

Introduction

Memorabilia Book 4 sets out the system of education that Xenophon says accounts for Socrates' preeminent usefulness in his companions' search for happiness (1.1, 8.11). Chapter 1 shows how Socrates persuaded different kinds of youth to take up that education. Chapter 2 sets out one of these propaedeutic methods in great detail.¹ Chapters 3 through 7 treat of the five stages of the education. In the final chapter of the book and of the *Memorabilia* itself, Chapter 8, Xenophon explains Socrates' behavior at his trial—reiterating his *Apology of Socrates*—and summarizes the previous seven chapters (but not the three earlier books). This conclusion might show that Xenophon composed *Mem.* 4 for independent publication.² At least it shows that Xenophon wrote it with a unified vision.³ He wanted to establish the sequence of stages constituting the Socratic education. In doing so, he illustrates the precise way Socrates proved useful. He also silences the charge that Socrates armed the nefarious Alcibiades and Critias, a charge that supposes he taught them political power (τὰ πολιτικά) before teaching them to how to wield it well, that is, with *sôphrosunê* (1.2.17).⁴ In fact, Xenophon argues, for Socrates as educator, *sôphrosunê* always came first.

Xenophon portrays Socrates differently from Plato as far as their respective character's usefulness, capacity to corrupt others, and educational curriculum are concerned. The last of these three qualities is relevant here. Plato simply never presents Socrates as providing an elaborated educational curriculum for his friends. Indeed, his Socrates usually disclaims teaching altogether. Of course, despite this denial of teaching we may still think that Plato's Socrates does help his interlocutors learn ways of talking and thinking, and thus that he "teaches" in some minimal way. And there is some sequence in the procedure Plato's Socrates uses; he directs his conversations toward questions purportedly more fundamental than the ones his friends first asked, turning, for example, to the nature of virtue before assessing who best teaches some branch of it. All the same, in no dialogue does Socrates explicitly articulate an order in which his friends ought to acquire certain virtues and skills. (Plato's *Republic* (521d-533d), the only seeming exception, has Socrates articulating a multi-decade curriculum for the guardians—philosopher-kings—of an imagined and improbable city.) Why Xenophon but not Plato articulates such an order is a question we will address later in this chapter. It will be worth wondering whether the so-called "unity of virtue" or "elenctic method," philosophical aspects of Plato's work more than of Xenophon's, explain the difference, or whether it is simply Plato's dramatic constructions, in contrast with Xenophon's "recollections" with their explicit editorial

¹ See Morrison 1994, 183–192, on *Mem.* 4.1–2.

² This is the view of Marchant 1923, xviii. Henderson's 2013 revision of the Loeb volume takes a more cautious position on composition, noting only that the *Memorabilia* was assembled over long periods of time. Dorion 2000 argues that Xenophon probably did publish diverse independent dialogues, but attained remarkable unity in the overall work. Gray 1998, 6–7, and *passim*, works to explain that remarkable unity.

³ Emphasized, among others, by Bruell 1994, xxi, and Gray 1998, 156, but Bruell also thinks that Book 4 is merely a caricature of philosophical protreptic, given that Euthydemus "is about as unfit for philosophy as a nature can be" (x), "a brainless beauty" (xxi). (Gray defends Euthydemus to the extent that Aristippus is a less receptive interlocutor (20).)

⁴ Aeschines, *Against Timarchus* 173, asserted a link between Socrates and Critias.

commentary, that prevents Plato from presenting a systematic pedagogy. These questions, comparing Xenophon and Plato, may reveal important features of the two authors' projects. They may also tell us something about Socrates and his legacy.

Yet we can address none of these questions until we address a more pressing question. This question concerns the five-stage curriculum itself. What exactly are the stages, how do they differ, and how do they work in a sequence? In other words, what precisely is Xenophon's Socratic education? I take up the five stages (in Chapters 3–7) in turn. Then I assess the final chapter as, contrary to appearance, a continuation of these matters. This allows us to see more readily Xenophon's purposes in Book 4. We will then be able to conjecture some differences between Xenophon and Plato, and posit some considerations about Socrates and his legacy.

Sôphrosunê

At the beginning of his discussion of the Socratic education, Xenophon says that Socrates aimed to engender *sôphrosunê* in his companions before he taught them anything else (πρότερον, 4.3.1; πρῶτον, 2). Only with that foundation might they safely become skilled in speech, practical ability, and cleverness (λεκτικοὺς καὶ πρακτικοὺς καὶ μηχανικούς). Admitting the truth behind the criticisms of Socrates' dealings with Critias and Alcibiades (1.2.17), Xenophon observes that possessing these political powers in the absence of *sôphrosunê* would make people liable to become more unjust and more capable of doing evil (ἀδικωτέρους... κακουργεῖν, 4.3.1). Xenophon says that Socrates does care that his companions eventually become skilled in speech and practical ability (4.6.1, 5.1). So a lesson in *sôphrosunê* is obligatory.

For all the priority and significance set on *sôphrosunê*, Xenophon does not make it immediately obvious what he means by it, and why he thinks that a person lacking it would be prone to bad action. Three candidate meanings do, fortunately, come to mind. One might suppose *sôphrosunê* to be a kind of self-knowledge, familiarity with one's powers and inadequacies, such that its possession would inhibit a person from doing what he would not do well. The Platonic dialogues *Charmides* (164d3–165b4), *Alcibiades I* (133c18), and *Rival Lovers* (138a5) all draw equivalences between self-knowledge and *sôphrosunê*.⁵ But Socrates in the *Memorabilia* has just treated of self-knowledge in the previous chapter, in his first conversation with Euthydemus; and there he argues that self-ignorance leads less to injustice and doing evil than to harmful error (4.2.24–30).⁶ One might instead suppose *sôphrosunê* to be self-control, another familiar equivalence, where self-control means deciding which desires to satisfy rather than capitulating to the most immediate or intense desire. People surely have strong desires to do what would be rightly judged unjust or evil. But Xenophon calls self-control *enkrateia*, and treats it as a distinct element in the Socratic education (4.5). Nowhere in Book 4 does Socrates or Xenophon say that *sôphrosunê* and *enkrateia* are identical. Socrates later does get Euthydemus' agreement that they have the same opposite (4.5.7–8); but arguments from shared opposites are dubious (cf. *Prot.* 332a4–333b4), and Socrates here never says that he thinks each item has only one opposite. Most importantly, Socrates says that *enkrateia* is important for executing one's will in the presence of annoyingly needy desires; doing evil may therefore sometimes *require* the presence of *enkrateia* and the absence of *sôphrosunê*. Thus they are not the same. Finally, one

⁵ See also Tuozzo 2011, 184–286, and Moore 2015.

