

ARH 215/CLST 243/VMS 209: Representing Women in the Classical World

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NB: this syllabus is from Spring 2013; subject to change

Course synopsis: This course examines the lives of women in Ancient Greece primarily through the evidence provided by archaeology and material culture, although we will also consider the information provided by written sources. We will explore some of the following questions: what does a proper/good woman look like? What does a prostitute look like? What does it mean if you can't tell the difference visually between the two? Why is being beautiful so important for women? Why was female chastity and the control of female sexuality such a preoccupation of men? By analyzing how women are represented in Greek art and literature, we explore the role of visual and written sources in communicating complex social, cultural, and political messages. The final weeks of the class will be focused on the trial of Neaira, a woman who had been a courtesan (a high-class sex worker) earlier in her life.

This course is writing intensive and fulfills a W Mode of Inquiry.

Key issues/questions to be explored – implicitly if not explicitly:

- How were women represented in the visual and material cultures of ancient Greece?
- What messages about women were the images meant to express?
- How does the way a woman is represented change with age, status, identity, geography?
- Are there any instances in which we can see women speaking or acting for themselves? Representing themselves? Or is everything mediated through a male point of view? And if so, what does that mean for the study of women in antiquity?
- What is the point of studying women in antiquity? Why does their history matter to us today?

Course Goals:

By the end of the course I hope you will have:

- developed spatial and visual skills for the analysis of images and material culture;
- developed skills to evaluate primary sources and to use them together with secondary sources to discuss current interpretations.
- You should be able to apply your knowledge and these skills objectively and flexibly to key issues and to express your ideas—both written and oral—in a coherent and thoughtful way.

Textbooks: S. Blundell, *Women in Classical Athens* (1998); S. Rotroff, *Women in the Athenian Agora* (2006). Additional assigned readings are posted on the Sakai website under Resources.

Assignments and Grading:

- Attendance/Participation = 10%
- Presentations x 2 at 10% each = 20%
- Short papers x 2 at 20% each = 40%
- Neaira defense project, paper (20%) and presentation (10%) = 30%

General policies, guidelines, and assignment instructions for the class:

- *Attendance/Participation:* Attendance is mandatory. In most cases the lectures do not review, but complement, the material covered in the readings. As this class only meets once a week, no more than one unexcused absence is allowed. Beyond that, half a letter grade is deducted from your participation grade for each additional absence. Students are expected to come to class with all of the assigned readings completed; the most successful students will have read each of the readings twice. This will allow you to participate actively and productively in class. Everyone should come to class with either a question about or a comment on the assigned readings.
- *Presentations:* Each student will give two in-class oral presentations, one on an assigned reading, the other on your research for the Neaira defense project. For the assigned reading presentation, the aim is to summarize the main aims of the author, the evidence that she or he uses to support their argument, and the conclusions the author draws.
- *Short papers:* Three papers, each no more than 5 **HANDWRITTEN** pages in length. The first stage is an initial handwritten draft of the paper; I will comment on the draft and then I will discuss those comments with you individually. You will then be required to revise the paper based on the written comments and our discussion. These papers will be shared with the class as a whole via the course website; we will also discuss the papers in class and have some peer-editing sessions. The final versions of these papers may either be handwritten or typed.

The first paper is a detailed and carefully composed description of an object in the Nasher that has something to do with women in the ancient world. The paper must include a detailed drawing of the object and its imagery. I will hand out a list of the objects from which you can choose. If the object is in study storage, you must make an appointment with Marianne Wardle (marianne.wardle@duke.edu) to arrange a time to see it. Please do this at least a week in advance, and remember that the museum is closed on Mondays.

The second paper must summarize the scholarly article that you will present orally to the class. Your summary should discuss the main aims of the author and the evidence that he or she uses to support their argument. What is the writer's thesis? What evidence does the author use? Does the author take issue with other writers? On what points does this author agree or disagree with earlier scholars? What are the main conclusions the author draws? The list of articles and the dates for their oral presentation is on the syllabus. Please choose the article you would like to write and present on by the second week of class.

The final paper is a summary of your research for the Neaira defense project. I will explain this project more fully in class; some general parameters of the project are laid out below. Students will work in teams on various background aspects – legal, social, culture, sexual – that will aid in composing a defense of the charges against Neaira. The final class will be an oral presentation of the various teams' research results.

The papers must be adequately and properly documented, particularly the final paper, with all the sources for your information acknowledged. Please visit the library website for tips on how to avoid plagiarism (<http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/index.html>); ask me if you are unsure about

methods and standards of scholarly citation. The paper must be in your own words – that is, I do not want you to quote extensively from your sources. **You are allowed to include only one direct quote for each paper. Please number your pages! Points will be deducted from your grade if you do not include page numbers.** Half a letter grade will also be deducted from any late drafts or final papers. If you are late to class on the day a draft or paper is due, then the paper is late.

