

Plato, the Parthenon, and Liberal Education.
A Workshop with Geoff Lehman and Michael Weinman.

Monday, April 15. Location tbd.

9.45 Opening remarks.

10.00 – 12.00. Session One. Plato's *Republic* and *Timaeus*.

This panel focuses on the legacy of Pythagorean mathematical thought in Plato's work and two questions in particular. First, how and why, precisely are the mathematical arts "a prelude to the song of dialectic" (*Republic* 7)? Second, why is it that Plato has Socrates insist (in *Republic* 9) that the king lives a life precisely 729 times more pleasant than the life of the tyrant? Are we, really, to take this quantification procedure seriously? What is at stake here?

With Robert Goulding (Notre Dame University)
Ermioni Prokapaki (University of Chicago)
Jason Rheins (Loyola University Chicago)
Michael Weinman (Bard College Berlin)

2.00 – 4.00. Session Two. The Parthenon.

This panel focuses on the architecture of the Parthenon, how it manifests *symmetria* (commensurability) in continuous proportionality based on musical ratios, and *harmonia*, the joining together of irreducibly different things. The irreducibility of arithmetic and geometry to each other may have demonstrated to the Pythagoreans the existence of the irrational. What are the ontological and epistemological questions posed by a building that seeks to bring commensurability into harmony with the irrational? How does the self-reflexivity of the building's famous refinements inflect such questions? In a temple dedicated to Athena, goddess of wisdom and craft, what is the relationship of *technē* to philosophical thought?

With Seth Estrin (University of Chicago)
Laura Gawlinski (Loyola University Chicago)
Geoff Lehman (Bard College Berlin)

4.30 – 6.30. Session Three. Liberal Education, Ancient and Modern.

Lehman and Weinman argue that we ought to read the Parthenon as a mediator between the earliest Greek reception of procedural mathematical knowledge from the ancient Near-East and the canonization of *proof-theoretical* mathematical knowledge as part a liberal arts education in Plato's Academy, (at least) somewhat more than a century after Plato wrote the *Republic*. In this session, we critically examine the evidence for such a "reading" of the trajectory from the seventh to third centuries and why it matters for thinking about the place of mathematics in a liberal arts curriculum today.

With Geoff Lehman (Bard College Berlin)
Stuart Patterson (Shimer/North Central College)
Jarrell Robinson (Independent Scholar)
Michael Weinman (Bard College Berlin)

6.30. Closing remarks.