⁶ On self-knowledge in *Mem.* 4.2, see Wilkins 1917, 23; Courcelle 1974, 19–20; Annas 1985, 121; Phillips 1989, 368; Dorion 2004, 240–251; Johnson 2005, 62–65; Dorion 2006, 96; Rossetti 2011, 76–80. Morrison 1994, 187, mentions it just in passing. I show that the interpretation of self-knowledge is indeed more complicated than it seems in Moore 2015, ch. 6.

might suppose that *sôphrosunê* is not self-knowledge or self-control but the knowledge of what is good and bad, as the end of Plato's *Charmides* comes to hint (174a10). Without the moral compass that *sôphrosunê* as knowledge of what is good would thereby provide, a person might very well become unjust and do evil. Yet Xenophon presents knowing what is best as a later and distinct part of the educational scheme, connected to study and largely disciplinary-relative. He once notes that Socrates did not distinguish between *sophia* and *sôphrosunê* (3.9.4), but it is clear from Xenophon's explanation that both he and Socrates took them to be conceptually distinct if in fact psychologically overlapping; we will discuss this passage in detail later. At any rate, equating *sôphrosunê* with knowing what to do (i.e., what is good) seems grandiose and inconsistent with its being simply one, and only the first, of five stages of education.

In fact, Xenophon never defines *sôphrosunê* in this chapter or book. Instead of defining it, he shows how Socrates endeavors to make his companions exercise it toward the gods (περὶ θεοῦς... σώφρονας, 4.3.2). He illustrates it with another conversation between Socrates and Euthydemus. Socrates' chief aim is to convince Euthydemus of the extent to which the gods have concerned themselves (ἐπιμελῶς, 2, cf. 12) with providing humans what they need. Euthydemus has yet to have taken the magnanimous extent of their *philanthropia* to heart (ἐνθυμηθῆναι, 3). Socrates therefore brings Euthydemus to agree to a sequence of ways that the created world suits human needs so well: it has light, night, stars, moon, arable land, seasons, water, fire, the sun and its cycles, livestock, beautiful and useful things, the faculty of reason for learning and planning, language and teaching and legislating and ruling, and even mantics to discern the future, all of which perfectly suit the kind of beings we are (3–12). Socrates says that these works should provide adequate reason for revering and honoring (σέβασθαι καὶ τιμᾶν) the gods (13). We should not despise (καταφρονεῖν) what does not appear palpably before us, he says; in many other departments of life we accept that effects prove the existence of a cause as well as the sight of that cause itself proves its existence (14). Confidence in the gods' existence and their benevolence should lead Euthydemus to thank them; and he can thank them by participating in the city's customary sacrifices to the best of his ability (15–16). With these thanks he can expect (θαρπεῖν τε καὶ ἐλπίζειν) from the gods the greatest goods (μέγιστα ἀγαθά, 17). Xenophon ends this section by quoting Socrates in a way that brings *sôphrosunê* back into focus. The *sôphrôn* person anticipates (ἐλπίζειν) the greatest benefits to come from those who can provide the greatest benefits, the gods; and this person accordingly aims to please the gods through strict obedience to the customs of civic religion. Xenophon concludes this section by returning to his theme of education: "Saying such things, and himself acting in such ways, he [Socrates] prepared his companions to become more reverent and *sôphrôn*" (τοιαῦτα μὲν δὴ λέγων τε καὶ αὐτὸς ποιῶν εὐσεβέστερους τε καὶ σωφρονεστέρους τοὺς συνόντας παρεσκεύαζεν, 18).

For all the details of this conversation, it hardly makes explicit what *sôphrosunê* is or which part of Socrates' teaching here is meant to be teaching it. Sections 3–14 present an argument for the existence and benevolence of the gods. Socrates emphasizes the extensive evidence for both, and reminds Euthydemus how often he already infers abductively from effect to cause. The result should be belief in accordance with religious convention. Sections 15–17 present an argument in favor of sacrificing to the gods on the grounds that doing so will maintain their benevolence. This gives a prudential reason to act in accordance with pious norms of behavior. Unlike the previous fifteen sections, section 18 does make explicit reference to *sôphrosunê*. Being *sôphrôn* involves looking to the right place for benefit, namely at those who can best confer it, the gods. It also involves prudence or unbending focus, strictly obeying religious tenets in order to preserve those benefits. It is not clear whether *sôphrosunê* combines a

correct understanding of the source of benefit with a persistence in doing whatever maintains those benefits, or whether it is one or the other. The final line of the chapter adds a complication. Xenophon links *sôphrosunê*—at least toward or with respect to the gods—with reverence (becoming εὐσεβεστέρους). The connective in εὐσεβεστέρους τε καὶ σωφρονεστέρους does not indicate the degree of difference Xenophon sees between the two adjectives. Xenophon’s summary of this chapter at the book’s end suggests he sees very little distance. He says that Socrates showed that he was so reverent (εὐσεβής) that he did nothing without the imprimatur or judgment (γνώμη) of the gods (4.8.11). The implication is that *sôphrosunê peri theous* practically means—or is at least an essential part of—doing what the gods judge best.

If being *sôphrôn* toward the gods means doing what the gods judge best, and the reason for doing this is that it is personally enriching to do so, then being *sôphrôn* in general would seem to mean doing what anything authoritative judges best because doing so yields the most personal benefit. This would seem to involve identifying the source of authoritative judgment (per sections 3–14), delineating the content of that judgment (per sections 15–17), and obeying that judgment (per section 18). Should a person do these three things, and thereby embody *sôphrosunê*, he would seem unlikely to become unjust, given that almost any imaginable authoritative judgment, be it social, rational, or divine, would legislate against injustice. For the same reason, the *sôphrôn* person would seem unlikely to do evil, even if he had the right skills.