Some recommendations for your papers: Please proofread both your drafts and your final versions with care. If you need help with the mechanics of writing – punctuation, grammar, organization, clarity of expression – I highly recommend a trip to the Writing Studio for both the drafts and the final papers. The best, most successful drafts will not actually be first drafts – first drafts, even if you are a good writer, are usually terrible. Writing is a process; it is hard and it takes time. The same goes for the final versions of your papers: good, successful final versions (that is, those that merit an A) will be the result of a lot of hard work, rethinking, rewriting, and refining. Specialized terminology must be used, and used correctly.

Who are you writing for? Me, obviously, but I stand for the “general educated reader”. You are also writing for your classmates, who may not know the particular details of your chosen subject, but who are familiar with the basic history of the period and the general principles of the subject.

NB: Please be aware that both the drafts and the final versions of your papers will be graded. The drafts count for 25% of your final grade, and the final versions 75%. **The final versions of the paper may be typewritten. All drafts must be handwritten.**

The Neaira defense project

In mid-4th century Athens, a man named Apollodorus brought a case against a foreign woman named Neaira. He accused her of living with an Athenian citizen named Stephanos as his legal wife and passing off her children as Athenian citizens. Accusing someone of the fraudulent exercise of rights that belonged exclusively to Athenian citizens was a very serious charge. If convicted, Neaira would have been made a slave and would have lost all of her property. At the time of the trial, Neaira was probably in her 50s, an old woman by ancient Greek standards. Earlier in life – in her teens – she appears to have been a celebrity hetaera, a high-class courtesan who consorted with some of the most powerful and famous men of 4th century Greece. The speech given by the prosecution is the only one to survive. We will try to construct her defense by researching the following background topics:

- 1) the customs, beliefs/attitudes, and laws on dowry, marriage, divorce, adultery in Athens;
- 2) the customs, beliefs/attitudes, and laws on Athenian citizenship and paternity;
- 3) the customs, beliefs/attitudes, and laws on prostitutes and prostitution;
- 4) the courtesan in ancient Greece;
- 5) the workings of the Athenian law courts;
- 6) the political background of Athens in the mid-4th century BCE.

Course Outline

10 January: *Explanation of course content, assignments, and performative expectations; some problems of studying women in antiquity; Chronology and geography of ancient Greece; introduction to material culture – what does a woman look like? where are the women?*

17 January: *Female ideology, female status, and images of women - how do we “read” images of women? how to dissect and analyze an argument – visit from the Writing Studio*

Reading: read all of S. Blundell, *Women in Classical Athens* (1998); M. Henry & S.L. James, “Woman, City, State: Theories, Ideologies, and Concepts in the Archaic and Classical Periods,” in James & Dillon.

11:45-12:30: Visit to the Nasher Museum

24 January: *Women, the family, and the household*

Reading: L. Nevett, “Separation or Seclusion? Towards an archaeological approach to investigating women in the Greek household in the fifth to third centuries B.C.,” in M. Parker Pearson and C. Richards, *Architecture and Order* (1997) 98-112; R. Just, *Women in Athenian Law and Life*, Ch. 4, “Marriage and the State,” and Ch. 5, “Family and Property.”

2 Oral Reports: K. Stears, “Dead Women’s Society: Constructing Gender in Classical Athenian Sculpture”; R. Osborne, “Law, the Democratic Citizen and the Representation of Women in Classical Athens.” *Past and Present* 155 (1997): 3-33.

31 January: *Women and the law*

Reading: B. Levick, “Women and Law,” in James & Dillon; S. Blundell, “Women in Athenian Law and society,” ch. 11, 113-129 in *Women in Ancient Greece* (1995); R. Just, *Women in Athenian Law and Life*, Ch. 3, “Legal Capabilities.”

2 Oral Reports: C. Patterson, “Marriage and Adultery in Democratic Athens,” Chapter 4 in *The Family in Greek History* (1998) 107-137; D. Cohen, “The Law of Adultery,” 98-132, ch. 5 in *Law, Sexuality, and Society* (1991).

31st January: draft of the first paper is due.

7 February: *Women and public space*

Reading: read all of S.I. Rotroff, *Women in the Athenian Agora* (2006); L. Llewellyn-Jones, ‘House and veil in Ancient Greece’, in N. Fisher, R. Westgate and J. Whitley (eds.), *Building Communities: House, settlement and society in the Aegean and beyond* (2005) 251-58.

2 Oral Reports: Lisa C. Nevett, ‘Towards a Female Topography of the Ancient Greek City: Case Studies from Late Archaic and Early Classical Athens (c.520-400 BCE)’ *Gender & History* 23 (2011) 576–596; J. Davidson, “Bodymaps: Sexing Space and Zoning Gender in Classical Athens,” *Gender & History* 23 (2011) 597-614.

