

**Syllabus**  
**ARTH 420/599: Advanced Studies in Ancient Art/Special Topics Art History**  
**Gender, Sex, and Religion in Ancient Egypt**  
**(and the Ancient Mediterranean World)**  
**Fall 2019**  
**Wednesday 4:30-7:10pm**  
**Music Theatre 1008**  
**Professor Jacquelyn Williamson**

**Contact information and Office Hours:**

Email: [jwilli98@gmu.edu](mailto:jwilli98@gmu.edu) **Please use your GMU email address for school business.**

Art History Department Phone: 703-993-1250

Office: Robinson B: 348

Office hours (time set aside for student walk-ins and student meetings): to be announced, or by appointment

Please note: professors are to be addressed by the professional title as given by the university and their peers: in this case “Professor” and/or “Doctor” (not “Mr.” “Ms.” “Miss” “Mrs.” These titles indicate marital status and/or gender identity and are not professional titles in Universities.)

**Description:**

Students will learn the most recent advances in the field of gender studies in antiquity and learn how to apply that knowledge to several examples in the ancient Egypt where gender was a significant factor in the creation of a power dynamic. For example students will study the power inherent in the divine nature of the Egyptian Queen. The class will also include an in-depth study of Cleopatra VII and the gendered nature of the conflict between Hellenistic Egypt and Rome. This class will study examples of scholarship outside of Egypt to learn how to ask new questions and dissect traditional narratives. Students will gain the tools they need to analyze similar issues in the past and in the modern world.

Students must successfully complete all requirements in order to pass the course.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- Class attendance and in-class discussion exercises.
- Assigned readings, including websites and documents on the Internet.
  - All readings will be available as pdfs on the Blackboard site for this class
- Critical Thinking Papers (with a final rewritten version to be handed in at the last class, see details below)
- Graduate students will have different requirements, as outlined on Blackboard

**Critical Thinking Papers:**

- Over the semester, you will write several 1-2-page **critical thinking papers**.

- **Undergraduates** will write five papers, **graduate students** will write seven papers
- To write this paper, you will use the **Critical Thinking Worksheet** in the Assignments section on the Blackboard page for this course. However, you will NOT just answer the questions on that worksheet by number. You will use that worksheet as an outline to structure your paper.
- Each paper will be handed in on the due dates listed in the syllabus.

### **Final Critical Thinking paper: revised and rewritten**

- This paper will be handed in during the last class of the semester.
- You will choose one of the critical thinking papers you wrote during the course of the semester, and rewrite it according to the suggestions and feedback provided. (note: you may not choose a paper that has no suggestions for revision.) These suggestions may include questions of style, composition, and spelling as well as questions of content.
- You will reread the original article/book excerpt/etc. Have your answers changed? Do you understand it in a different way now that you have read more? Be sure to include a discussion of connecting articles/book excerpts, etc. that may have helped you understand the original article better (cite these works also, preferably by footnote and the Chicago Manual of Style method.)
- This revised version will be 3-4 pages in length.
- **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:**
- GMU email accounts—only GMU accounts will get announcements and grading access.
- Ability to find and print on-line text documents from the Internet and Blackboard.
- Computerized word-processing with spell-checkers and decent printers for all written work.

### **Coursework/Grade Requirements**

**10%** class attendance: showing up for class

**10%** class participation: includes assigned readings, active participation in class discussions

**20%** final revised critical thinking paper

**60%** critical thinking papers: **Undergraduates** will write five papers; **graduate students** will write seven papers. 2 pages each.

### **Due dates: Critical Thinking Papers**

**September 4:** First Critical Thinking Paper Due (all students)

**September 11:** Second Critical Thinking Paper Due (all students)

**September 25:** Third Critical Thinking Paper Due (all students)

**October 2:** Fourth Critical Thinking Paper Due (all students)

**October 16:** Fifth Critical Thinking Paper Due (all students)

**October 23:** Sixth Critical Thinking Paper Due (graduate students only)

**November 20:** Seventh Critical Thinking Paper Due (graduate students only)

**December 4:** Final Revised and Rewritten Critical Thinking Paper due (all students)

**LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE**  
**(Students will be notified of any changes in advance)**

Assigned reading should be done before the date of the class meeting.

