

Interpretive questions:

- ❖ To whom might Socrates be narrating this conversation? Why haven't they said anything?
- ❖ Why does the dialogue take place the morning after an all-night conversation?
- ❖ What is truly beautiful and worthy of love, according to the *Republic*?
- ❖ Is Socrates a good teacher? Would you like to learn from him? Are Glaucon and Adeimantus having fun? Is anyone else?
- ❖ What is going on in 552d?
- ❖ Why does Adeimantus say “You're telling me my own dream”? 563d
- ❖ What is the text saying about law—things that legislators (political leaders) create and enforce?
- ❖ Why is a tyrant “drawn to complete hostility to law” and why is it “named complete freedom by those who are introducing him to it”? 572e
- ❖ Why do parents come up so often in the discussion of the tyrant?



*“Young people ought to study Plato because he dramatizes the conversations of his teacher, Socrates. Plato does not say anything in his own name; he tells us what Socrates said and did. But in relating these conversations and inviting us, in effect, to take part, Plato leads his readers to reflect on the question every young person raises about his or her own life—how can I best live?”*  
-Professor Catherine Zuckert (left)

Catherine Zuckert (born 1942), the teacher who persuaded me to savor Plato's *Republic* (and much else), even though our human minds are different ages (at least in this lifetime) and we therefore sometimes perceive (taste; become attuned to) the *kalon* a bit differently, especially when it comes to music and some television shows. We share a deep love of poetry, and the dramatic. A political philosopher and the Nancy Reeves Dreux Professor of Political Science (*emerita*) at the University of Notre Dame, Zuckert has authored and edited numerous books, including *Plato's Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues*, which is almost 900 pages long. The first woman to become the editor-and-chief of *The Review of Politics*, a prestigious political theory journal that has published articles by esteemed authors like Hannah Arendt, Yves Simon, Leo Strauss, and Eric Voeglin, Catherine Zuckert (née Heldt) met her future husband Michael Zuckert, also a political philosopher and Nancy Reeves Dreux Professor of Political Science *emeritus*, in Allan Bloom's class when they were undergraduates at Cornell University. MZ, who is the embodiment of gregariousness and boundless energy, sat in the back row of that class, reportedly cracking jokes and goofing off; he was planning to be an engineer at the time. Michael and I get along particularly well. As a college student, Catherine was reportedly serious, studious, shy, and quietly brilliant—as she is today, though she's no longer *as* shy, having lectured and taught all over the world. As doctoral students, the Zuckerts both studied with Bloom's teacher Leo Strauss

(a contemporary of Hannah Arendt; Arendt disliked Strauss personally), at the University of Chicago. Bloom (1930-1992) was idiosyncratic, a political reactionary, and openly gay at a time when that was far less acceptable in the U.S., even within academia. Bloom's last book, *Love & Friendship* (written in the late 1980s), was dedicated to his companion, Michael Z. Wu. Many of their friends and family members say Wu died of AIDS, though that diagnosis is not confirmed. The Zuckerts taught undergraduates at Carleton College in Minnesota for many years before they started teaching and advising graduate students who were training to become professors at Notre Dame and elsewhere. The Kant scholar Rachel Zuckert, one of their three daughters, taught philosophy at Bucknell before moving to Northwestern University. CZ and MZ technically retired (becoming *emeriti*) in 2017 and 2019, toward the end of my time in graduate school and they are delighted I landed at Bucknell! Michael still teaches regularly at Notre Dame and at Arizona State University and just published a book on Abraham Lincoln. Catherine is writing a book on the search for self-knowledge. Neither of them descends into the fracas of faculty meetings, university, or community governance anymore. MZ & CZ asked me to send you their encouragement for your upcoming assessment in POLS 210. They are glad you have joined the conversation.



### Big questions:

- ❖ What is the difference between a teacher and a parent? How does that change over the course of a human education and the course of a human life?
- ❖ What do we learn about someone from *seeing* a picture of them versus hearing (or reading) a story about them that does not have pictures versus seeing them speak at a distance but not talking to them versus hearing their voice but not seeing them (as on a podcast) versus seeing and hearing them speak *and* talking to them in real time and in the flesh?
  - Is a picture still worth a thousand words if it's edited, filtered, airbrushed, or a deep fake?
  - How much would you be willing to pay for an asynchronous education of pre-recorded lectures and pre-made slides in which you never met the teacher but had access to their written materials? How much do you think you could sell this handout for? (Asking for a friend.)
- ❖ Is it possible to love someone you've never met or desire something you've never seen?
- ❖ Is imagination creating (bringing into being)—or is it the way humans represent (make present) things that *are* (exist) independent of (beyond) human construction?
- ❖ Is what we want always the same as what we *should* want? How do we know?

### Quotes to note:

“‘Then,’ I said, ‘only the dialectical way of inquiry proceeds in this direction, destroying hypotheses, to the beginning itself in order to make it secure; and when the eye of the soul is really