



Probabilities, Hypotheticals, and Counterfactuals in Ancient Greek Thought

From Cambridge University Press



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This volume explores the conceptual terrain defined by the Greek word *eikos*: the probable, likely, or reasonable. A term of art in Greek rhetoric, a defining feature of literary fiction, a seminal mode of historical, scientific, and philosophical inquiry, *eikos* was a way of thinking about the probable and improbable, the factual and counterfactual, the hypothetical and the real. These thirteen original and provocative essays examine the plausible arguments of courtroom speakers and the 'likely stories' of philosophers, verisimilitude in art and literature, the likelihood of resemblance in human reproduction, the limits of human knowledge and the possibilities of ethical and political agency. The first synthetic study of probabilistic thinking in ancient Greece, the volume illuminates a fascinating chapter in the history of Western thought.

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About the Author

Victoria Wohl is Professor of Classics at the University of Toronto. She works on the literature and culture of classical Athens. Her research spans a variety of genres, poetic and prosaic, and focuses on the social relations, political thought, and psychic life of democratic Athens. In particular she is interested in the intersection among these three fields and the role of literature in articulating and negotiating their interaction. Her previously published work includes *Law's Cosmos: Juridical Discourse in Athenian Forensic Oratory* (2010), *Love Among the Ruins: The Erotics of Democracy in Classical Athens* (2002) and *Intimate Commerce: Exchange, Gender, and Subjectivity in Greek Tragedy* (1998).

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