The article or book excerpt that is the subject of the **critical thinking paper** is indicated by a bold label: “**This article is the subject of the critical thinking paper for this week.**”

**Week 1 8/28**

**Introduction to syllabus and course, Introduction discussion: The Epic of Gilgamesh: homosexuality, heterosexuality, and the agency of sex in antiquity**

**Week 2 9/4 First Critical thinking paper due: all students**

**Subject: Theoretical frameworks and a discussion of the Egyptian queen**

**The impact of feminist scholarship on ancient studies.** Bahrani, Zainab, Intro and Chp 1: *Women of Babylon: Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia* New York: Routledge, 2001, pg. 1-27.

**Problem of Categories.** Joyce, Rosemary 2008 *Ancient Bodies, Ancient Lives, Sex, Gender, and Archaeology*, New York: Thames and Hudson. Chp 2 “Goddesses, matriarchs, and manly-hearted women, troubling categorical approaches to gender,” pg. 46-66 **This article is the subject of the critical thinking paper for this week.**

**The Egyptian queen as the divine manifestation of sacred sexuality.** Sarah Nelson (ed) 2003 *Ancient Queens Archaeological Explorations* Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press. “She for Whom All That Is Said Is Done: The Ancient Egyptian Queen” Lana Troy, pg. 93-116

**Tuesday September 3<sup>rd</sup>** : Last day to add classes

**Week 3 9/11 Second Critical Thinking Paper Due: all students**

**Subject: Gender and violence, and the ‘Orientalist’ perception of the past**

**The Battle between Horus and Seth**

**Archaeologies of Gender and Violence:** Bo Jensen and Uroš Matic’: “Why do we need archaeologies of Gender and Violence and why now?” From: *Archaeologies of Gender and Violence*, ed Jensen and Matic’, Oxbow Books, 2017. pg. 1-23

**Mesopotamia and the gendered Orientalist imagination.** Bahrani, Zainab, “Babylonian Women in the Orientalist Imagination,” *Women of Babylon: Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia* New York: Routledge, 2001pg 161-179 **This is the subject of the critical thinking paper**

**September 9<sup>th</sup>:** last day to drop with 100% tuition refund

**Week 4 9/18 Erik Gustafson- guest professor**

**Subject: modern gaze, modern bias, and the construction of theoretical frameworks to see beyond both**

**The female nude: modern fetish, ancient difference**

Bahrani, Zainab, That Obscure Object of Desire, *Women of Babylon: Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia* New York: Routledge, 2001, pg. 70-95.

**Reinterpretation of a well-known female nude:**

Nanette Salomon, “Making a World of Difference: Gender, Asymmetry, and the Greek Nude,” in *Naked Truths: Women, Sexuality, and Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology*, ed. by Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow & Claire Lyons, 197-219 (Abingdon: Routledge, 1997).

**September 17<sup>th</sup>:** last drop day with 50% tuition refund

**Week 5 9/25 Third Critical Thinking paper due: all students**

**Subject: Theoretical frameworks: modern western assumptions, and the problems inherent in western feminisms when applied outside of the western context**

**Performativity Theory Reinterpreted.** Joyce, Rosemary. “Feminist Theories of Embodiment and Anthropological Imagination: Making Bodies Matter.” In *Feminist Anthropology*, ed. Pamela L. Geller and Miranda Stockett, 43-54. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.

**Rethinking gender.** Joan Gero, M. Christina Scattolin “Beyond Complementarity and Hierarchy: New Definitions for Archaeological Gender Relations,” pg. 155-172, in Sarah Nelson, Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (eds) *In Pursuit of Gender Worldwide Archaeological Approaches*, Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press. 2002

**This is the subject of the critical thinking paper**

**Relocating ancient women’s power through theories of the modern Islamic movement.** Mahmood, Saba “Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival.” *Cultural Anthropology* 16.2, 2001, pg. 202-236

**September 30<sup>th</sup>:** final drop period with 100% tuition penalty

**Week 6 10/2 Fourth Critical thinking paper due: all students**

**Subject: Queen/King Hatshepsut and understanding moments of exception through theory**

*Hatshepsut, from Queen to Pharaoh*, eds Keller et al, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University Press, 2006: two selected excerpts. 86-189, and 260-289

Betsy Bryan, "Hatshepsut and Cultic Revelries in the New Kingdom," 93-123, in *Creativity and Innovation in the Reign of Hatshepsut*, eds Galan, Bryan, Dorman. Papers from the Theban Workshop 2010, Published by the OI of Chicago, Illinois, 2014.

