

The College of the Humanities
Classical Civilizations
CLCV 2405: GREEK AND ROMAN SEXUALITY

Prof. Shawna Dolansky

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Lectures: Mondays 6:05-8:55 PM @ UC 180

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30-1:30

COURSE OBJECTIVES: To gain some insight into ancient sexuality and categories of gender using primary sources. A close reading of literary sources in translation is supplemented by the wide body of artistic evidence available from the ancient world on this topic (in the form of vase-paintings, sculpture, wall-paintings, and everyday objects).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

- have acquired a knowledge of ancient Greek and Roman sexuality and sexual activities, be able to describe in detail what sexuality meant and how it functioned in ancient Greece and Rome, and be able to outline how ancient sexual categories differ from our own
- address the possible symbolism and meaning of content/subject matter in ancient art within its specific and larger social/historical context
- to understand the discourse surrounding the male and female body in the ancient world
- read, comprehend, and sum up ancient literary sources in translation concerning sexuality

LEARNING OUTCOMES/TRANSFERABLE SKILLS:

Students completing this course are expected to have acquired:

- an understanding of the importance of historical perspective, and how social norms and customs, and the construction of sexuality, are products of time, events and context
- an appreciation of the ways in which gender is constructed and roles and boundaries reinforced within a given society
- a developed understanding of the limits of primary evidence as embodying actual historical fact

EVALUATION:

1. Weekly quizzes, 5% each for 9 quizzes; total of 45%
2. Group presentations: 30% (10% for written proposal, due Oct 15th; 20% for final presentation)
2. Final exam: 25%

Note: There are no make-up quizzes. Quizzes are held at the beginning of each class. Absence or tardiness causing you to miss a quiz will result in a grade of zero for that quiz without exception - unless you have a doctor's note excusing the absence or tardiness.

Required Reading (books have been ordered through the campus bookstore):

1. M. Johnson: *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Literature and Society: A Sourcebook*
NOTE this book is available as an e-book through the Carleton library
2. Online selections as listed in schedule (below)

SCHEDULE

Sept 10 Introduction: Gender, Sex, and Reading Ancient Texts

Sept 17 The Oresteia

QUIZ 1

READ (at home, before class): Johnson intro

WATCH (at home, before class):

Women in Classical Greek Drama in live streaming format : available through the library database Films on Demand. You can find this by doing a TITLE search in the library catalogue <http://catalogue.library.carleton.ca/> - and then click on the link "Films on Demand" in the centre of the catalogue entry.

Sept 24 Fertility and Religion

QUIZ 2

READ: Johnson ch 1 & 2

Oct 1 Gender & Paradigm: Penelope & Pandora

QUIZ 3

READ: Johnson ch 3, AND

<http://www.stanford.edu/~plomio/penelope.html>

<http://www.stoa.org/diotima/anthology/eratosthenes.shtml>

<http://bacchicstage.wordpress.com/euripides/medea/>

Oct 8 THANKSGIVING - NO CLASS

Oct 15 Gender & Sex

QUIZ 4

ONE PAGE PRESENTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE IN CLASS

READ:

<http://www.stoa.org/diotima/anthology/wlgr/wlgr-privatelife267.shtml> (Xenophon *Oeconomicus*)

<http://www.uh.edu/~cldue/texts/demeter.html> (Homeric Hymn to Demeter)

<http://bacchicstage.wordpress.com/> (go to "Aeschylus" and "Suppliant Maidens")

<http://bacchicstage.wordpress.com/> (go to "Euripides" and "Hekabe")

Oct 22 Women's Bodies

QUIZ 5

READ: Johnson ch 4, 6, & 7

Oct 29 Men's Bodies

QUIZ 6

READ: Johnson ch 5

AND:

<http://bacchicstage.wordpress.com/> (go to Euripides "Hippolytus")

<http://bacchicstage.wordpress.com/> (go to Euripides "Ion")

<http://www.stoa.org/hopper/text.jsp?doc=Stoa:text:2002.01.0004> (David Konstan "Enacting Eros")

Nov 5 Boundary Crossing

QUIZ 7

<http://bacchicstage.wordpress.com/> (go to Euripides "Bacchae")

<http://bacchicstage.wordpress.com/> (go to Sophocles "Women of Trachis")

Nov 12 **The Lysistrata**

QUIZ 8

<http://bacchicstage.wordpress.com/> (go to Aristophanes "Lysistrata")

Nov 19 **Sexual Aids & Guides**

QUIZ 9

READ: Johnson ch 8

Nov 26 **GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

Dec 3 **GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

POTENTIAL GROUP PRESENTATION TOPICS:

Ideals of femininity in ancient Greece & Rome

Ideals of masculinity in ancient Greece & Rome

Victorian suppression of classical erotica, and its effects on our understanding of ancient civilizations

Sex and gender in Greek drama

Sex and gender in Roman law

The construction of homosexuality: Foucault and feminism

Sex and gender in Apuleius' *The Golden Ass*

Sex and gender in ancient Sparta

On Monday Sept 24, I will pass around a sign-up sheet with the above topics listed, and ask students to list your names in the spaces under your desired topic. If more than 4 people sign up for a given topic, we will work out a way in which 2 groups can present material on the same topic that does not overlap too greatly. Group members will exchange contact information. If a group of you independently and in advance of Sept 24 decide on a topic that is not listed, you must obtain approval from me prior to Sept 24.

The presentation:

As a group, decide your approach to the research of your chosen topic, and divide the work equally among yourselves. Do some preliminary research to see what books and journals are available for the focus you wish to take in your presentation. On October 15th you will hand in a two page proposal (typed, double-spaced) that outlines your general topic, and the specific research directions on this topic that each member of the group will be pursuing. Include in the specific details: what research questions you are asking; which secondary texts you will be consulting, and which primary texts you will be using as examples. Also include the format which your 15 minute class presentation will take, e.g. powerpoint, play performance with separate oral explanation, posters, staged debate, etc. All class presentations will require a verbal explanation of your main points, as well as the use of specific (enacted) examples from ancient art, drama, texts, etc. to visually illustrate the points you're making. Presentations will be primarily marked on sophistication and depth of content, secondarily on creativity in demonstration of that content.