Until we study *enkrateia* in detail we cannot account for all its differences from *sôphrosunê*. Even in approximation, however, we can query Louis-André Dorion’s claim that *sôphrosunê* “is almost always synonymous with *enkrateia*,” where *enkrateia* for him means “moderation in pleasures and desires.”⁷ It may be granted that the *sôphrôn* person will not act on all his desires, given that authoritative judgment may call for only limited satisfaction of some. To this extent he will act with moderation in pleasures and desires. But *sôphrosunê* does not in itself mean moderation or limitation. It seems instead to mean recognizing, understanding, and fitting oneself to the determinatively best ways to live, and to do so in acknowledgement of the personal value in doing so.

Because Xenophon does not state in his own or Socrates’ voice the definition of *sôphrosunê*, the conjectured account of *sôphrosunê* given above cannot be proven. But we can corroborate it with Xenophon’s remarks on *sôphrosunê* elsewhere in the *Memorabilia*. In the work’s opening chapter, mirroring 4.3.2, Xenophon expresses his amazement that anybody would consider Socrates to lack *sôphrosunê* toward the gods (περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς μὴ σωφρονεῖν) given that he was never irreverent (ἀσεβής) toward the gods, and that he always said or did whatever was appropriate to the most reverent person (εὐσεβέστατος) (1.1.19–20). Xenophon gives a similar explanation for Socrates’ *sôphrosunê*: Socrates believes, as is common, that the gods care for humans, but he also believes, as is less common appreciated, that the gods know all, and give signs to men. Thus, the reader may infer, the gods make public their definitive and informative authoritative judgments. Xenophon observes Socrates’ *sôphrosunê* here to explain Socrates’ disobedience during the oligarchy. His disobedience was not a matter of moderation or self-control, for he probably did not desire to obey the tyrants, but of following the right rules.

In the *Memorabilia*’s second chapter, Xenophon diagnoses Critias’ and Alcibiades’ interest in studying with Socrates. They saw that he lived most self-sufficiently on very little (ἐλαχίστων μὲν χρημάτων ἀταρκέστατα), was most self-controlled about pleasures (τῶν ἡδονῶν

⁷ Dorion 2006, 101. North 1966, 123–132, recognizes the various instances and ways across his *oeuvre* that Xenophon distinguishes *sôphrosunê* from *enkrateia*, but does not, in her attention to give a clear account of that difference in the case of *Mem.* 4.2 (127).

δὲ πασῶν ἐγκρατέστατον), and mastered any conversation (1.2.14). What they were drawn by, however, was only his power of speech and thus action, not his *sôphrosunê* (15). Thus *sôphrosunê* must comprise Socrates' first two traits, his *autarchia* and his *enkrateia*. Socrates' need and desire for very little might seem best reduced to "self-control." If so, this would vindicate Dorion's equation of *sôphrosunê* and self-control (*enkrateia*) and show that the five-stage educational scheme described in Book 4 is actually no more than four stages. But in fact Xenophon does not make *sôphrosunê* reduce to *enkrateia*. First, while the *autarchia* that *sôphrosunê* includes amounts for Socrates in making do with very little, it also includes, as we see in 4.7.1, discussed below, knowing how to do various things well. Second, and more significantly, Xenophon's remarks about Critias and Alcibiades continue (1.2.17–23). He imagines—as we mentioned in the Introduction—the charge against Socrates that he should have taught *sôphrosunê* before he taught *ta politika*. Xenophon rebuts the charge, claiming that Socrates both led his erstwhile companions to *sôphrosunê* by argument and demonstrated *sôphrosunê* in his own person. The reader must wait till 4.3 to learn about the argument, but Xenophon here goes on to say what he means in referring to Socrates' demonstration of *sôphrosunê*. He says that Socrates showed himself to be *kalon kagathon* and talked admirably about virtue and the other human matters. Xenophon is describing not someone who specifically controls their desires but rather someone who embodies traditionally ideal character traits and speaks well about the authoritative human norms. At this point Xenophon says that the opposite of *sôphrosunê* is *hubris* (19), which must imply taking one's own goals as sovereign, in total disregard of others' rights or privileges.⁸ Xenophon also offers as examples of those lacking *sôphrosunê* drunks and people embroiled in love affairs; he says that they lose the ability to care for duty and disdain what is contrary to duty (τῶν τε δεόντων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι καὶ τῶν μὴ δεόντων ἀπέχεσθαι, 22). The emphasis continues to be on the recognition and pursuit of the best guidelines for living and foregoing endorsement of whatever one simply feels like doing.

I will mention just three other relevant uses of *sôphrosunê* in the *Memorabilia*.⁹ When Xenophon lists the definitional questions Socrates pursues as part of his characteristic activity, he gives them in opposing pairs, and sets *sôphrosunê* against *mania* (1.1.16). Since the person acting in *mania* acts irrationally, *sôphrosunê* seems to mean acting on the basis of good reasons.¹⁰ In Book 3, Xenophon says that Socrates did not distinguish between *sophia* and *sôphrosunê*. For he who, recognizing (γινώσκοντα) what is admirable and good, does them (χρῆσθαι αὐτοῖς), and he who, knowing (εἰδόντα) what is disgraceful, hangs back (εὐλαβεῖσθαι), Socrates judged both *sophon* and *sôphron* (3.9.4). If Xenophon uses parallel word order, he seems to suggest that *sophia* is recognizing and knowing what is good and bad, whereas *sôphrosunê* is doing what one knows is best to do. This reasoning is corroborated by a later

⁸ This view is supported by MacDowell 1976, 14–24. It is worth noting that denial of the gods was considered *hybris*, and thus *sôphrosunê*, as its opposite, would involve recognizing their existence (20); but this is really a matter of acknowledging the gods' decisive role in the world.

⁹ Linked with *aidôs*, it also characterizes the bearing of the virtuous woman in Prodicus' speech (*Mem.* 2.1.22); when Euthydemus has become incited by Socrates' provoking conversation, he keeps silent so as to project *sôphrosunê* rather than impetuous defensiveness (4.2.6). In Xenophon's *Symposium*, Callias' beloved Autolykos is once said to combine *sôphrosunê* with *aidôs* (*Symp.* 1.8.5), and once with strength, endurance, and bravery (8.8.4). In the *Oeconomicus*, only to those truly *sôphrôn* do gods give the gift of being willingly obeyed (*Oec.* 21.12).

