

HINE 163/263 – Love, Sex and Desire in the Ancient World

COLLOQUIUM SYLLABUS

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Lecture Times: Tu/Thu 9:30 am-12:20 pm
Room: H&SS 5086
Office Hours: Tu 12:30-2:30 pm

Course Description: This class will introduce you to cultures of ancient Sumer, Egypt, Israel, Greece, Rome and India through an examination of their conceptions and expressions of love, desire and sexuality. We will engage in an interdisciplinary study using a variety of literary genres including lyric poetry, love letters, philosophical dialogue, didactic poetry and the romance novel. The focus of this study will introduce a wide range of topics for discussion including the split between physical and spiritual love, philosophic ideals of “love” and “beauty,” perceptions of appropriate gender roles, physical ideals of female and male beauty, the different conceptions of hetero- and homosexual relations, and the conventions of literary form.

Texts: Ariel Bloch and Chana Bloch, *The Song of Songs* (University of California Press, 1998); Stephen Bertman, *Erotic Love Poems of Greece and Rome* (NAL Trade, 2005); Plato, *Symposium* (A. Nehamas, trans.; Hackett, 1989); Ovid, *The Art of Love* (J. Michie, trans.; Modern Library, 2002); Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon* (T. Whitmarsh, trans.; Oxford University Press, 2001); Vatsyayana, *Kama Sutra* (W. Doniger, S. Kakar, trans.; Oxford World Classics, 2009); *Course Reader*.

Course Requirements: The formal requirements of the course include completion of assigned reading, regular attendance at class-meetings, a research paper (due 6/3), and a final examination (6/9). Students will do well in the course only if they attend class faithfully and keep up with the reading assignments.

Grades: Grades of papers handed in late will be lowered by 1/3 of a letter grade each day past the due date. An approximate final grade will be determined as follows:

30% class participation/attendance
35% research paper
35% final exam

Lecture Schedule

4/1 Love at the Beginning of Civilization
4/8 Inanna and Dumuzi
4/15 Egyptian Love Poetry
4/22 Biblical Erotica

4/29 Aphrodite and Eros
Male and Female in Greece
5/6 Pastoral Poetry/ Love in Philosophy

5/13 The Art of Love in Rome
5/20 The Ancient Romance Novel
5/27 The Chinese Bedchamber
6/3 Ancient Indian Erotic Literature
6/9 **Final Examination 8-11 am**

Reading Assignment

Reader, “From Sumer”
Reader, “From Egypt”
The Song of Songs
Reader, “The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite”
Bertman, “Erotic Love Poems of Greece”
Reader, “Theocritus, Idylls”
Symposium
Bertman, “Erotic Love Poems of Rome”
Reader, “Different Desires”; *Art of Love*
Leucippe and Clitophon
Reader, *Discourse on the Highest Tao under Heaven*
Kama Sutra