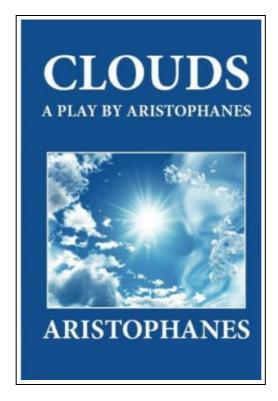
Clouds: A Play by Aristophanes (Paperback)



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Reviews

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(Mr. Kevin Herzog)

CLOUDS: A PLAY BY ARISTOPHANES (PAPERBACK)



Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, United States, 2012. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English. Brand New Book ****** Print on Demand ******. Aristophanes comedy Clouds is a humorous send-up of Greek rationalism, science, atheism, and lawyerly sophistry, as supposedly represented by Socrates and the philosophical and sophistic schools of Athens. Aristophanes portrays intellectuals as an arrogant class of effete and pasty skinned unbelievers. Except for their skills in rhetoric, which help them get around the law and rip people off, their knowledge is of little worldly or practical value. In other words, their heads are figuratively in the clouds (hence the play s title). Clouds is funny in places, but also disturbing in its anti-intellectualism and nostalgia for marshal virtues and doubt-free theism. If Aristophanes were alive today, he might be a caustic, and very conservative, Republican (or even a Fascist). For all this, his play has an undeniably contemporary feel in its critiques of rhetoric, and makes a good primer for reflection on the nihilistic and shameless uses of argumentation (as when oil company representatives engage in blatant sophistries to cast doubt on global warming science). But when, at the end of the play, the lead character (Strepsiades) gleefully burns down the school of Socrates, one is sobered by the reactionary nature of the play. The ending reminds one of humanity s long and tragic history of genocide and iconoclasm (the destroying of a rival ideology s texts, idols, symbols, or buildings). The ending of Aristophanes play clearly suggests that the killing of an entire class of people in his society would be a positive development. It is not without reason that Plato famously attributed Socrates death, at least in part, to the popular prejudice generated against him by Aristophanes Clouds. In short, Aristophanes play is thought-provoking, funny, and sobering....

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