¹⁰ At *Mem.* 3.9.6, *mania* becomes the opposite of *sophia* and means self-ignorance (τὸ δὲ ἀγνοεῖν ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἂ μὴ οἶδε δοξάζειν τε καὶ οἶσθαι γινώσκειν) about matters of common knowledge.

remark, where *sophia* involves attention (προσέχειν) to what's useful, understanding (καταμανθάνειν), and perceiving (αἰσθανομένου) what's good and bad; by contrast, choice (προαιρεῖσθαι) and concerned action (ἐπιμελεῖσθαι) are typical of *sôphrosunê* (4.5.6–7). *Sôphrosunê* is endeavoring to do what one ought (ἐπιμελεῖσθαι ὧν προσήκει).

From what we see, *sôphrosunê* makes a plausible starting point for the Socratic education. It amounts to a sensitivity to what considerations ought to motivate action and a commitment to acting on those considerations.¹¹ It does not have its own detailed moral content. A person who is *sôphrôn* does not know, on account of his *sôphrosunê*, precisely what to do. What he knows instead is to seek out the authoritative judgments and to listen to them. On the assumption that such authoritative judgments do exist, and on the assumption that education or learning amounts to following authoritative judgments—be they in the conventions of reading, the ways of navigation, or moral precepts—*sôphrosunê* will be foundational for any education whatsoever.

Dikaiosunê

Book 4's fourth chapter sets out some specific judgments about how to act. Granted, Chapter 3 already provided a little content. As we learned there, exercising *sôphrosunê* toward the gods amounts to being reverent, and this requires following the civic sacrifices, rituals, and the other instituted or customary religious proprieties. The content is whatever those institutions or customs—in other words, those laws—set out about our relations with the gods (cf. 4.6.4). As we see in Chapter 4, just as exercising *sôphrosunê* toward the gods is called reverence, exercising *sôphrosunê* toward other humans is called justice. This is most evident from the case of Socrates, who exemplified *sôphrosunê*. He obeyed the common authority and obeyed the laws' command (κοινῇ ἄρχουσί τε ἃ οἱ νόμοι προστάττειεν πειθόμενος, 4.4.1), never swayed by popular feeling or oligarchic fiat, both of which encourage actions that are contrary to law (2–4). Socrates embodies justice by following the public authority, formulated concretely in law.

What we may infer from Xenophon's remarks about Socrates' character we may corroborate with Socrates' words. Further into Chapter 4, Hippias asks Socrates what he believes justice to be (9); Socrates responds that the lawful is just (τὸ νόμιμον δίκαιον εἶναι, 12); indeed, they are the same thing (τὸ αὐτό, 13). The law is the set of specific agreements about what ought to be done and not done (συνθέμενοι ἃ τε δεῖ ποιεῖν καὶ ὧν ἀπέχεσθαι ἐγράψαντο, 13). Socrates soon clarifies what “the same thing” means: justice is obedience to or being persuaded by (πειθόμενος) the law (13). In other words, acting lawfully is acting justly. Some of these laws in accordance with which we act justly have never, admittedly, been established by legislator or legislative body. These “unwritten laws” (19) are the customs that all humans follow about piety, filial duty, and incest; they count as laws, despite never being expressly decided upon, because their infraction yields punishment (21). Socrates puts the gods at the source of these laws, and judges those laws just on the grounds that the gods must be better law-givers than men (25).

¹¹ Marchant 1923, xviii, translates *sôphrosunê* as “prudence” and says that it means “character”; if so, then Xenophon's Socrates provides a helpful and plausible analysis of “character.” But his introductory essay sometimes confounds the difference between *sôphrosunê* and *enkrateia* (xx and n2). Gray 1998, 153, does not distinguish *sôphrosunê* from *sôphrosunê peri theous* and accordingly translates “respect for the gods.”

Mem. 4.4 has generated much scholarly concern, especially about the validity and scope of the argument for the identity of law and justice.¹² A particular issue is whether Socrates conceives of human law positively or ideally, as that which has actually been issued irrespective of its success, or only those laws that are actually beneficial.¹³ Another issue is whether Xenophon presents Socrates as providing his complete and honest opinion about the relation between justice and law. Some worry that Socrates might be obscuring his actual views, namely that some laws are unjust, to preempt charges that he undermines Athenian law, which charges Xenophon records at *Apol.* 1.2.¹⁴ Nor is it especially clear what feature of the obedience to the law makes it just. One possibility is that the arrangements the laws compel are intrinsically just; in this case, the content of the *dictates* is substantively just, and by consequence the acceptance of those dictates. Another possibility is that obedience to whatever laws there are, as long as those laws meet certain formal constraints—being universally applicable and enforced, for example—is procedurally just, as it were, because this allows everybody to coordinate their actions with everybody else’s. Of course, Xenophon’s Socrates might think it is both, or sometimes one and sometimes the other. The gods’ law would be substantively just, as would some human legislation; other laws might not be perfectly substantively just but their obedience would be just for other reasons, such as its success at effecting social coordination.

The difficulties brought up by Chapter 4 are of great philosophical, literary, and historical interest.¹⁵ But they may be bracketed for the sake of understanding the Socratic education adumbrated in Book 4. Xenophon writes this chapter as part of the educational sequence (cf. 4.8.11): without *sôphrosunê* there is no justice; with *sôphrosunê* justice must have some practical realization, and it does so in the obedience to the laws. Yet this chapter has an odd position in the five curricular chapters: it is the only one in which Xenophon presents Socrates talking with someone other than Euthydemus.¹⁶ Xenophon says that Socrates talked often about justice, and in particular about its teachability (4.4.5). Hippias, a fellow intellectual rather than a student, overhears Socrates going through this argument one of the many times he did so. Coming up to Socrates, he teases Socrates for being both repetitive (6) and opaque about his real views (9). He states that he has a new and irrefutable view of justice, but refuses to share it until Socrates shares his own (7). Socrates points to his actions as a sufficient clue to his view of justice, but is eventually cajoled into putting into words what he thinks justice is (12; Socrates gives the same view without being cajoled at 4.6.5–6). The remainder of the chapter recreates a conversation between Hippias and Socrates, and closes with the claim that “by saying and doing such things he [Socrates] made those near him more just (δικαιοτέρους ποίει)” (25).