14 February: *Status – citizens, foreigners, slaves*

Reading: D. Cohen, “Seclusion, Separation, and the Status of Women in Classical Athens.” 134-145 in McAuslan & Walcot; C. Patterson, “Other Sorts: slaves, foreigners and women in Periclean Athens,” *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Pericles*, ed L.J. Samons (2007).

2 Oral Reports: A. Glazebrook, “The Bad Girls of Athens: The Image and Function of Hetairai in Judicial Oratory,” in *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World* (2006) 125-138; L. Dean-Jones, “The Cultural Construct of the Female Body in Classical Greek Science,” in *Women’s History & Ancient History* (1991) 111-137.

14th February: final version of first paper is due.

21 February: *Female Sexuality and Prostitution*

Reading: J. Davidson, “Women and Boys,” and “A Purchase on the Hetaera” chs. 3 & 4 in *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens*; K. Kapparis, “The Terminology of Prostitution in the Ancient Greek World,” 222-255 in Glazebrook & Henry.

3 Oral Reports: A. Glazebrook, “Porneion: Prostitution in Athenian Civic Space.” 34-59 in Glazebrook & Henry (2011); C.K. Blazeby, “Woman + Wine = Prostitute in Classical Athens?” 86-105 in Glazebrook & Henry (2011); E. Cohen, “Free and Unfree Sexual Work: An Economic Analysis of Athenian Prostitution.”

28 February: *Women and Greek Religion, part 1*

Reading: E. Stehle, “Women and Religion in Greece,” in James & Dillon; H. Foley, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (1994) Background: The Eleusinian Mysteries and Women’s Rites for Demeter,” pp. 65-75.

2 Oral Reports: J. Neils, “Looking for the Images: Representations of Girls’ Rituals in Ancient Athens,” in *Finding Persephone: Women’s Rituals in the Ancient Mediterranean* (2007) 55-78; M. Dillon, “Women Priests,” ch. 3 in *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion* (2002) 73-106.

28th February: draft of second paper is due.

7 March: *Women and Greek Religion, part 2*

Reading: E. Stehle, “Thesmophoria and Eleusinian Mysteries: The Fascination of Women’s Secret Ritual,” in *Finding Persephone: Women’s Rituals in the Ancient Mediterranean* (2007) 165-85; E. Vikela, “The Worship of Artemis in Attica: cult places, rites, iconography,” C. Hines, “The Paradox of Artemis in Greek Myth, Ritual, and Dedication.”

2 Oral Reports: J. Henderson, “Women and the Athenian Dramatic Festivals.” *TAPA* 121 (1991): 133-47; S. Goldhill, “Representing Democracy: Women at the Great Dionysia,” 347-69 in Osborne & Hornblower, eds., *Ritual, Finance, Politics: Athenian Democratic Accounts, Presented to David Lewis* (1994).

SPRING BREAK

21 March: *Introduction to the Case of Neaira*

Reading: Wikipedia article on Neaira at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neaira_\(hetaera\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neaira_(hetaera)); [Demosthenes], “Against Neaira,” speech no. 59, in V. Bers, *Demosthenes Speeches* 50-59, pp. 151-194; D. Hamel, *Trying Neaira: The True Story of a Courtesan’s Scandalous Life in Ancient Greece* (2003) preface and Part I, “Life as a Prostitute,” pp. ix-43.

21st March: final version of second paper due.

28 March: *The Neaira defense project – Library Research Meeting*

Reading: D. Hamel, *Trying Neaira: The True Story of a Courtesan’s Scandalous Life in Ancient Greece* (2003) Part II, “Stephanos and the Children,” pp. 47-113.

4 April: *The Neaira defense project – discussion of issues and problems*

Reading: D. Hamel, *Trying Neaira: The True Story of a Courtesan’s Scandalous Life in Ancient Greece* (2003) Part III, “The Trial and its Antecedents,” 117-162.

11 April: *The Neaira defense project –discussion of issues and problems*

Reading: C. Patterson, “The Case against Neaira and the Public Ideology of the Athenian Family,” in *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology* (1994) pp. 199-216.

11th April: draft of final paper is due.

18 April: *Final class - The defense of Neaira*

Oral presentations of the results of group research projects.

1st May: final version of final paper is due to me electronically by 10:00 pm.

Grading Scale:

98-100	A+	74-77	C
94-97	A	71-73	C-
91-93	A-	68-70	D+
88-90	B+	64-67	D
84-87	B	61-63	D-
81-83	B-	less than 60	F
78-80	C+		

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- I will act if the Standard is compromised.