In your essay, explain Socrates’ arguments defending the guardians’ communal lifestyle and the happiness derived from it. Offer counterarguments drawing directly from evidence in *Republic*. What knowledge does the reader gain about the nature of justice and happiness from the example of the guardians? How is this knowledge relevant to Plato’s ultimate goal, “in establishing a city, not looking to make any one group in it outstandingly happy, but to make the whole city so as far as possible” (Plato 420b6).

Plato introduces Kallipolis to set up a utopian city that focuses on knowledge and justice. Within this city, there are three different classes of people: the guardians, the auxiliaries and the producers. He primarily focuses on the guardians, who serve as the leaders through their strong spiritual side of the soul. Plato creates the guardians as a well-balanced group of role models for the city that do not own private property or have families or wealth; furthermore, Plato teaches the reader about the nature of happiness and justice through the guardian’s balance of the soul. I think that Plato’s argument that justice, balance and philosophy leads to happiness is correct because society needs justice, philosophy and balance to properly function.

Plato uses the guardians to demonstrate balance in the soul and the city, which creates justice and happiness individually and in the city as a whole. Plato explains the guardians are a group of men and women that must have the “philosophy, then, and spirit, speed, and strength as well, must all be combine in the nature,” (Plato, Book 2, 376c). He selects philosophy as the main component of the guardians, which shows how Plato uses the city of Kallipolis to defend the philosophy in Athens as philosophy was seen as useless during Plato’s time. This strengthens the argument for the necessity of philosophy in society for happiness. This helps the reader understand justice as Plato sees philosophy as a necessary part for balance and justice, deepening the reader’s understanding of justice and its necessity. His choice to incorporate philosophy also adds onto Plato’s defense of Socrates as *Republic* as it was written after his execution. He incorporates philosophy to help teach the reader about justice as Plato advocates for more justice which his teacher did not receive. Plato then discusses spirit as essential to being a guardian, which is important as it brings in the element of the soul, beginning the teaching of Plato uses the argument for a healthy, balanced soul through the guardians as a means of explaining the importance of justice in society. He inputs speed and strength to allude to the auxiliaries, which relates to idea of balance of the soul to lead to happiness and justice. These elements strengthen the argument for justice and philosophy through necessity for balance. Plato’s choice in the word “combine” again brings up the argument for balance within the soul as the guardians must have balance between spirit, strength and speed. That logic adds onto the teaching that balance in the soul can lead to happiness and justice as he argues that the guardians must have a combination of these different traits. He also includes the word “nature” as an appeal to the people of Ancient Athens as nature and being natural/in touch with it was revered at the time, which adds onto the idea that the natural balance of the soul leads to happiness. Again, this priniciple of balance strengthens the argument for the necessity of justice and philosophy in society. Plato says that the guardians cannot own private property nor have wealth or families; however, through this restrained lifestyle, the city will gain happiness from them balancing the city through their spiritual side of the soul taking control along with being role models/leaders. Plato talks about the specifics of this lifestyle when he says, “…First, none of them should posses any private property that is not wholly necessary. Second, none should have living quarters or storerooms that are not open for all to enter at will…” (101, 416d). Plato chooses the words “first” and “second” in order to indicate that he is listing rules, creating the serious mood. This mood validates his argument as it gives Plato a commanding tone, allowing him to control the conservation and validating the argument for justice in society. This adds onto the reader’s knowledge about justice and happiness as it creates a list of serious conditions that must occur for proper balance to lead to justice and happiness as end-products, showing the necessity of justice in society. Plato argues that private property, wealth and families should not be allowed because “[the guardians] will be household managers and farmers instead of guardians—hostile masters of the other citizens, instead of their allies,” (102, 417a-b). Plato means that the private property will corrupt the guardians, rendering them unable to complete their job within the city. If this balance is thrown off, then the happiness in the city will cease to exist as well as justice, adding knowledge into Plato’s argument. That logic also shows the necessity of balance and justice in society to have happiness. He builds onto this argument that the ownership of private property that the guardians would bring down the utopian principles of Kallipolis when he says, “They will spend their whole lives hating, being hated, plotting and being plotted against…For all these reasons, let’s declare that *that* is how the guardians must be provided with hosing and the rest, and establish it as a law,” (102, 417b). This quote adds onto the previous argument that the ownership of a private life would lead to disruption in balance of the city, leading to injustice and unhappiness. That logic strengthens the argument for justice, philosophy and balance in society. Plato also specifically speak about the balance of the soul symbolized by the city through “…these people were happiest as they are,” (103,420b5). By this, Plato means that the people were happiest when their soul was balanced and pursuing their natural leanings, strengthening the argument for balance, justice and philosophy in society. Plato expanded upon this saying that even though the individual may not always be happy, the overall city was outstandingly happy, which is the goal (103, 420b6). The city in this quote represents the soul and individuals, deepening the understanding of happiness. That logic also adds onto the position that society needs balance, justice and philosophy.

Adeimantus questions Plato’s definition of happiness and justice in the city through the challenging of Socrates that no one could truly be happy if their freedoms and choices are limited. Adeimanuts interrupts Socrates to question him by saying, “How will you defend yourself Socrates…if someone objects that you are not making these men very happy and, furthermore, that it is their own fault that they are not? I mean, the city really belongs to them, yet they derive no good from the city. Others own land, build fine, big houses, acquire furnishings to go along with them, make their own private sacrifices to the gods, entertain guests, and also, of course, posses what you were talking about just now: gold and silver and all the things that those who are going to be blessedly happy are thought to require…” (103, 419a-c). Through this Adeimantus suggests that true justice is not served as the guardians, who are the leaders of the city, are not rewarded by material goods that many covet after and also suggests that because of this, the guardians could not truly be happy. Adeimantus’s counterargument contrasts Socrates’s as he argues for the necessity of worldly goods rather than spiritual balance for happiness in society. That logic adds onto the reader’s knowledge of happiness and justice as Adeimantus offers a counterargument that happiness is also grounded in material and physical desires as well as spiritual health. Socrates rejects Adeimantus’ criticism by saying that justice causes happiness and is necessary in society when he replies, “However, in establishing our city, we are not looking to make any one group in it outstandingly happy, but to make the whole city so as far as possible. For we thought that we would be most likely to find justice in such a city, and injustice, by contrast in the one that is governed worst. And we thought that by observing both cities we would be able to decide the question we have been inquiring into for so long. At the moment, then, we take ourselves to be forming a happy city…” (103, 420b-c2). That quote adds onto the reader’s knowledge of justice and happiness as Socrates reasserts that the communal lifestyle is necessary because it allows for complete justice and equality, creating a balance and overall happiness for the city. The quote also presents the idea that communal happiness is more important than personal happiness.

I agree with Socrates’ argument that justice leads to happiness in most cases as doing the right thing tends to improve personal happiness. This principle was taught to us in grade school that justice and the truth will set your free and make you happier, so based on personal experience along with what I’ve been taught, I agree with Plato on that point; while I am for communal living and equality in theories like Marxism and Kallipolis, I recognize that these suggestions are unrealistic due to human nature toward greed and possession. I think Plato neglects basic human nature by saying that people will be happier with no choices and possessions. While Plato makes a convincing case for communal living, he does not take into account human nature.

Word Count: 1500

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*Shannon G. Kane*