¹² Marchant 1923, xx, thinks that the argument here contradicts Plato’s *Gorgias* as well as other parts of the *Memorabilia*, and is in the end “unconvincing as an exposition of Socrates’ views on Justice, and the concluding sentence of the chapter does not square with it.” At *Mem.* 3.9.5 Socrates talks about a feature of justice, namely that it is beautiful and wisdom.

¹³ Morrison 1995 presents both sides but sides with the positivist interpretation.

¹⁴ Johnson 2012, 125–126, is somewhat sympathetic to Leo Strauss’ view of *Mem.* 4.4 in his critical reappraisal of Strauss’ evidence for his view; Dorion 2010, in an equally careful critique of Strauss, is less inclined to any sympathy, and so prefers the straightforward positivist reading; see also Stavru 2008.

¹⁵ See Johnson 2012, 133–135, for the drama and structure of the chapter.

¹⁶ Marchant 1923, xix, assumes that this means that Xenophon had already written this exchange with Hippias and inserted into the work constituting *Mem.* 4; Johnson 2012, 141–142, also discusses the question.

This ending integrates Chapter 4 into those around it by claiming for Socrates educational success. In the previous chapter, about *sôphrosunê*, it was at least somewhat clear how that educational success was to have come about. Euthydemus came to recognize the most important source of benefit, having apparently been skeptical about the gods and their benevolence, and he came to realize that by practicing certain familiar actions he could retain the benefit he got from them. Socrates admitted that becoming truly *sôphrôn* requires practice, and so Euthydemus could not become *sôphrôn* simply by accepting a few theses. But he would know now what to practice, and so could be on his way. It remains to be seen how the conversation depicted in Chapter 4, about justice, reveals Socrates' educational success.

Xenophon seems to think that Socrates' actions are the best teachers for knowing how to live justly. Socrates' scrupulous and sometimes disobedient or counterintuitive civic service, the justice of which history has vindicated, supported the more fundamental laws over opportunistic commands or lazy habit (1–5). Socrates never bore false witness or served himself as a prosecutor; he never set friends or citizens against one another; and in never did anything Hippias, for one, would consider unjust (11). So Xenophon may think that Socrates provides Hippias a model for the just life that Hippias in fact went on to imitate—a life of a person who avoids injustice and also avoids unlawfulness. But he must also think that the argument about injustice also teaches an important part of the lesson. Hippias says he can speak irrefutably about justice. He does not explicitly maintain that he believes his view about justice, but we have two reasons to think that he does. First, he claims that nobody at all can speak against his view (7); and so if Hippias is rational, he ought to believe his view: it is irreproachable! Second, Socrates says that this discovery, if it is so good, would dispel all controversy about what is just, and thus put an end to all litigation and war (8); and so if Hippias is sympathetic to these consequences as great goods, he again should believe his view: it is a panacea! But the view that Hippias wants to present, and probably believes, whatever it may be, is obviously not that justice is lawfulness. After all, he is confused by that view (13). Yet by the end of the conversation he understands the view and accepts it. If Socrates' view is from Xenophon's perspective true, then Socrates has replaced Hippias' false view of justice with his own true view of justice. Given that the degree to which one acts justly determines the degree to which one is just (13), and one's beliefs about justice determine how one acts (if one wants to act justly), then Hippias' acquisition of a Socrates' true view of justice makes him more just.

This reasoning would hold irrespective of the content of Socrates' (true) view of justice. Yet I think that the content too contributes to making Hippias more just. We have argued that justice is *sôphrosunê* toward other humans. We have also argued that *sôphrosunê* amounts to identifying and following authoritative judgments. What are the authoritative judgments in the human realm? The laws are an excellent possibility. An alternative view of justice brings this into relief. "Benefit friends and harm enemies" has no backing besides tradition or familiarity, and it provides too little guidance in most situations. The law, by contrast, comes either from legislative deliberation or from the gods, both of which have claims to authority. The law is also finely articulated, capable of giving useable guidance in a great diversity of cases. As we have seen above, much more would need to be said about the authority of law, or its legislators, including whether it is always authoritative or only ideally, before becoming satisfied with the view. But the incompleteness of the view, or even the possibility that it might have some unavoidable vagueness, does not tell against Socrates' main point. His main point seems to be that justice is not simply doing what you want to do, or what you are told by others you can do,

but is instead doing what something much greater than you—a well-ordered society, or the mind of god—has decided you ought to do.

Enkrateia

In 4.3, Xenophon presented Socrates as helping his students become *sôphrôn* before they became *praktikos*; Socrates did not want those practical powers used for ill. The existence of this worry means that Socrates thought it possible to be *praktikos* while not being *sôphrôn*. *Sôphrosunê* is a moral but not practical precondition for good action. In 4.5, Xenophon addresses the other precondition for good action, the practical one. Here he shows Socrates encouraging *enkrateia* as the way to become more capable (πρακτικωτέρους). Now, *enkrateia* is not necessary for doing absolutely anything at all. It is good (ἀγαθόν) if one wants to be able to do anything admirable (καλόν τι πράξειν, 1). Still, this is different from the case of *sôphrosunê*. *Sôphrosunê* makes you not want to act unjustly or do evil, on the assumption that you could act badly if you wanted to. *Enkrateia* makes you able to act justly or do well, on the assumption that you would not otherwise be able to, even if you wanted to. But that there really is a difference between *sôphrosunê* and *enkrateia* vis-à-vis becoming *praktikos* does not tell us the nature of the difference, or the nature of *enkrateia* by itself. That explanation comes in Socrates' conversation with Euthydemus.

The argument's first part describes *akrasia*, which Socrates eventually identifies as *enkrateia*'s opposite (8; the etymology supports this view). *Akrasia*, as Socrates puts it, is being ruled by bodily pleasures. This slavery to pleasure both prevents you from doing what is best and forces you to do what is bad (3–5). It distracts you from study and grasping important things, and blinds you to what is good and bad, and consequently prevents your attainment of wisdom (6). Finally it hinders the exercise of *sôphrosunê*, deflecting you from practicing what is appropriate, and causing you to choose and practice what is harmful and useless (7). We may note parenthetically that this last sub-argument proves again that *sôphrosunê* must differ from *enkrateia*: Socrates must demonstrate that *sôphrosunê* excludes *akrasia*, but he would not need to show in the same way that *enkrateia* excludes its conceptual and etymological opposite.

