

Symposium Commentary Assignment

Throughout this class, you have been making use of commentaries to help you understand the texts you are reading. You have had a Bryn Mawr commentary that gave assistance with basic issues of vocabulary and grammar, but you have also had the more content-oriented commentary by Dover. Even both commentaries together, however, never provide all the information and assistance that one might like to have in order to understand, not only the language but also the meaning and context of the text.

You should choose a passage (of roughly 20 lines) from the *Symposium* that we have not gone over in class. For this passage you should provide an in-depth commentary, giving the reader not only important vocabulary and grammatical assistance but also any historical or cultural context that might be necessary to understand the passage. I would suggest that you follow the lemma format in Dover, providing entries keyed to a line number and particular word or phrase. Obviously, you should start with, but not limit yourself to, the material in the Bryn Mawr and Dover commentaries. Bury's commentary is also easily available online via the Perseus Project, and other commentaries can be found via Tripod.

How does the passage you have selected fit in with the rest of Plato's *Symposium*? What ideas or themes appear in your passage that are significant for Plato's project as a whole? For such questions, you may find the resources in the Perseus Project a useful starting point, especially the online version of Bury's commentary on the *Symposium*. The completed assignment, due at **noon on Friday, December 12**, should include your text along with the commentary. If you have not yet mastered the mysteries of Greek fonts (with accents) in your word processor, please contact me. The GreekKeys font system is available now for all students in Carpenter Library.