

HON 2223: Sexuality & Gender in the Ancient World

Spring 2008

MWF 9:00-9:50

Dr. Maria S. Marsilio

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Office hours: MW 11:00-3:00; F 11:00-1:00; and by appointment

Description:

A study of the ancient Greek and Roman cultural constructions of gender through reading of legal, philosophical, medical, historical, religious, and literary works. We will examine the connections between the ancient ideology of gender and the legal, social, religious, and economic roles of women in Greek and Roman cultures. We will also compare this ancient ideology of gender with conceptions of masculinity and femininity in modern American culture.

Course Objectives:

This course is discussion-driven. The instructor will lecture occasionally, but only in order to provide important background that will help place the class discussions in proper context. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings for each class and to attend every class prepared and eager to engage in questioning, debate, and discussion about the course topics and problems with their instructor and classmates. As a class we will examine a diverse body of evidence including:

- Male and female in Athenian myth.
- Male and female roles within the family structure (*oikos*)
- Male and female incorporations within the Athenian polis. This includes legal rules that defined their capabilities and restrictions as well as their economic status.
- Comments of 5th and 4th century writings about the “natures” and “characters” of men and women and their differences. How did these reflect women's role in the social organization of the polis and how can they be seen to justify it?
- The role of women in the rituals of the Athenian state.
- How conditions for women changed in Hellenistic Greece.
- How certain Roman institutions compared/contrasted to those of classical Greece and how they affected the position of women. In what sense were Roman women “emancipated?”

Required Texts:

Hadas, Moses, et al. *Aristophanes: The Complete Plays of Aristophanes*. Bantam Classics, 1984. ISBN: 0553213431.

Grant, Michael. *Cicero: Selected Political Speeches*. Penguin Books, 1989. ISBN: 0140442146.

Corrigan, Robert W. *Classical Tragedy: Greek and Roman*. Applause, 2000. ISBN: 1557830460.

Athanassakis, Apostolos N. Hesiod, *The Works and Days; Theogony; The Shield of Herakles*. 2nd ed. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. ISBN: 0801879841.

Fantham, Elaine, et al. *Women in the Classical World: Image and Text*. Oxford, 1995. ISBN: 0195098625.

Lefkowitz, Mary R. and Maureen B. Fant. *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*. 3rd ed. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005. ISBN: 0801883105.

Requirements:

Completion of all required readings and active participation in class discussions. **25%**

One mid-term examination on Friday, February 22. **25%**
This exam will include passages from our readings for commentary and analysis.

One oral presentation to be delivered in class on a selected topic on our course syllabus. Students will research and present their work in pairs. **25%**

One final research paper (8-10 pages), which will be due during the week of final examinations. The instructor will supply a list of suggested paper topics. **25%**

Tentative Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

M Jan 14: Introduction

W Jan 16: Sources for Sexuality and Gender in Antiquity

UNIT I: GREECE

F Jan 18: Images of a divided world
Readings: Homer, *Iliad* 6. 237-529 (xerox)

M Jan 21: No class – Martin Luther King Holiday

W Jan 23 Hesiodic cosmology
Readings: Hesiod, *Theogony*

F Jan 25 The birth of Woman and misogyny
Readings: Hesiod, *Works and Days* lines 1-106
Semonides, *On Women* (L&F #57)

- M Jan 28 Athenian visions of gender in Sparta
 Readings: L&F # 95-100
 Alcman, *Partheneion* (L&F #401)
 WCW chapter 2, pp. 56-67
- W Jan 30 Gender and the Polis in Classical Athens
 Readings: WCW chapter 3, pp. 68-83
 Selections from Aristotle's *Politics* (L&F #72)
- F Feb 1 Slaves, Men, Women and Children in Classical Athens
 Readings: Selections from Aristotle's *Politics* (L&F #72)
 Slides: Slaves, Men, Women and Children
- M Feb 4 Athenian cult and ritual
 Readings: Homeric Hymn to Demeter (L&F #393)
 WCW chapter 3, pp. 83-96
Report: Festival of Thesmophoria
- W Feb 6 Athenian cult and ritual
 Readings: WCW chapter 3, pp. 83-96
 Festival of the Panathenaia (illustrated with slides)
- F Feb 8 Athenian married life: images and realities
 Readings: WCW chapter 3, pp. 96-113
 Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* (L&F #267)
 Lysias, *On the Murder of Eratosthenes* (L&F #88)
- M Feb 11 Sexuality outside the household
 Readings: WCW chapter 3, pp. 113-127
 Demosthenes, *Against Neaera* (L&F #90)
 L&F #286-288
- W Feb 13 Athenian mythology: The Amazons
 Readings: WCW chapter 4, pp. 128-135
 Slides: Goddesses, Whores, Wives, Amazons
- F Feb 15 Childhood and Education
 Slides: Coming of Age in Ancient Greece