**Framing exceptional actions within traditional gender roles:**

Shitrit, Lihi, Ben-, Introduction to *Righteous Transgressions*, Princeton, 2006. Excerpt: Acknowledgements through Introduction, ends page 31. **This is the subject of the critical thinking paper**

**Week 7 10/10**

**Subject: sex: modern values that obscure an understanding of ancient reality**

**The sacred celebration of sex in ancient Egypt.**

Depaw, M and Smith, M 2004 "Visions of Ecstasy. Cultic Revelry before the goddesses Ai/Nehemanit," *Res Severa Verum Gaudium. Festschrift für Karl-Theodor Zauzich zum 65. Geburtstag am 8 Juni 2004*, Studia Demotica VI, Leuven-Paris-Dudley, pg. 67-94

D. O'Connor, "Eros in Egypt," *Archaeology Odyssey*, 2001 (**please be sure to google images of The Turin Erotic Papyrus to help you understand this reading**)

K. Szpakowska, "Altered States," in *A Delta man in Yebu*, ed. AK Eyma and CJ Bennet, EEF, 2003

**Week 8 10/16 Fifth Critical thinking paper due: all students**

**Subject: The Amarna Period and Queen Nefertiti I**

J. Tyldesley, *Nefertiti's Face: The Creation of an Icon*, Profile Books, 2018  
Pgs 7-23; 60-69; 70-87; 175-186

**This is the subject of the critical thinking paper**

**Week 9 10/23 Sixth Critical thinking paper due: graduate students only**

**Subject: The Amarna Period and Queen Nefertiti II**

Jacquelyn Williamson 'Alone before the God: Gender, Status, and Nefertiti's Image' *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 51, 2015, 179-192.

Uroš Matic, “Her Striking but Cold Beauty- Gender and Violence in depictions of Queen Nefertiti smiting the enemies,” *Archaeologies of Gender and Violence*, ed. Jensen and Matic’, Oxbow Books, 2017. pg. 103-121 **This is the subject of the critical thinking paper**

**Week 10 10/30 Guest Speaker: Erik Gustafson**

**Subject: Nefertiti III: No, it is not a fake.**

J. Tyldesley, *Nefertiti’s Face: The Creation of an Icon*, Profile Books, 2018, pg. 27-60

**In class viewing: Jacquelyn Williamson, ‘Secrets: Nefertiti’ Smithsonian Channel.**

**Week 11 11/06**

**Self-Guided museum visit: The Walters Art Museum in Baltimore has an excellent collection of ancient Egyptian art.**

**Admittance is free.**

Visit the museum armed with your new knowledge of ancient Egypt. Take a selfie with an object that stands out to you, write up your impressions of the object in two paragraphs and hand it in for the next class on the 13<sup>th</sup> (with a print out of your selfie). Note that this exercise takes the place of the attendance credit for this week’s class, and is **not one of the assigned critical thinking papers**. Thus you do not need to take particular care with the writing, just jot down your impressions and thoughts.

**Week 12 11/13 Guest speaker: Elizabeth Waraksa: Female Figurines in Egyptian religion**

**Subject: Female Figurines: magic and sex**

Waraksa, Elizabeth A. “Female Figurines in the Pharonic Period,” *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 2008.

Waraksa, Elizabeth A. Chapter 4/Conclusions pp. 166-175 of the book and scroll through the catalogue/Appendix A, *Female Figurines from the Mut Precinct: Context and Ritual Function*. Fribourg, Switzerland, Göttingen, Germany: Academic Press, Vandenhoeck Ruprecht. (2009) available by open access at: [https://www.zora.uzh.ch/id/eprint/152360/1/Waraksa\\_2009\\_Female\\_Figurines\\_from\\_the\\_Mut](https://www.zora.uzh.ch/id/eprint/152360/1/Waraksa_2009_Female_Figurines_from_the_Mut)

**Week 13 11/20 Seventh Critical thinking paper due: graduate students only**

**Subject: The God’s Hand: God’s Wives of Amun**

**Readings TBA**

**Week 14: 11/27**

**Subject: Cleopatra and Fake News**

**Cleopatra and Ptolemaic/Hellenistic Queens.**

Ashton, Sally-Ann. *The Last Queens of Egypt*. Harlow: Pearson/Longman, 2003, 1-68

**Week 15: 12/4 Final Revised Critical Thinking Paper due: all students**

**Subject: Broader contexts and ancient origins of modern misogyny**

Mary Beard, *Women and Power: A Manifesto*, Profile Books, 2017 All (don't worry, it's short)

**CLASS POLICIES**

**Attendance** is necessary; much of the material will only be covered in our lectures. You are responsible for getting notes, and for all consequences of missed classes. **Class participation will affect your grade.**

**Classroom atmosphere.** Courtesy and common sense, please. Talking during lectures, wandering in and out, cell phones, and eating food (unless the class agrees it is OK) are all badly distracting to everyone else. **Disruptive individuals can be asked to leave, according to GMU policy.**

**Laptop computers** are fine for taking notes in class. No Facebook, Solitaire, etc. **Phones** will be turned off at all times, of course, as a courtesy to all.

