

**Plato's Symposium**  
 Greek 51, Fall 2005  
 UNC at Chapel Hill  
 MW 2:00–3:15pm  
 Dr. Patrick Lee Miller  
 Murphey 220

Teacher	Texts
<p>Dr. Patrick Lee Miller  <a href="mailto:plmiller@email.unc.edu">plmiller@email.unc.edu</a>  <a href="http://www.unc.edu/~plmiller">www.unc.edu/~plmiller</a></p> <p>UNC Office: 311 Murphey Hall            UNC Office Hours: 3:15–4pm, MW</p> <p>Duke Office: 347 Trent Hall            Duke Office Hours: 10:30–12am, TTh</p>	<p><i>Plato's Symposium: Commentary</i>, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.            Gilbert Rose (Bryn Mawr, 1985)</p> <p><i>Plato: Symposium</i>, Greek Text and            Commentary, ed. Kenneth Dover            (Cambridge, 1993)</p> <p><i>Plato: Symposium</i>, English Translation, trans.            Alexander Nehamas and Paul            Woodruff (Hackett, 1989)</p> <p><i>Plato: Phaedrus</i>, English Translation, trans.            Alexander Nehamas and Paul            Woodruff (Hackett, 1995)</p> <p>Some Recent Scholarship, on Reserve in            Murphey Library</p>

Important Dates	Evaluation
First take-home test.....9/26	Take-home tests (2).....30%
Second take-home test.....10/31	Classroom translation.....15%
Paper.....11/21	Paper.....20%
Final Exam.....12/16	Final Exam.....35%

Plato's *Symposium* is that rarest of texts: both a literary masterpiece *and* a penetrating work of philosophy. In this course we shall try to appreciate it as both. Most of our work will be with its Greek, which we shall read as carefully as our semester allows. First we must understand Plato's vocabulary and grammar thoroughly, in order to ascend to a contemplation of this dialogue's variety of styles and arguments.

We begin by situating *Symposium* in the context of the Platonic *corpus*. As we move through the Greek text, we shall also consider it in the context of the wider intellectual culture of classical Greece. This will involve reading some Xenophon, "Hippocrates," and Gorgias, as well as—time permitting—Plato's own *Phaedrus*, which makes a perfect companion piece, since it is also about love, rhetoric, and spiritual ascent.

To complement our close reading of Plato and his contemporaries, we shall occasionally read some recent scholarship on *Symposium* and its cultural background. These articles and book chapters will help us probe the timely and timeless questions raised by the dialogue, questions of sex and gender, love and knowledge. With a little luck, finally, let's invite one of these scholarly authors to a symposium of our own, hoping he doesn't disrupt us in the manner of Alcibiades!

τί δῆτα, ἔφη, οἴομεθα, εἴ τῳ γένοιτο αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν ἰδεῖν  
εἰλικρινές, καθαρὸν, ἄμεικτον, ἀλλὰ μὴ ἀνάπλεων σαρκῶν τε  
ἀνθρωπίνων καὶ χρωμάτων καὶ ἄλλης πολλῆς φλυαρίας  
δνητῆς, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον καλὸν δύναιτο μονοειδὲς κατιδεῖν;  
ἄρ' οἶει, ἔφη, φαῦλον βίον γίγνεσθαι ἐκεῖσε βλέποντος  
ἀνθρώπου καὶ ἐκεῖνο ᾧ δεῖ θεωμένου καὶ συνόντος αὐτῷ; ἢ  
οὐκ ἐνθυμῆ, ἔφη, ὅτι ἐνταῦθα αὐτῷ μοναχοῦ γενήσεται,  
ὁρῶντι ᾧ ὁρατὸν τὸ καλόν, τίκτειν οὐκ εἰδῶλα ἀρετῆς, ἅτε  
οὐκ εἰδώλου ἐφαπτομένῳ, ἀλλὰ ἀληθῆ, ἅτε τοῦ ἀληθοῦς  
ἐφαπτομένῳ· τεκόντι δὲ ἀρετὴν ἀληθῆ καὶ θρεψαμένῳ  
ὑπάρχει θεοφιλεῖ γενέσθαι, καὶ εἴπερ τῷ ἄλλῳ ἀνθρώπων  
ἀθανάτῳ καὶ ἐκείνῳ;