The argument's second part focuses on the nature and benefits of *enkrateia*. Socrates starts with a seeming irrelevance, arguing that *enkrateia* is a precondition for full pleasure (9). This seems an irrelevance because full pleasure is not itself necessary for being *praktikos*. But the reason *enkrateia* is a precondition for full pleasure reveals something deep about *enkrateia*. Getting full pleasure, Socrates argues, requires delayed gratification. This means that *enkrateia* allows one to defer satisfying the most immediate, pressing, or intense pleasures in favor of satisfying longer-term or less obvious pleasures. But not just pleasures; *enkrateia* gives a person the patience or psychic space he needs to engage in learning. Among the subjects Socrates includes as topics of learning “something good and admirable” are health, social relations, household management, and politics, all of which are both beneficial and pleasurable (10). It is in this respect that Socrates' image and modeling of *enkrateia* helps people to become *praktikos*: with *enkrateia*, they come to know what is good and how, in the various arenas of life, to pursue it. Socrates caps this part by explaining how precisely *enkrateia* allows a person to know what is good. He seems to imply that *enkrateia* puts all pleasures, whether intense or remote, at an equal distance, making it possible to sort through them (διαλέγοντας) and consider (σκοπεῖν) and choose (προαιρεῖσθαι) the best (11).

Without these last few arguments we might have imagined that *enkrateia* works by weakening the force of inner desires or expectations. This restraint picture, however, is not the

most apt. The picture rather more suggested by this argument is of a person managing an onslaught of noisy or seductive claims on his attention. *Akrasia* mean submitting to the first or loudest of those claims, for no other reason than that they come most readily to attention; they have mere temporal or phenomenological priority. *Enkrateia* means not submitting to the first or loudest of the claims; it is the ability to survey all the claims disinterestedly, and then to pursue the one that seems on reflection best to pursue. *Enkrateia* does not indicate *which* claim is best to pursue; it opens a space in which to assess the available claims. In *Mem.* Book 1 Xenophon put it as a matter of being a master, who decides at leisure about the desires he wishes to satisfy, rather than a slave, who must always do whatever his desires demand (1.4.1–6). In other words, *enkrateia* is not itself the knowledge of good; it is a precondition for it.

Both *enkrateia* and *sôphrosunê* are developed through practice. Acquiring *enkrateia* requires practicing abstaining from acting on the first desires to beckon. Acquiring *sôphrosunê* takes practice identifying the authoritative judgments and following them. *Enkrateia* and *sôphrosunê* are of course related. Without *sôphrosunê* a person would exercise his *enkrateia* without being able to decide on the best desire to satisfy. Without *enkrateia*, both the attention to reality and the determination of one's will constitutive of *sôphrosunê* would be preempted by a person's instant gratifications. But they are conceptually and pedagogically distinct.

Dialektikos

At the end of the Chapter 5, we saw that *enkrateia* allows the evaluative sorting of possible actions. Relying on an etymological play (ὀνομασθῆναι), Socrates argued that sorting (διαλέγοντας) allows conversation (διαλέγεσθαι, 4.5.12).¹⁷ So in this way *enkrateia* helps people become most competent in speech (διαλεκτικωτάτους). The present chapter, 4.6, focuses on another way to become *dialektikôteros*.

According to Xenophon, Socrates encouraged people to investigate what each thing is, especially by discerning its definition. Once they knew the definition, they could explain the concept to others and could avoid misleading themselves and others. This neutralizes opponents who argue without clarity or logical defense (13). It also increases an advocate's persuasiveness, showing how to go methodically through a set of equivalences or entailments, gathering up agreement at each step (15).

This chapter is presented only as showing the competence in speech that Socrates brought to his interlocutors. But it is remarkable for being Xenophon's most concentrated account of Socratic definition. At *Mem.* 1.1.6, Xenophon says that Socrates asked "What is *x*?" type questions. But only here does Xenophon show Socrates going through those questions—with Euthydemus—and arriving at an answer, on at least eight topics: reverence, justice, wisdom, good, beauty, courage, kingship, and the better man (4–14).¹⁸ These obviously have their familiarity from the Platonic dialogues. But Plato's Socrates does not generally claim that he teaches definition in order to improve his interlocutors' power of speech. He asks definitional questions instead to reveal to his interlocutors that they fail to know what they might have assumed to be the most basic topics to know. He does this not just to open their minds to hear the correct view. Plato's Socrates is the Socrates that Hippias in *Mem.* 4.4.9 recognizes, coy about

¹⁷ Marchant 1923, xx, treats this as passage as a "curious" appendage, and supposes Socrates actually said something like this. But it really does seem to advance the argument of the passage.

¹⁸ At *Mem.* 3.9.1–10, Xenophon goes through the views Socrates has about concepts like courage, wisdom, *sôphrosunê*, leisure, and the like, but he could hardly be said to be giving Socrates' definitions there (contra Marchant 1923, xxi).

his definitional beliefs and given to confuting his conversation partners. Xenophon accepts Hippias' assertion, as we see at the beginning of Socrates' conversation with Euthydemus (4.2.10–39).

All the same, Xenophon does not otherwise emphasize this quality of Socrates' discussions. In fact what we seem to see here in 4.6 is Xenophon's reinterpretation of Socrates' commitment to definition. Whereas in Plato definition proves diagnostic and protreptic to further conversation, helping a person know his ignorance and dig his way back out, in Xenophon definition proves rhetorically valuable, helping a person know the best oratorical routes to supporting one's thesis or confuting another's.¹⁹ Xenophon's Socrates shows that people have mistaken or inadequate beliefs about core moral concepts, but only to interest them in learning what they should instead believe. For Xenophon, Socrates' educational scheme only momentarily leaves people's heads spinning. Plato's Socrates, by contrast, leaves his friends baffled, with the bare commitment to talk to them again in the future.

