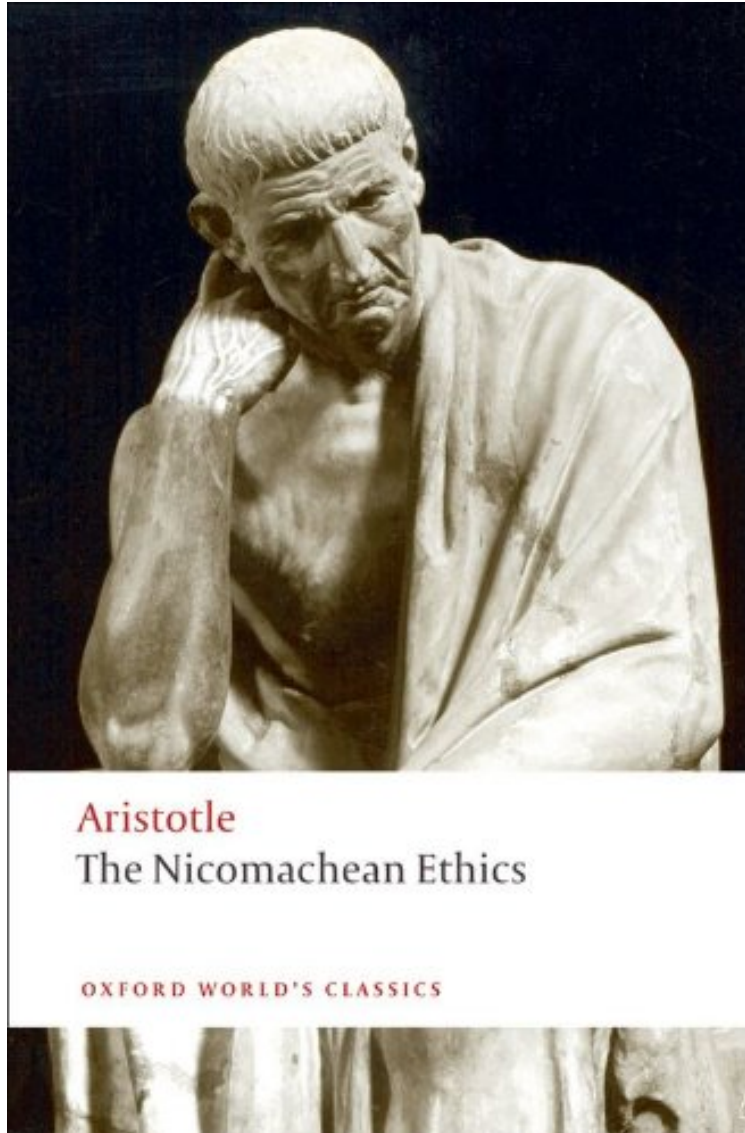


(Mobile pdf) The Nicomachean Ethics (Oxford World's Classics)

## The Nicomachean Ethics (Oxford World's Classics)

Von David Ross, Lesley Brown  
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**Von David Ross, Lesley Brown : The Nicomachean Ethics (Oxford World's Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Nicomachean Ethics (Oxford World's Classics):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen4 von 4 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Doing the right thing...Von FrKurt MessickAristotle was a philosopher in search of the chief good for human beings. This chief good is eudaimonia, which is often translated as 'happiness' (but can also be translated as 'thriving' or