**Late work will be graded down five points per weekday and ten points over a weekend.** Plan ahead--last-minute hard-disk and printer failures do not constitute legitimate excuses.

**English as a Second Language:** If English is not your first language, I will be happy to help you do your best in the writing assignments. The final result must be written in good standard English. Please work with **The Writing Center** <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/resources/> and <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/> Call them at (703) 993-1200, or see their web page for English language help, at: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>. You may also want to work with GMU's **English Language Institute (ELI)**. Call them at (703) 993-3664, or visit their website at <http://eli.gmu.edu>

**Learning disabilities.** If you are a student with disabilities, and you need academic accommodations, please see me *and* contact the Office of Disabilities Resources (ODS) or 703-993-2474. Website: <http://ds.gmu.edu/> All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**Religious holidays.** This syllabus is arranged according to the George Mason University calendar. If you observe a religious holiday that the University does not, please let me know and I will make necessary accommodations for you (but not for the whole class).

**Auditors** are welcome to sit and listen, if there is room. If they would like to participate more actively, that's fine with me *if (!!)* you are keeping up with the assigned class reading.

**Honor Code and Academic honesty** is expected in all tests and writing, according to the GMU Honor Code. "Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." Please respect the Honor Code, our classroom standards, your fellow students, and yourself. Please report violations to the Honor Committee, using the procedures explained in the website.

## **GRADING POLICIES**

See the grade rubric above (before the schedule of readings).

**Final grades may be raised or lowered from strict average in the following circumstances:**

Class participation improves/deteriorates

Reliability is stellar (always on time, always prepared, etc.) or poor (bad attendance, never prepared)

Significant improvement over the semester (Student begins semester poorly but then does better)

**Grades will be calculated as follows:**

A = 100% to 93%, or 4.00

A- = 92% to 90%, or 3.67

B+ = 89% to 87%, or 3.33

B = 86% to 83 %, or 3.00

B- = 82% to 80 %, or 2.67

C+ = 79% to 77 %, or 2.33

C = 76% to 73 %, or 2.00

C- = 72% to 70 %, or 1.67

D = 60% to 66%, or 1.0

F = below 60% receives no credit

I may award a final A+ in rare instances: 4.0 average *plus* unusually good writing and class participation.

**WRITTEN WORK** may be graded by points, or by the following criteria, as appropriate:

A = Startlingly good, exceeding expectations, and well written. Must be imaginative;

NOT given for simply following directions.

B = Good effort with a good result.

C = Perfunctory; or, tried but missed the point; or, did something well but it wasn't the assignment; or, good idea but careless or sloppy.

D = Warning: accepted under protest.

F = Unacceptable as college-level work.

**Paper grades will be lowered** for lateness, sloppiness, lack of proofreading, bad English, lack of necessary documentation/supporting evidence/footnoting, faulty logic, or failure to follow directions for the assignment. Please study the directions for writing assignments, elsewhere in this syllabus.

**Late written work:** Papers are **due in class in hard copy** on the day specified. After that, late papers will be lowered five points a day, or half a grade, during the work week (Mon-Fri) and lowered ten points over a weekend. Note that this makes even “A” work into “F” work after ten days. **If you need an extension, you must ask for it *before* the due date** if you want to avoid a penalty.

**Class participation grade:**

**“A” Level: Great class participation**—student demonstrates understanding of subject and the ability to think critically about it, makes connections with other students and encourages friendly and positive discussion, no “one-upping.”

**“B” level: Normal class participation**—student shows up on time, keeps up with classwork, participates in group activities, does not cause problems

**“C” level:** Student shows poor class attendance, does not pay attention, is not up to date with reading, is disruptive, etc.

**“D-F” level:** Student will get a D-F in class participation automatically if they use their personal technology devices in any way that is not connected to the classroom. IE no Facebook, Tinder, Snapchat, etc. etc. etc. You are allowed to monitor emergency campus alerts of course.

