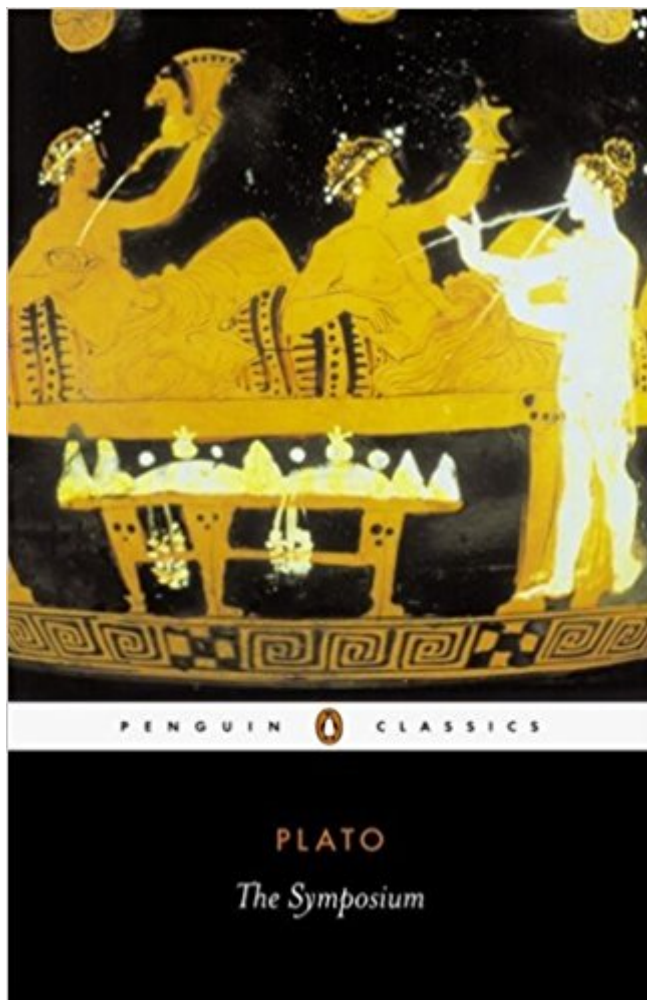


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# The Symposium (Penguin Classics)



## Synopsis

A fascinating discussion on sex, gender, and human instincts, as relevant today as ever. In the course of a lively drinking party, a group of Athenian intellectuals exchange views on eros, or desire. From their conversation emerges a series of subtle reflections on gender roles, sex in society and the sublimation of basic human instincts. The discussion culminates in a radical challenge to conventional views by Plato's mentor, Socrates, who advocates transcendence through spiritual love. The *Symposium* is a deft interweaving of different viewpoints and ideas about the nature of love—as a response to beauty, a cosmic force, a motive for social action and as a means of ethical education. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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## Customer Reviews

Plato (c.427-347 BC) stands with Socrates and Aristotle as one of the shapers of the whole intellectual tradition of the West. He founded the Academy in Athens, the first permanent institution devoted to philosophical research and teaching, and the prototype of all Western universities.

Christopher Gill is a Professor of Ancient Thought at the University of Exeter. He has written widely on ancient philosophy and literature.

Very good translation, with very helpful foreword to set the stage for this composition by Plato.

A great little book. It's a great translation and there's a lot of supplemental material here to help the reader understand the text a bit more, which is always helpful. Although as another reviewer noted, it can be hard to tell just who is speaking at any given moment. But that seems to be a common trend with all translations of Plato. All in all it's a great edition to own and great material to read.

"The Symposium" is one of those books that everyone should read. In it, Plato explores, through a series of speeches, the nature and origins of love and passion. However, the Penguin edition fails to clearly distinguish when one speech begins and one ends. It will be confusing for students studying this work to reference a certain speech; however, the "paragraph markers" in the text are helpful. Also, the text incorporates "end notes," but for lay readers of Greek Literature, footnotes may be more useful.

The symposium is a great book for people out there looking for a good read, I would recommend this book to anyone taking a humanities class.

read this but get a better copy i love plato but this copy of his symposium is very basic wouldn't recommend it unless you need a travel copy

Its light weight is affordable in its price and easy to read but it would be better if those paragraphs are separated and labelled with the name of person as other The Symposium books (such as 'Socrates Dialogue with Agathon' "Diotima's Dialogue with Socrates"), and including each section in the table of content ..

Got this as a gift to a friend and they appreciated it. Guess there are more one could order also.

I can hardly offer a crit of Plato: that would be hubris. The Symposium's words are perfectly clear and therefor this seems to be a good translation. I liked the illustrations but was surprised that more ancient pictures were not used, e.g from Pompeii's murals, as depictions of (a) the different forms of

love and (b) the style of classical feasting. Also I thought the introductory section didn't add much value as it seemed to be more of a rehash of Plato's own words without much explanation or giving contemporary context to the concepts of love, nor of how long these concepts have been in philosophical fashion and their influence on philosophers down the ages. And it seems to me to be clear that the love between mentor and mentored boy is not intended to include erotic love, but that no great fuss is made if it occurs, which is more than can be said for many of the intervening generations' and our own approach.

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