'flourishing'). Aristotle sees pleasure, honour and virtue as significant 'wants' for people, and then argues that virtue is the most important of these. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle makes the claim that happiness is something which is both precious and final. This seems to be so because it is a first principle or ultimate starting point. For, it is for the sake of happiness that we do everything else, and we regard the cause of all good things to be precious and divine. Moreover, since happiness is an activity of the soul in accordance with complete and perfect virtue, it is necessary to consider virtue, as this will be the best way of studying happiness. How many of us today speak of happiness and virtue in the same breath? Aristotle's work in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is considered one of his greatest achievements, and by extension, one of the greatest pieces of philosophy from the ancient world. When the framers of the American Declaration of Independence were thinking of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, there is little doubt they had an acquaintance with Aristotle's work connecting happiness, virtue, and ethics together. When one thinks of ethical ideas such as an avoidance of extremes, of taking the tolerant or middle ground, or of taking all things in moderation, one is tapping into Aristotle's ideas. It is in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that Aristotle proposes the Doctrine of the Mean - he states that virtue is a 'mean state', that is, it aims for the mean or middle ground. However, Aristotle is often misquoted and misinterpreted here, for he very quickly in the text disallows the idea of the mean to be applied in all cases. There are things, actions and emotions, that do not allow the mean state. Thus, Aristotle tends to view virtue as a relative state, making the analogy with food - for some, two pounds of meat might be too much food, but for others, it might be too little. The mean exists between the state of deficiency, too little, and excessiveness, too much. Aristotle proposes many different examples of virtues and vices, together with their mean states. With regard to money, being stingy and being illiberal with generosity are the extremes, the one deficient and the other excessive. The mean state here would be liberality and generosity, a willingness to buy and to give, but not to extremes. Anger, too, is highlighted as having a deficient state (too much passivity), an excessive state (too much passion) and a mean state (a gentleness but firmness with regard to emotions). Aristotle states that one of the difficulties with leading a virtuous life is that it takes a person of science to find the mean between the extremes (or, in some cases, Aristotle uses the image of a circle, the scientist finding the centre). Many of us, being imperfect humans, err on one side or the other, choosing in Aristotle's words, the lesser of two evils. Aristotle's wording here, that a scientist is the only one fully capable of virtue, has a different meaning for scientist - this is a pre-modern, pre-Enlightenment view; for Aristotle, the person of science is one who is capable of observation and calculation, and this can take many different forms. Aristotle uses different kinds of argumentation in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. He uses a dialectical method, as well as a functional method. In the dialectical method, there are opposing ideas held in tension, whose interactions against each other yield a result - this is often how the mean between extremes is derived. However, there are other times that Aristotle seems to prefer a more direct, functional approach. Both of these methods lead to the same understanding for Aristotle's sense of the rational - that humanity's highest or final good is happiness. There is a discussion of the human soul (for this is where virtue and happiness reside). Aristotle argues that virtue is not a natural state; we are not born with nor do we acquire through any natural processes virtue, but rather through 'habitation', an embedding process or enculturation that makes these a part of our soul. However, it is not sufficient for Aristotle's virtue that one merely function as a virtuous person or that virtuous things be done. This is not a skill, but rather an art, and to be virtuous, one must live virtuously and act virtuously with intention as well as form. Of course, one of the implications here is that virtue is a quantifiable thing, that periodically resurfaces in later philosophies. How do we calculate virtue? This is a difficult question, and not one that Aristotle answers in any definitive way. However, more important than this is the key difference that Aristotle displayed setting himself apart from his tutor Plato; rather than seeing the possession of 'the good' or 'virtue' as the highest ideal, Aristotle is concerned with the practical aspects, the ethics of this. Based on Aristotle's lectures in Athens in the fourth century BCE, this remains one of the most important works on ethical and moral philosophy in history. 2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. The Oxford edition is great. Von Ein Kunde The Oxford edition (ISBN: 019283407X) is great, but stay away from the Dover Thrift edition and the Prometheus editions (those editions I give one star). Aristotle's book is essential reading for the student of the history of Ethics, though it is certainly not the first ethical system in the history of philosophy. About the Dover edition, not all of the words are translated in the text, which is rather annoying for anyone with no knowledge of the ancient Greek language. Also, it is far from an easy read, even in portions that are completely translated. About the Prometheus edition, it is a reprint of the Wellدون translation, but without his introduction or his index (Prometheus seems to be trying to save a little money, but it makes it much less valuable.) Also, Prometheus renumbered the pages WITHOUT renumbering the references in the margins (if you already purchased this poorly made edition, add 8 to all of the pages in the marginal notes). But wait, there is more that is wrong with this edition! Prometheus omitted a note that explains that the pages referred to in the footnotes are to a different standard edition, so don't bother trying to find those references within the book. All in all, a disgraceful job of reprinting the book. I advise staying away from Prometheus editions whenever possible; see the reviews of Hobbes' *Leviathan* for another example of their efforts. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Doing the right thing Von Fr Kurt Messick Aristotle was a philosopher in search of the chief good for human beings. This chief good is eudaimonia, which is often translated as 'happiness' (but can also be translated as 'thriving' or 'flourishing'). Aristotle sees pleasure, honour and virtue as significant 'wants' for

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Kurzbeschreibung 'Happiness, then, is the best, noblest, and most pleasant thing in the world.' In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle's guiding question is: what is the best thing for a human being? His answer is happiness, but he means, not something we feel, but rather a specially good kind of life. Happiness is made up of activities in which we use the best human capacities, both ones that contribute to our flourishing as members of a community, and ones that allow us to engage in god-like contemplation. Contemporary ethical writings on the role and importance of the moral virtues such as courage and justice have drawn inspiration from this work, which also contains important discussions on responsibility for actions, on the nature of practical reasoning, and on friendship and its role in the best life. This new edition retains and lightly revises David Ross's justly admired translation. It also includes a valuable introduction to this seminal work, and notes designed to elucidate Aristotle's arguments. ABOUT THE SERIES: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the widest range of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, helpful notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more. Pressestimmen "Very useful as a cornerstone for our discussion of

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