

The charges the men of athens have formed against socrates

[Profession](#), [Philosophers](#)



Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to summarize and critically evaluate Socrates' reply to the charges that he is a wrongdoer who corrupts the youth. In the summary I will present the charges the men of Athens have formed against Socrates regarding the youth and his questioning of Metelus. Also in the summary I will review closely Socrates two replies, specifically the Horse trainer Analogy (HTA) ant the Unintentional Argument (UA). It is my opinion that Socrates arguments fail to disprove the initial charges brought against him. I will evaluate both the HTA and the UA to determine if they refute the charges against Socrates. The Apology is Plato's version of the speech given by Socrates as he defended himself against the charges of corrupting the young, and by not believing in the gods in whom the city believes.

Summary

Socrates is brought to trial and feels he is falsely charged with being a doer of evil who corrupts the youth. The trial takes a different approach when Socrates accuses Meletus (the main spokesperson for this trail) of being the actual doer of evil. Socrates not only accuses Meletus of being the real doer of evil but he also accuses him of being facetious and calling this trial for his own amusement. Socrates didn't stop there, his final accusation is that Meletus is eager to take individuals to court but his appealed purpose is incorrect.

After Socrates accusations, he then begins to question Meletus. He first asks Meletus to pinpoint for everyone who works to improve the youth seeing that Meletus himself is worried with the prosperity of the youth. Meletus gives

several different responds to Socrates initial question. His final answer was, all Athenians excluding Socrates himself help to improve the youth.

Socrates responds to Meletus using the Horse Trainer Analogy. Socrates explained that in the example of horses, only the horse trainers can improve the horses. On the other hand anyone who is not a horse trainer will hurt the horses if they try to train them. Socrates believes this analogy is true of all animals-including, likely the youth of Athens. Socrates then states that if he is a corrupter of the youth that one person will not affect their well-being seeing that he is the only sole corrupting influence in the city. Socrates finishes by arguing that Meletus is disinterested in the youth and his only purpose is to bring him to court on any charge.

Once Socrates concluded the Horse Trainer Analogy he then presents the Unintentional Argument. Socrates once again leads Meleus through a sequence of questions. Meletus begins to agree with some of the questions ask by Socrates. Meletus agrees that it is better to live in the midst of decent people rather than immoral people. This is because decent people help their fellows while immoral people hurt them. Meletus also agrees people desire to be helped by others rather than harmed this is because no one enjoys to be harmed. Meletus firmly believes that Socrates projected to corrupt the youth. Socrates then retells Meletus of his prior statement that decent people help their fellows while immoral people hurt them. Socrates further explain that he is fully aware if he make those around him immoral, those immoral people will do harm to him. Socrates wraps up his argument by once again denying corrupting the young men of Athens and if by any chance he did so,

he had no malicious intent behind it. Socrates believes before calling a trial Meletus should have warned him of his unintentional errors so that he could correct his actions. Nonetheless, Socrates claims Meletus did not inform him and instead brought him to court to be disciplined. Due to this Socrates draws the same conclusion, that Meletus is not worried by the actual matter of the youth.

Argument

While pleading his case to the jury Socrates stated an analogy and an argument. Socrates is originally charged with corrupting the youth. Socrates chooses to adjust his charges twice. By using the Horse Trainer Analogy Socrates first adjusts his charges from being a corrupter of the youth to being the sole corrupter of the youth. The Unintentional Argument came next. His original charges of being the corruptor of the youth he once again modified to being an intentional corruptor of the youth. All Socrates replies to his charges will be assessed in terms of how effectively they refute his charges.

The Horse Trainer Analogy is a pretty logical analogy. Just as the youth, horses are in need of training to learn and to understand what to do. When first born, just as a child, a horse has no knowledge on what's right and what's wrong. In order for both children and horses to learn and receive a better understanding they need a trainer. The trainer must first be experienced in the areas they are offering training in order to successfully help those being trained. For example you wouldn't expect a person who does not know how to read to teach a group of students reading skills.

Although there are a lot of experienced trainers, the inexperienced range larger in numbers. Those who are inexperienced can be very damaging towards those they influence. If you cannot properly teach the skill such as the one stated in my example reading to a group of students you shouldn't offer to do so because the skill becomes a never ending cycle done incorrectly.

Though it may seem odd to compare a human to an animal the HTA displays more similarities between the two then most realized. There is not enough significant unlikeness to make this make this a flawed argument. It is understood that humans and animals are two different species but that does not mean they cannot be similar. The HTA stands firm and young humans and young horses are not different in ways that are relevant to the analogy.

In conclusion the HTA analogy successfully refutes the original charges brought against Socrates. Socrates so rationally explained how the HTA and the youth both have very much in common. Just as with the original charge the modified argument also successfully refutes the charges of Socrates being the sole corruptor of the youth. Although Socrates is brought to trial alone in regards to these charges it has not been proven that Socrates alone is the only person doing harm to the youth.

The Unintentional Argument on the other hand unlike the Horse Trainer Analogy is flawed. Granted, Socrates main point in the UA makes sense when you think of it. It puts you in the state of mind of the golden rule do unto others as you would have done unto you. You would think if one does badly

to another intentional that in return they will probably do harm to them. However that is not always the case. In some cases good people do good things and bad people do bad things but those roles can be easily shifted. Various examples throughout history can argue the complete opposite of Socrates' claim.

Socrates claims that he has not corrupted the youth because based on the principle of reciprocity if he did in return he would get the same treatment back he has given.

First, consider slavery. During slavery slave masters did physical and mental harm to their slaves. Slavery lasted various years and not once did a slave master endure the same treatment slaves did. Although over the time period of slavery many slaves did attempt to run away none turned on their masters.

Next, consider some political leaders such as Fidel Castro, Robert Mugabe and Vladimir Lenin. These men unmistakably corrupted their followers. For example, Fidel Castro restricted any non-communist countries from entering Cuba and he killed others for not thinking his way. Robert Mugabe orchestrated the killing of over 20,000 civilians because he did not receive any votes in a certain province. Mugabe also bulldozed any village that voiced dissent against him. Vladimir Lenin instituted the Red Terror or the systematic elimination of millions of people, including members of his own political party. In spite of the corruption caused by these men, their followers remained devoted and none of these men were harmed by those they corrupted.

Taking these examples into consideration, it is obvious that one can corrupt others and escape being affected. Since Socrates argument claims he knows if he does harm he will be harmed the argument is enfeebled. In many cases Socrates could do just as slave owners, Castro, Mugabe and Lenin did and remain unharmed.

Socrates UA failed to refute both the original and modified charges. First the original charges that Socrates corrupted the youth with no reference to intent. Socrates has still failed to show that he did not corrupt them.

Although Socrates has proven that it is a possibility that he was unaware of corrupting the youth the original charges still state that Socrates corrupted the youth and the UA fail to change those charges.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to summarize and critically evaluate Socrates' reply to the charges that he is a wrongdoer who corrupts the youth. I presented the charges the men of Athens have formed against Socrates regarding the youth and his questioning of Metelus. Also in the summary I will review closely Socrates two replies, specifically the Horse trainer Analogy (HTA) ant the Unintentional Argument (UA). It is my opinion that Socrates UA fail to disprove the initial charges brought against him. I have evaluated both the HTA and the UA and determine the UA fail to refute the charges against Socrates while the HTA does the opposite. At the end of the trail Socrates is found guilty. Socrates was a wise man who's spirit still lives on.