Xenophon: Symposium 2.1
Xenophon. Xenophon in Seven Volumes, 4. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA; William Heinemann, Ltd., London. 1979.
http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0212%3Atext%3DSym.%3Achapter%3D2%3Asection%3D1

[2.1] When the tables had been removed and the guests had poured a libation and sung a hymn, there entered a man from Syracuse, to give them an evening's merriment. He had with him a fine flute-girl, a dancing-girl—one of those skilled in acrobatic tricks,—and a very handsome boy, who was expert at playing the cither and at dancing; the Syracusan made money by exhibiting their performances as a spectacle.

[2] They now played for the assemblage, the flute-girl on the flute, the boy on the cither; and it was agreed that both furnished capital amusement. Thereupon Socrates remarked: “On my word, Callias, you are giving us a perfect dinner; for not only have you set before us a feast that is above criticism, but you are also offering us very delightful sights and sounds.”

[3] “Suppose we go further,” said Callias, “and have some one bring us some perfume, so that we may dine in the midst of pleasant odours, also.” “No, indeed!” replied Socrates. “For just as one kind of dress looks well on a woman and another kind on a man, so the odours appropriate to men and to women are diverse. No man, surely, ever uses perfume for a man's sake. And as for the women, particularly if they chance to be young brides, like the wives of Niceratus here and Critobulus, how can they want any additional perfume? For that is what they are redolent of, themselves.2 The odour of the olive oil, on the other hand, that is used in the gymnasium is more delightful when you have it on your flesh than perfume is to women, and when you lack it, the want of it is more keenly felt.

[4] Indeed, so far as perfume is concerned, when once a man has anointed himself with it, the scent forthwith is all one whether he be slave or free; but the odours that result from the exertions of freemen demand primarily noble pursuits engaged in for many years if they are to be sweet and suggestive of freedom.”
“That may do for young fellows,” observed Lycon; “but what of us who no longer exercise in the gymnasia? What should be our distinguishing scent?”
“Nobility of soul, surely!” replied Socrates.
“And where may a person get this ointment?” “Certainly not from the perfumers,” said Socrates.
“But where, then?”
“Theognis has said: ‘Good men teach good; society with bad will but corrupt the good mind that you had.’”

[5] “Do you hear that, my son?” asked Lycon.
“Yes, indeed he does,” said Socrates; “and he puts it into practice, too. At any rate, when he desired to become a prize-winner in the pancratium, [he availed himself of your help to discover the champions in that sport and associated with them; and so, if he desires to learn the ways of virtue,]1 he will again with your help seek out the man who seems to him most proficient in this way of life and will associate with him.”

[6] Thereupon there was a chorus of voices. “Where will he find an instructor in this subject?” said one. Another maintained that it could not be taught at all. A third asserted that this could be learned if anything could.

[7] “Since this is a debatable matter,” suggested Socrates, “let us reserve it for another time; for the present let us finish what we have on hand. For I see that the dancing girl here is standing ready, and that some one is bringing her some hoops.”

[8] At that, the other girl began to accompany the dancer on the flute, and a boy at her elbow handed her up the hoops until he had given her twelve. She took these and as she danced kept throwing them whirling into the air, observing the proper height to throw them so as to catch them in a regular rhythm.

[9] As Socrates looked on he remarked: “This girl's feat, gentlemen, is only one of many proofs that woman's nature is really not a whit inferior to man's, except in its lack of judgment and physical strength. So if any one of you has a wife, let him confidently set about teaching her whatever he would like to have her know.”

[10] “If that is your view, Socrates,” asked Antisthenes, “how does it come that you don't practise what you preach by yourself educating Xanthippe, but live with a wife who is the hardest to get along with of all the women there are—yes, or all that ever were, I suspect, or ever will be?”

“Because,” he replied, “I observe that men who wish to become expert horsemen do not get the most docile horses but rather those that are high-mettled, believing that if they can manage this kind, they will easily handle any other. My course is similar. Mankind at large is what I wish to deal and associate with; and so I have got her, well assured that if I can endure her, I shall have no difficulty in my relations with all the rest of human kind.”

These words, in the judgment of the guests, did not go wide of the mark.

[11] But now there was brought in a hoop set all around with upright swords; over these the dancer turned somersaults into the hoop and out again, to the dismay of the onlookers, who thought that she might suffer some mishap. She, however, went through this performance fearlessly and safely.

