

CX247-30 Sexuality and Gender in Antiquity

24/25

Department

Classics & Ancient History

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

James Davidson

Credit value

30

Module duration

22 weeks

Assessment

50% coursework, 50% exam

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The study of gender and sexuality in the classical world is a relatively new field of enquiry, which has really only developed over the last twenty or thirty years. It remains one of the most vigorous and challenging areas of classical scholarship, a battleground where many claims are still contested. It is also one of the most truly interdisciplinary research areas, where theories and methodologies drawn from politics and sociology, anthropology, feminism, psychoanalysis and lesbian and gay studies can all be validly employed. This module has a greek texts variant for Q800 students, where a selection of texts are studied in the original Greek.

The ancient Greek world occupies a unique position in this interdisciplinary debate, as the most conspicuous example of an apparently other sexual universe – often caricatured as a ‘Reign of the Phallus’ – which shoulders the burden of proof for the cultural, constructed nature of human sexuality. Currently there is a great deal of dispute between scholars over the nature of Greek sexuality and the position of women in Greek society. Although students need to identify areas of debate in every topic they cover, this is particularly vital for students of ancient sexuality. You will be studying ‘modern interpretations of Greek sex and gender’ as much as you are studying ‘Greek sex and gender’; and many of the books on the bibliography represent important contributions to the debate rather than important contributions to the study of the ancient world. In this module

above all, it is impossible to reconstruct an eirenic (consensual) picture of Greek gender and sexuality without paying attention to modern debates and arguments, and your aim should be to understand a range of these arguments, and their strengths and limitations as interpretations of and responses to the ancient evidence.

Students will be expected to come to each session with a decent knowledge of the basic themes of the course, as well as the ancient sources and key secondary analysis specified for that session, and to be able to contribute to discussions. There will be some kind of discussion in each session, not just in the smaller group seminars.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module studies 'modern interpretations of Greek sex and gender' as much as 'Greek sex and gender'. Students will engage in an interdisciplinary approach to the topic, exploring theories and methodologies drawn from sociology, anthropology, feminism, psychoanalysis and lesbian and gay studies. It examines the nature of Greek sexuality and the position of women in Greek society.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The study of gender and sexuality in the classical world is a relatively new field of enquiry, which has really only developed over the last twenty or thirty years. It remains one of the most vigorous and challenging areas of classical scholarship, a battleground where many claims are still contested. It is also one of the most truly interdisciplinary research areas, where theories and methodologies drawn from sociology, anthropology, feminism, psychoanalysis and lesbian and gay studies can all be validly employed. The ancient Greek world occupies a unique position in this interdisciplinary debate, as the most conspicuous example of an apparently other sexual universe — often caricatured as a 'Reign of the Phallus' — which shoulders the burden of proof for the cultural, constructed nature of human sexuality. Currently there is a great deal of dispute between scholars over the nature of Greek sexuality and the position of women in Greek society. Although students need to identify areas of debate in every topic they cover, this is particularly vital for students of ancient sexuality. You will be studying 'modern interpretations of Greek sex and gender' as much as you are studying 'Greek sex and gender'; and many of the books on the bibliography represent important contributions to the debate rather than important contributions to the study of the ancient world.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- By the end of this module students should expect to develop a critical appreciation of recent scholarly approaches to sexuality and gender.
- By the end of this module students should expect to understand the contribution made by different types of source material to the study of this topic.

- By the end of this module students should expect to learn how to examine primary texts and material data closely.
- By the end of this module students should expect to have engaged in interdisciplinary study.

