Q1 The default historical context for early Christian social formation was the dining room in the house church.
- **Fellows**: 0.79 Red 68% R 09% P 14% G 09% B
- **Associates**: 0.98 Red 94% 06% 00% 00%

Q2 The community meal of early Christians followed the model of the Greco-Roman banquet.
- **Fellows**: 0.88 Red 73% R 18% P 09% G 00% B
- **Associates**: 0.96 Red 88% 13% 00% 00%

Q3 The worship of the community took place at the table during the symposium portion of the meal.
- **Fellows**: 0.80 Red 64% R 18% P 14% G 05% B
- **Associates**: 0.96 Red 88% 13% 00% 00%

Q4 Early Christians gathered for meals because that is what groups did in the Greco-Roman world.
- **Fellows**: 0.85 Red 68% R 23% P 05% G 05% B
- **Associates**: 1.00 Red 1.00 00% 00% 00%

Q5 Stories about meals of Jesus were generative of early Christian community meals.
- **Fellows**: 0.45 Gray 14% R 32% P 32% G 23% B
- **Associates**: 0.27 Gray 06% 00% 63% 31%

Q6 Stories about meals of Jesus arose in the context of early Christian meal gatherings.
- **Fellows**: 0.76 Red 59% R 14% P 23% G 05% B
- **Associates**: 0.88 Red 69% 25% 06% 00%

Q7 There was no trajectory of historical practice extending from the meal practice of the historical Jesus to the meal practice of the early church.
- **Fellows**: 0.41 Gray 27% R 05% P 32% G 36% B
- **Associates**: 0.54 Pink 38% 19% 13% 31%

Q8 Early Christian groups adapted the Greco-Roman banquet in diverse ways.
- **Fellows**: 0.94 Red 81% R 19% P 00% G 00% B
- **Associates**: 0.98 Red 94% 06% 00% 00%

Ballot 8
The Greco-Roman Meal Tradition
Dennis Smith

The so-called Secret Gospel of Mark has come under criticism in recent years, accused of being a hoax perpetrated by Morton Smith, who in 1972 first proposed the existence of this ancient variation of Mark when he published a previously unknown fragment of a letter by Clement of Alexandria. Since Morton Smith died several years ago and can no longer defend his arguments, and since the original manuscript which he published in transcription is no longer available for scholarly study, the debate about the authenticity of Secret Mark has become particularly dicey.

Three papers were presented on this issue. Charles Hedrick (“Evaluating Morton Smith: Hoaxer Outed or Colleague Slandered?”) and Marvin Meyer (“Secret Mark: The Debate Goes On”) argued that Secret Mark was not a hoax by Morton Smith. Dennis MacDonald (“The Naked Truth about the Naked Youth: Why the Secret Gospel of Mark is a Modern Hoax”) proposed that it was a hoax by Morton Smith, but rather than arguing for that position in detail he made a case that canonical Mark can be understood as is, without the variation provided by Secret Mark.

Hedrick answered the arguments recently proposed by Stephen Carlson (The Gospel Hoax: Morton Smith’s Invention of Secret Mark, 2005). He noted that many of Carlson’s arguments are ad hominem in nature and so should be dismissed, since, whether or not Morton Smith was the misanthrope that Carlson and others take him to have been, that does not make him a dishonest scholar. As for the opportunity of Smith to create such an ancient manuscript, Hedrick points out the difficulty of doing so under the field conditions in which he was working. Furthermore, Hedrick argues, it is exceedingly difficult to develop the skill to forge an ancient document and those who knew and worked with Morton Smith testify that he did not have that skill.

Meyer takes up the argument from a different perspective, noting how scholars such as Helmut Koester and John
Dominic Crossan have concluded that the Secret Mark fragments make good sense of difficult texts in Mark in regard to the *neaniskos* or youth. Therefore both Koester and Crossan have concluded, on form critical grounds, that Secret Mark is a precursor to canonical Mark. When it was excluded from canonical Mark, as described in the fragmentary letter of Clement, then that left the problematic text in Mark 14:51–52. Meyer argues further that both Koester and Crossan have concluded, on form critical grounds, that Secret Mark is a precursor to canonical Mark.
Secret Mark and canonical Mark present the *neaniskos* as a paradigm of discipleship.

MacDonald makes a case for the sufficiency of the *neaniskos* stories in canonical Mark as they are. He argues that these stories represent an imitation in Mark of the story of Elpenor in Homer. In both cases, young men are presented who "reenter the narrative at dawn several days after their deaths (a symbolic death in the case of Mark’s fleeing youth)."

The ballot addressed the various issues associated with Secret Mark. Fellows and Associates rejected the propos-

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**Ballot 6**  
**And So We Left Troy-Troas**  
**Dennis MacDonald**

**Q1** The first person narrative of the sea voyage from Troas in Acts 16:10–18 is written in imitation of first person narratives of sea voyages in Homer’s Odyssey.  
**Fellows** 0.62 Pink 25% R 40% P 30% G 05% B  
**Associates** 0.88 Red 64% 36% 00% 00%

**Q2** The first person narrative of the sea voyage from Troas in Acts 20:5–15 is written in imitation of first person narratives of sea voyages in Homer’s Odyssey.  
**Fellows** 0.65 Pink 25% R 45% P 30% G 00% B  
**Associates** 0.88 Red 64% 36% 00% 00%

**Q3** The first person narrative of the sea voyage in Acts 21:1–18 is written in imitation of first person narratives of sea voyages in Homer’s Odyssey.  
**Fellows** 0.65 Pink 25% R 45% P 30% G 00% B  
**Associates** 0.90 Red 71% 29% 00% 00%

**Q4** The first person narrative of the sea voyage and shipwreck in Acts 27:1–28:16 is written in imitation of first person narratives of sea voyages in Homer’s Odyssey.  
**Fellows** 0.67 Pink 30% R 40% P 30% G 00% B  
**Associates** 0.90 Red 71% 29% 00% 00%

**Q5** The narrator of Acts intends the reader to connect the first person narratives with the narrator.  
**Fellows** 0.83 Red 57% R 33% P 10% G 00% B  
**Associates** 0.95 Red 86% 14% 00% 00%

**Q6** The narrator of Acts was a companion on Paul’s sea voyages.  
**Fellows** 0.02 Black 00% R 00% P 05% G 95% B  
**Associates** 0.03 Black 00% 00% 08% 92%

**Q7** The narrator of Acts assumed a pseudo identity as a companion on Paul’s sea voyages.  
**Fellows** 0.86 Red 57% R 43% P 00% G 00% B  
**Associates** 0.95 Red 85% 15% 00% 00%

**Q8** Luke-Acts was originally composed under the pseudonym of Luke.  
**Fellows** 0.44 Gray 05% R 38% P 43% G 14% B  
**Associates** 0.62 Pink 07% 71% 21% 00%

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MacDonald proposed that the author of Acts wrote his shipwreck stories (Acts 16:10–18, 20:5–15, 21:1–18, 27:1–28:16) in imitation of first person sea voyage stories in Homer’s *Odyssey*. The Fellows voted pink on Homer as the source while the Associates voted red. MacDonald also argued that the narrator intended the reader to connect the first person narratives with the narrator but that this was a pseudo-identity for the narrator. Fellows and Associates concurred. However, Fellows voted gray on MacDonald’s argument that Luke-Acts was originally written under the pseudonym of “Luke;” Associates gave it a pink vote.