[12] Then Socrates, drawing Antisthenes' attention, said: “Witnesses of this feat, surely, will never again deny, I feel sure, that courage, like other things, admits of being taught, when this girl, in spite of her sex, leaps so boldly in among the swords!”

[13] “Well, then,” asked Antisthenes, “had this Syracusan not better exhibit his dancer to the city and announce that if the Athenians will pay him for it he will give all the men of Athens the courage to face the spear?”

[14] “Well said!” interjected Philip. “I certainly should like to see Peisander the politician1 learning to turn somersaults among the knives; for, as it is now, his inability to look spears in the face makes him shrink even from joining the army.”

[15] At this point the boy performed a dance, eliciting from Socrates the remark, “Did you notice that, handsome as the boy is, he appears even handsomer in the poses of the dance than when he is at rest?”
“It looks to me,” said Charmides, “as if you were puffing the dancing-master.”

[16] “Assuredly,” replied Socrates; “and I remarked something else, too,—that no part of his body was idle during the dance, but neck, legs, and hands were all active together. And that is the way a person must dance who intends to increase the suppleness of his body. And for myself,” he continued, addressing the Syracusan, “I should be delighted to learn the figures from you.”
“What use will you make of them?” the other asked. “I will dance, by Zeus.”

[17] This raised a general laugh; but Socrates, with a perfectly grave expression on his face, said: “You are laughing at me, are you? Is it because I want to exercise to better my health? Or because I want to take more pleasure in my food and my sleep? Or is it because I am eager for such exercises as these, not like the long-distance runners, who develop their legs at the expense of their shoulders, nor like the prize-fighters, who develop their shoulders but become thin-legged, but rather with a view to giving my body a symmetrical development by exercising it in every part?

[18] Or are you laughing because I shall not need to hunt up a partner to exercise with, or to strip, old as I am, in a crowd, but shall find a moderate-sized room1 large enough for me (just as but now this room was

large enough for the lad here to get up a sweat in), and because in winter I shall exercise under cover, and when it is very hot, in the shade?
[19] Or is this what provokes your laughter, that I have an unduly large paunch and wish to reduce it? Don't you know that just the other day Charmides here caught me dancing early in the morning?"
"Indeed I did," said Charmides; "and at first I was dumbfounded and feared that you were going stark mad; but when I heard you say much the same things as you did just now, I myself went home, and although I did not dance, for I had never learned how, I practised shadow-boxing, for I knew how to do that."

[20] "Undoubtedly," said Philip; "at any rate, your legs appear so nearly equal in weight to your shoulders that I imagine if you were to go to the market commissioners and put your lower parts in the scale against your upper parts, as if they were loaves of bread,1 they would let you off without a fine."
"When you are ready to begin your lessons, Socrates," said Callias, "pray invite me, so that I may be opposite you in the figures and may learn with you."

[21] "Come," said Philip, "let me have some flute music, so that I may dance too."
So he got up and mimicked in detail the dancing of both the boy and the girl.

[22] To begin with, since the company had applauded the way the boy's natural beauty was increased by the grace of the dancing postures, Philip made a burlesque out of the performance by rendering every part of his body that was in motion more grotesque than it naturally was; and whereas the girl had bent backward until she resembled a hoop, he tried to do the same by bending forward. Finally, since they had given the boy applause for putting every part of his body into play in the dance, he told the flute girl to hit up the time faster, and danced away, flinging out legs, hands, and head all at the same time;

[23] and when he was quite exhausted, he exclaimed as he laid himself down: "Here is proof, gentlemen, that my style of dancing, also, gives excellent exercise; it has certainly given me a thirst; so let the servant fill me up the big goblet."

[24] "Certainly," replied Callias; "and the same for us, for we are thirsty with laughing at you."

Here Socrates again interposed. "Well, gentlemen," said he, "so far as drinking is concerned, you have my hearty approval; for wine does of a truth 'moisten the soul'1 and lull our griefs to sleep just as the mandragora does with men, at the same time awakening kindly feelings as oil quickens a flame.

[25] However, I suspect that men's bodies fare the same as those of plants that grow in the ground. When God gives the plants water in floods to drink, they cannot stand up straight or let the breezes blow through them; but when they drink only as much as they enjoy, they grow up very straight and tall and come to full and abundant fruitage.