Indicative reading list

Davidson, J. Courtesans and Fishcakes (London 1997)

Luc Brisson Sexual Ambivalence: Androgyny and Hermaphroditism in Graeco-Roman Antiquity. (Berkeley, 2002)

E. Cantarella, Bisexuality in the Ancient World (New Haven, 1992)

J. Davidson Greeks and Greek Love (London 2007)

K. J. Dover, Greek Homosexuality (London, 1978)

Michel Foucault, History of Sexuality I: An Introduction, (London, 1979) Eng. transl. by R. Hurley of Histoire de la sexualité, I: La Volonté de savoir (Paris, 1976)

Michel Foucault II: The Use of Pleasure (New York 1985) Eng. transl. by Robert Hurley of L'Usage des plaisirs (Paris 1984)

N. Kampen, ed., Sexuality in Ancient Art (Cambridge, 1996)

Marilyn Skinner, Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture (Oxford, 2005)

Greek set texts:

Homeric Hymn 5 To Aphrodite, ed. Martin L. West Loeb series (Cambridge MA, 2003) – Complete
 2. Apollodorus Against Neaera = [Demosthenes] 59 ed. Chris Carey – Aris and Phillips, (Warminster, 1992) – Para 1-71

Term 2

1. Plato, Symposium ed. K. J. Dover (Cambridge, 1980)

FROM 176a TO 185c:... peri Erôtos sumballomai

FROM 189c: Kai mên ô Eruximache... TO 193 d: ...eudaimonas poiêsai

2. Aeschines 1 Against Timarchus ed. Charles Darwin Adams Loeb series (Cambridge, MA 1919) FROM para 39 TO para 85 inclusive.

3. Lysias 3 Against Simon in Lysias Selected Speeches ed. Chris Carey (Cambridge, 2008)– Complete --

Subject specific skills

Knowledge The course is intended to give students knowledge of:

- the texts and materials which relate to the study of gender and sexuality in Ancient Greece.
- modern theories of sexuality, including the work of Michel Foucault, and gender, including the work of Judith Butler.
- ancient debates and discourses of sexuality.
- modern debates about ancient sexuality and the use of ancient material to support different argumentative positions.

Analysis and Critique

The course is intended to enable students:

- to assess ancient and modern debates critically.
- to construct their own arguments based on their assessment of modern debates and ancient materials.
- to communicate their ideas in the form of written essays.
- to engage in constructive debate with other members of the group, defending and/or modifying their arguments.

Transferable skills

- critical thinking
- problem solving
- active lifelong learning
- communication
- information literacy
- ICT literacy
- Citizenship

Study

Study time

Type	Required	Optional
Lectures	41 sessions of 1 hour (14%)	
Seminars	4 sessions of 1 hour (1%)	
Tutorials	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)	21 sessions of 1 hour
Private study	253 hours (84%)	
Total	300 hours	

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Costs

Category	Description	Funded by	Cost to student
Books and learning materials	texts approximately £30	Student	£30.00

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group C2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Term 1 Essay Essay 1 2,500- 3000 words	25%		Yes (extension)
Term 2 Essay Essay 2 2,500- 3000 words	25%		Yes (extension)
In-person Examination (Summer) 2 hour examination	50%		No

- Answerbook Pink (12 page)

Feedback on assessment

Individual tutorials, Tabula feedback marking sheets

[Past exam papers for CX247](#)

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 2 of UCXA-Q800 BA in Classics
- Year 2 of UCXA-QQ39 Undergraduate English and Classical Civilisation

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UCXA-QQ39 Undergraduate English and Classical Civilisation

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 2 of UCXA-Q800 BA in Classics
- Year 2 of UCXA-VV16 Undergraduate Ancient History and Classical Archaeology
- Year 2 of UCXA-VV18 Undergraduate Ancient History and Classical Archaeology with Study in Europe
- Year 2 of UCXA-Q820 Undergraduate Classical Civilisation
- Year 2 of UCXA-Q821 Undergraduate Classical Civilisation with Study in Europe
- Year 2 of UCXA-Q802 Undergraduate Classics (Latin) with Study in Europe

- Year 2 of UPHA-VQ52 Undergraduate Philosophy, Literature and Classics

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 2 of UCXA-Q800 BA in Classics
- Year 2 of UCXA-VV16 Undergraduate Ancient History and Classical Archaeology
- Year 2 of UCXA-VV18 Undergraduate Ancient History and Classical Archaeology with Study in Europe
- Year 2 of UCXA-Q820 Undergraduate Classical Civilisation
- Year 2 of UCXA-Q821 Undergraduate Classical Civilisation with Study in Europe