At the close of Book Four, Xenophon clarifies his point about Socrates' education in conversational skill. He says that Socrates manifests, and thereby teaches, an ability to speak, define, test, and refute (4.8.11). So his Socrates still pushes his friends to say what they think, and does not hesitate to show them their errors. But the difference between Plato's and Xenophon's Socrates, and this definitional chapter makes the difference stark, is the purpose to which this testing is put. In the first case, it provides self-knowledge; in the second, a practical capacity.

Autarkia

Xenophon treats the last stage of the Socratic education as distinct from the others. The first four stages, he notes here, involved Socrates' giving his judgment (*γνώμην*) to his friends (4.7.1). As we saw, this judgment concerned *sôphrosunê*, justice, *enkrateia*, and conversation. These stages pertain equally and generally to all people. The fifth stage points beyond these fundamental preconditions for acting well. Xenophon notes that a wholly good person (*kalos kagathos*) must know (how to do) a number of things if he should want to be self-sufficient. Some of these matters, Xenophon says, Socrates could himself teach; for some Socrates recommended an expert; and for yet others Socrates apparently thought his friends could learn for themselves (1–2). In this last category Socrates includes geometry, astronomy, cosmology, arithmetic, health, and *mantikê*. But while Socrates expected his companions to engage in self-education, he proposed limits on their pursuits. It is these limits that constitute the substance of this chapter.

Socrates imposed on his companions four limits to their study. They should study only so much of a topic as is useful (2); as does not interfere with the learning of other useful things (2); as does not intrude on the gods' secrets (6); and as does not make you crazy or eccentric (6). At the conclusion of Book 4, when Xenophon summarizes the five stages, he implies that these lessons contribute to teaching people to be *phronimos*. This means "thoughtful," but perhaps also completely competent in practical and worldly affairs. The contrast is with being theoretically astute, disciplinarily deep, or well-versed in book learning; the ulterior motive is to differentiate Socrates as he was from the Socrates as popularly caricatured, in the *Clouds*, for example.

The final section

¹⁹ It is often noted that Xenophon presents not just Socratic definition but also Socratic "hypothesis" at 4.6.13–15 (e.g., Marchant 1923, xxi-xxii); such variety of procedure is to be expected. See Natali 2006.

The final chapter of the *Memorabilia* starts by mentioning Socrates' claim that his *daimonion* sign told him (προσημαίνειν) what he ought and ought not to do (4.8.1). Yet Xenophon notes that his trial and execution might seem to speak against the reality of any predictive *daimonion* sign. Much the rest of the chapter shows that Socrates was right not to have acted any differently in response to the indictment. Xenophon's prime observations are that Socrates died admirably, happily, and beloved by the gods (3), he had already lived the best and most pleasurable life (7), and posterity would remember him as free of wrongdoing and concerned only to improve those around him (10). This chapter thus seems not to abandon Xenophon's description of the Socratic education but to show that it continued even in Socrates' death. A life well lived is tested most severely at its extremes, and here Socrates models the very best life lived.

A reader might wonder whether Xenophon makes a misstep in mentioning the *daimonion* sign. If it were really responsible for Socrates' success in life, and if a person could not be taught to have his own *daimonion* sign, then something about his success cannot be taught. From this perspective, Socrates' success cannot be conveyed even through careful literary remembrance. But it seems that Xenophon has not in fact erred. Socrates never says that anything he teaches in the five sections of his curriculum could be replaced by a *daimonion* sign. Indeed, his education is for those matters for which his students do not have divine guidance. They are to look elsewhere than to a supernatural coach, barking out the plays as they come. They are to look instead to their faculties of choice, to the authoritative judgments available to them, and to the disciplinary skills they can pursue with teachers or on their own.

Educational schemes

A reader of Plato's Socratic dialogues could come to think that Socrates' lesson, as magisterially orchestrated and prolonged as it may be, is little more than that we should know ourselves and to do so by discovering what is good and true.²⁰ Socratic refutation causes a recognition that one fails to know what one thought one knew; coupled with any strong desire, one's acknowledgement of ignorance propels one to the investigation and testing of ideas possibly worth adopting.²¹ The virtues all amount to approximately the same thing, knowing what's good; and while what "the same thing" is perhaps even Socrates or Plato could not say, and "knowing" and "what's good" are also hardly self-evident terms, Socrates seems to think that the "unity of virtue" means that there is really just one way to improve ourselves, whatever particular virtue we think is lacking, and that is by making the effort to avoid wrongdoing.²²

Of course, Socrates' lesson, perhaps simple to articulate, is hardly easy to take up. We may see this in Socrates' efforts with Charmides in Plato's *Charmides*. In Socrates' absence, Charmides has learned the appropriate form in which to answer definitional questions (159b5, 1690e4–5). But he also has to learn how to bear public judgment (158c5–159a4); how to come up with plausible responses to difficult questions (160d5–e2); how to analyze his responses for accuracy (161c8–162a7); which authorities to trust in accepting possible solutions to his problems (162a8–e5); that conversation is better than direct instruction (156a1–b1); and that his guardian Critias is himself an unreliable guide of the truth. These are just several of the parts of the Socratic lesson depicted in the *Charmides*, rendered atomically. So when we articulate

²⁰ This argument is considered in my Moore 2015.

²¹ See Moore 2012

²² For one view on ambiguities in Socrates' remarks about the unity of virtue in Plato, specifically the *Protagoras*, see O'Brien 2003.

Socratic pedagogy this way, even Plato presents Socrates as teaching a range of skills, attitudes, and topics. It would be thus be misleading to say that for Plato, Socrates only refutes—even if one posits a “positive elenchus”—or even that refutation is the most important part of his teaching. It would be better to say that Socrates brings to bear a constellation of conversational practices on his companions and seeks a constellation of educational outcomes.