Outside of this classroom:

If you or anyone you know has been subjected to any form of harassment (due to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.), please consider a visit to GMU’s Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights. They will be supportive and discreet. GMU is proud of its diverse student body and committed to protecting the rights and the dignity of all students.

GMU Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights Website:  
<http://integrity.gmu.edu/compliance/titleIX.cfm>

**Resources:**

In addition to the class readings, content from the lectures will be drawn from the following resources:

Gender:

Asher-Greve, Julia; Joan Goodnick Westenholz (eds)

*Goddesses In Context: On Divine Powers, Roles, Relationships and Gender in Mesopotamian Textual and Visual Sources* Academic Press Fribourg.

“Gender Theory and Issues,” 2013, Julia M. Asher-Greve, pg. 15-28

Hays-Gilpin, Kelley and David S. Whitley

*Reader in Gender Archaeology*, London, Routledge.

“Gender Iconography and Ideology, the Palaeolithic Mother Goddess, Fact or Fiction?” 1998, pg 257-268

Joyce, Rosemary A.

“Feminist Theories of Embodiment and Anthropological Imagination: Making Bodies Matter.” In *Feminist Anthropology*, ed. Pamela L. Geller and Miranda Stockett, 43-54. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.

Joyce, Rosemary

*Ancient Bodies, Ancient Lives, Sex, Gender, and Archaeology*, New York: Thames and Hudson. 2008

Mahmood, Saba

“Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival.” *Cultural Anthropology* 16.2, 2001, pg. 202-236

Mahmood, Saba

*Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton University Press, 2005.

Nelson, Sarah and Myriam Rosen-Ayalon (eds)

*In Pursuit of Gender Worldwide Archaeological Approaches*, Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press. 2002

Nelson, Sarah (ed)

*Ancient Queens Archaeological Explorations* Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.

“Ancient Queens: an introduction” 2003, Sarah Nelson, pg. 1-18; “She for Whom All That Is Said Is Done: The Ancient Egyptian Queen” Lana Troy, pg 93-116

Also:

Bottéro, Jean.

- Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia* transl. Teresa Lavender Fagan, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2001.
- Cooper, Jerrold.  
“Genre, Gender, and the Sumerian Lamentation” *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, Vol 58, 2006, pg. 39-47.
- Dever, William G.  
*Did God Have a Wife? Archaeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel*, Michigan: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2005
- Everitt, Anthony.  
*The Rise of Rome*. New York: Random House, 2012.
- Frood, Elizabeth.  
“Sensuous Experience, Performance, and Presence in Third Intermediate Period Biography” in *Ancient Egyptian Literature Theory and Practice*, Roland Enmarch, Verena Lepper (eds), Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2013
- Holbl, Gunther.  
*A History of the Ptolemaic Empire*. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- James, Sharon and Sheila Dillon (eds)  
*A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, Sussex: Blackwell. 2012
- Jones, Prudence J.  
*Cleopatra: a sourcebook*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006
- Koloski-Ostrow, Ann Olga; Claire Lyons (eds)  
*Naked Truths, Women, Sexuality, and Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology*. Routledge Press, London, 2000
- Macgregor, Sherry Lou.  
*Beyond Hearth and Home: Women in the public sphere in Neo-Assyrian society* Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project. 2012
- Meyers, Carol.  
*Rediscovering Eve, Ancient Israelite Women in Context*, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2013.
- Landgráfová, Renata and Hana Navrátilová.  
*Sex and the Golden Goddess I*, Prague: Czech Institute of Egyptology. 2009.
- Moyer, Ian S.  
*Egypt and the Limits of Hellenism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Plutarch.

*The Parallel Lives: Life of Antony*. In [www.penelope.uchicago.edu](http://www.penelope.uchicago.edu). Loeb Classical Library edition, 1920.

Schiff, Stacy.

*Cleopatra: a life*. New York: Little, Brown and Co., 2010.

Shafer, Byron (ed).

*Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice* Cornell University Press. 1991.

Snell, Daniel C.

*A Companion to the Ancient Near East* Malden: Blackwell Publishing. 2007

Stavrakopoulou, Francesca and John Barton (eds)

*Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah* London: T&T Clark International. 2010

Stökl, Jonathan and Corrine L. Carvalho (eds)

*Prophets Male and Female: Gender and Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible, the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Ancient Near East* Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. 2013.