- M Feb 18 Archaic lyric poetry: images of sexuality
 Readings: Selected poems of Sappho (L&F #1-6)
 L&F #226-232
Report: Relationships Between Women and Female Homosexuality (L&F #1-6; L&F #226-232)
- W Feb 20 Archaic lyric poetry: images of sexuality
 Readings: Male erotic lyric (L&F #234)
Report: Male Prostitution and Homosexuality (L&F #72, 74, 100, 241)
- F Feb 22 Examination
- M Feb 25 The Rape/Seduction of Helen and the Trojan War
Report: Greek views of Helen
- W Feb 27 Classical Greek Tragedy
 Readings: Aeschylus, *Oresteia: Agamemnon*
- F Feb 29 Classical Greek Tragedy
 Readings: Aeschylus, *Oresteia: The Libation Bearers*
- March 3-9: Spring Break
- M March 10 Classical Greek Tragedy
 Readings: Aeschylus, *Oresteia: The Eumenides*
Report: The Trial Scene of Eumenides
- W March 12 Classical Greek Tragedy
 Reading: Sophocles, *Antigone*
Report: The Debate of Antigone and Creon
- F March 14 Classical Greek Tragedy
 Reading: Euripides, *Medea*
Report: Medea and Witchcraft (L&F #414-416)

- M March 17: Classical Greek Comedy
Readings: Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*
- W March 19 Theater in Spain
Guest: Dr. Robert Shannon
Professor of Spanish, Department of Foreign Languages
- March 21-24: Easter Break
- W March 26 Hellenistic Women
Readings: WCW chapter 5, pp. 136-182
- F March 28 Ancient biology and medicine
Readings: Selections from the Hippocratic Corpus (L&F #338-354)
WCW chapter 6, pp. 183-205
Report: The Female Reproductive System

UNIT II: ROME

- M March 31 Marriage and Family in Republican Rome
Readings: Selections from early Roman law (L&F #107-111)
WCW chapter 7, pp. 216-230
Slides: Roman Family Life
- W April 2 Roman Marriage by Rape/Seduction
Readings: Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* I.9-13: "Rape" of the Sabines (xerox)
- F April 4 Roman Religion
Readings: WCW chapter 7, pp. 230-242
Report: The Guardianship of Women and Vestal Virgins
(L&F #107-111; L&F #408-411; L&F #71)
- M April 7 Etruscan Women
Readings: WCW chapter 8, pp. 243-259
Power Point: Etruscan Gallery at Penn Museum
- W April 9 Women at Work
Readings: Female Occupations (L&F #283-337)

WCW chapter 9, pp. 260-279
Report: Women and War

- F April 11 Roman noblewomen: representation
Readings: WCW chapter 10, pp. 280-293
Cicero, *Pro Caelio* (Clodia Metelli)
- M April 14 Augustan laws on marriage and adultery
Readings: (L&F #120-129)
WCW chapter 11, pp. 294-329
Report: Adultery at Rome (L&F #123-125)
- April 16-18 No classes – Dr. Marsilio at CAMWS conference
- M April 21 Images of Cleopatra at Rome
Reading: Horace, *Odes* 1.37 and I.38 (xerox)
- W April 23 Transgendered Moments: Vergil's *Aeneid*
Report: The Tragedy of Dido
- F April 25 Rome and Pompeii: Power Point