It may be possible that Plato’s Socrates thinks the sharpness of self-contradiction has a peculiar effect on people smug about their level of education. But so too does Xenophon’s Socrates. Xenophon introduces *Mem.* 4.2 by saying that he will show the Socratic education for those who thought they had already come upon the best education and thought highly of their wisdom (4.2.1). This education is one full of refutation. So we might say that Xenophon focuses his literary attention, in the *Memorabilia*, on those who differed from Euthydemus, who did not have this conceit of wisdom. Plato, by contrast, focuses his attention on those like Euthydemus, who happen to be at once extremely appealing to Socrates and most in need of chastening, lest their political strengths harm themselves and others.²³

Just as both Plato and Xenophon found Socratic refutation characteristic of Socrates but not exhaustive of his pedagogical tactics, both found his pedagogic tactics and goals many and diverse. Because Xenophon allows himself editorial intervention, and foregoes dramatic continuity, he can organize and comment on the stages of the Socratic education. His desire to elucidate Socrates’ usefulness encourages him to do this. Plato’s literary form prevents him from emphasizing the pedagogical stages as starkly. He also seems less interested in proving Socrates’ practical usefulness than in showing exactly how a conversation with Socrates might have gone. Despite Plato’s preference for vivid representation over schematic overview, however, we may still perceive the parts of a Socratic education even there. It would certainly be worth looking. In any event, Both Plato and Xenophon show a Socrates much more complex than a teacher of some subject or a giver of some advice. Both dedicate their literary or memorial efforts to drawing out that complexity, trying to make sense of its density, efficacy, and completeness.²⁴

Xenophon’s analysis in *Mem.* 4 is a fascinating one. The philosophical assumptions and distinctions he makes about the dispositions and skills necessary to live well repay close scrutiny. He advances a plausible view of *sôphrosunê*, not unimportant given the baffling variety of views current in the fourth century. He presents a powerful view of *enkrateia*, one with resonances in Platonic reflection on *promêtheia* and the so-called “art of measurement.” His attempt to remain grounded by explaining Socratic conversation itself, and noting Socrates’ advice on those topics that exceed the capacity of that conversation, broadens the register of discussion about the Socratic legacy.

Bibliography

- Annas, Julia. 1985. “Self-Knowledge in Early Plato.” In *Platonic Investigations*, ed. Dominic J. O’Meara, 121–38. Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press.
- Bruell, Christopher. 1994. “Introduction.” In *Xenophon: Memorabilia*. tr. Amy Bonnette. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

²³ Some commentators (e.g., Danzig 2005) wonder whether Xenophon believes or denies that “elenchus” teaches virtue; I do not think that this is the best way to put an important question, because I am not sure that Plato believes that “elenchus” teaches virtue either. Gray 1998, 13–14, argues that Xenophon does not care for elenchus.

²⁴ This develops the argument of Gray 1998 (e.g., 8), that just as Socrates made advances in presenting wisdom to his students, so too did Xenophon in presenting Socrates to his readers.

- Courcelle, Pierre Paul. 1974. *Connais-Toi Toi-Même de Socrate À Saint Bernard*, vol. 1. Paris: Études Augustiniennes.
- Danzig, Gabriel. 2005. "Review of Dorion 2003." *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 5.30.
- Dorion, L. A. 2003. "Introduction." In *Xénophon: Mémoires 1, Introduction générale. Livre I.*, Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
- Dorion, L. A. 2004. "Qu'est-Ce Que Vivre En Fonction de Sa Dunamis? Les Deux Réponses de Socrate Dans Les Mémoires." In *Les Etudes Philosophiques: Les Écrits Socratiques de Xénophon*, ed. Luc Brisson. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 235–52.
- Dorion, L. A. 2006. "Xenophon's Socrates." In *A Companion to Socrates*, eds. Sara Ahbel-Rappe and Rachana Kamtekar, 93–109. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Dorion, L. A. 2010. "The Straussian Exegesis of Xenophon." In *Xenophon*, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies, ed. V. J. Gray. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gray, Vivienne. 1998. *The Framing of Socrates: The Literary Interpretation of Xenophon's Memorabilia*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.
- Henderson, Jeffrey, ed. 2013. *Xenophon: Memorabilia, Oeconomicus, Symposium, Apology*. Revised. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Johnson, David M. 2005. "Xenophon at His Most Socratic (Memorabilia 4.2)." *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 29: 39–73.
- Johnson, David M. 2012. "Strauss on Xenophon." In *Xenophon: Ethical Principles and Historical Enquiry*, Mnemosyne Supplements, eds. Fiona Hobden and Christopher Tuplin, 123–59. Leiden: Brill.
- MacDowell, Douglas M. 1976. "Hybris in Athens." *Greece and Rome* 23: 14–31.
- Marchant, E.C. 1923. *Xenophon: Memorabilia, Oeconomicus, Symposium, Apology*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Moore, Christopher. 2012. "Socrates and Clitophon in the Platonic *Clitophon*." *Ancient Philosophy* 32: 257–78.
- Moore, Christopher. 2015. *Socrates and Self-Knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Morrison, Donald. 1994. "Xenophon's Socrates as Teacher." In *The Socratic Movement*, ed. Paul A. Vander Waerdt, 181–208. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Morrison, Donald. 1995. "Xenophon's Socrates on the Just and the Lawful." *Ancient Philosophy* 15: 329–47.
- Natali, C. 2006. "Socrates' Dialectic in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*." In *Remembering Socrates: Philosophical Essays*, eds. Lindsay Judson and V. Karasmanēs, 3–19. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- North, Helen. 1966. *Sôphrosunê: Self-Knowledge and Self-Restraint in Greek Literature*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- O'Brien, Denis. 2003. "Socrates and Protagoras on Virtue." *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 24: 59–131.
- Phillips, John. 1989. "Xenophon's *Memorabilia* 4.2." *Hermes* 117: 366–70.
- Rossetti, Livio. 2011. "L'Euthydème de Xénophon." In *Le Dialogue Socratique*, Paris: Encre Marine / Les Belles Lettres, 55–99.
- Stavru, Alessandro. 2008. "Socrate et Le Confiance Dans Les Agraphoi Nomoi (Xénophon, *Mémoires* IV.4): Réflexions Sur Les Socratiques de Walter F. Otto." In *Xénophon et Socrate*, eds. M. Nancy, A. Tordesillas, and L.-A. Dorion, 65–85. Paris: J. Vrin.

Tuozzo, Thomas M. 2011. *Plato's Charmides: Positive Elenchus in a "Socratic" Dialogue*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilkins, Eliza Gregory. 1917. "'Know Thyself' in Greek and Latin Literature." Ph.D. diss.
University of Chicago.