[26] So it is with us. If we pour ourselves immense draughts, it will be no long time before both our bodies and our minds reel, and we shall not be able even to draw breath, much less to speak sensibly; but if the servants frequently 'besprinkle' us—if I too may use a Gorgian1 expression—with small cups, we shall thus not be driven on by the wine to a state of intoxication, but instead shall be brought by its gentle persuasion to a more sportive mood."

[2.27] This resolution received a unanimous vote, with an amendment added by Philip to the effect that the wine-pourers should emulate skilful charioteers by driving the cups around with ever increasing speed. This the wine-pourers proceeded to do.

[3.1] After this the boy, attuning his lyre to the flute, played and sang, and won the applause of all; and brought from Charmides the remark, "It seems to me, gentlemen, that, as Socrates said of the wine, so this blending of the young people's beauty and of the notes of the music lulls one's griefs to sleep and awakens the goddess of Love."

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[7.2] When they had finished, a potter's wheel was brought in for the dancing girl on which she intended performing some feats of jugglery.

This prompted Socrates to observe to the Syracusan: “Sir, it is quite probable that, to use your words, I am indeed a ‘thinker’; at any rate, I am now considering how it might be possible for this lad of yours and this maid to exert as little effort as may be, and at the same time give us the greatest possible amount of pleasure in watching them,—this being your purpose, also, I am sure.

[7.3] Now, turning somersaults in among knives seems to me to be a dangerous exhibition, which is utterly out of place at a banquet. Also, to write or read aloud on a whirling potter's wheel may perhaps be something of a feat; yet I cannot conceive what pleasure even this can afford. Nor is it any more diverting to watch the young and beautiful going through bodily contortions and imitating hoops than to contemplate them in repose.

[4] For it is of course no rare event to meet with marvels, if that is what one's mind is set on. He may marvel at what he finds immediately at hand,—for instance, why the lamp gives light owing to its having a bright flame, while a bronze mirror, likewise bright, does not produce light but instead reflects other things that appear in it; or how it comes about that olive oil, though wet, makes the flame higher, while water, because it is wet, puts the fire out.

[7.5] However, these questions also fail to promote the same object that wine does; but if the young people were to have a flute accompaniment and dance figures depicting the Graces, the Horae,1 and the Nymphs, I believe that they would be far less wearied themselves and that the charms of the banquet would be greatly enhanced.”
“Upon my word, Socrates,” replied the Syracusan, “you are quite right; and I will bring in a spectacle that will delight you.”
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[9.2] After he had withdrawn, a chair of state, first of all, was set down in the room, and then the Syracusan came in with the announcement: “Gentlemen, Ariadne will now enter the chamber set apart for her and Dionysus; after that, Dionysus, a little flushed with wine drunk at a banquet of the gods, will come to join her; and then they will disport themselves together.”

[9.3] Then, to start proceedings, in came Ariadne, apparelled as a bride, and took her seat in the chair. Dionysus being still invisible, there was heard the Bacchic music played on a flute. Then it was that the assemblage was filled with admiration of the dancing master. For as soon as Ariadne heard the strain, her action was such that every one might have perceived her joy at the sound; and although she did not go to meet Dionysus, nor even rise, yet it was clear that she kept her composure with difficulty.

[4] But when Dionysus caught sight of her, he came dancing toward her and in a most loving manner sat himself on her lap, and putting his arms about her gave her a kiss. Her demeanour was all modesty, and yet she returned his embrace with affection. As the banqueters beheld it, they kept clapping and crying “encore!”

[5] Then when Dionysus arose and gave his hand to Ariadne to rise also, there was presented the impersonation of lovers kissing and caressing each other. The onlookers viewed a Dionysus truly handsome, an Ariadne truly fair, not presenting a burlesque but offering genuine kisses with their lips; and they were all raised to a high pitch of enthusiasm as they looked on.

[6] For they overheard Dionysus asking her if she loved him, and heard her vowing that she did, so earnestly that not only Dionysus but all the bystanders as well would have taken their oaths in confirmation that the

youth and the maid surely felt a mutual affection. For theirs was the appearance not of actors who had been taught their poses but of persons now permitted to satisfy their long-cherished desires.

[9.7] At last, the banqueters, seeing them in each other's embrace and obviously leaving for the bridal couch, those who were unwedded swore that they would take to themselves wives, and those who were already married mounted horse and rode off to their wives that they might enjoy them. As for Socrates and the others who had lingered behind, they went out with Callias to join Lycon and his son in their walk.
So broke up the banquet held that evening.