

HIEU 133, Special Topics
Gender in Antiquity and the Early Mediterranean

Dr. Kathryn M. Ringrose
MWF 2:00 – 2:50
WLH 2207

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 1:00 – 2:00

Course books in the order you should read them:
Peter Brown, The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity, Columbia University Press, second edition, 2008.

The Satyricon and the Apocalocytosis of the Divine Claudius, Penguin Classics, 1986.

Maude Gleason, Making Men – Sophists and Self-presentation in Ancient Rome Princeton University Press, 1995.

Additional readings will be available on the class web site. I will post the address in class.

This course will examine gender structures and their roots from classical Greece and Rome through the coming of Christianity. How did ideas about gender and sexuality develop in the Late Antique and Medieval worlds? How do these cultures define masculinity and femininity? How are "love" and "sexuality" defined? Is gender a simple bi-polar concept or is there room for middle grounds in some cultures? How much latitude is given to the expression of "otherness"? Who are the Amazons? Why do the Byzantines castrate their most important courtiers? Is it accurate to say that the Bible condemns homosexuality? To move into modernity, what does our governor mean when he talks about "girlie-men"? How do today's politicians manipulate long-standing cultural assumptions about gender?

There will be a short paper and a final examination. I will pass out suggested topics, and we can also develop topics together. I am willing to work with Roosevelt College students regarding their papers. The paper will be due on Monday, March 1. I do not accept late papers. Please check the date of the final examination for this course and see if it conflicts with any of your other final exams, your vacation travel plans, or you have three exams in a row on the same day. If so see me before Feb. 15 so I can help you deal with the problem.

Class schedule: There is no class on January 8 (I will be attending a professional meeting), January 18 (the Martin Luther King holiday), or February 15 (the Presidents' day holiday).

It is my policy that a student must do all the work assigned in the course in order to receive a passing grade in the course. In other words, if you fail to write the paper, but get an A on the final exam you will fail the course (rather than be given a C-). I also do not tolerate plagiarism of any kind.