

FEMINISM AND CLASSICS VII: VISIONS

University of Washington: May 19-22, 2016

CALL FOR PAPERS

For the ancient Greeks and Romans, looking was a powerful, even transformative, act. A gaze could generate desire, stain mirrors, or turn a person to stone; similarly, a glance at the forbidden might result in blindness, dismemberment, or worse. Vision itself was understood as both an expression and an instrument of mental capacity: victims of madness were often characterized by distorted vision, while knowledge was a consequence of proper sight – to know something (*eidenai*), in Greek, is to have seen it. This link between vision and knowledge has persisted to the present day in our word *theory*, which is rooted in ancient concepts of viewing and contemplation. Moreover, it is now widely understood that knowledge of a subject is shaped by the observer's point of view, and feminist Classical scholarship of the last few decades has increasingly striven to incorporate diverse perspectives from both the ancient and the modern worlds.

This conference will focus on vision in – and visions of – the ancient Mediterranean world, primarily ancient Greece and Rome, but without excluding, for example, Egypt and the Near East. We welcome submissions related to any aspect of this theme, including sight, blindness, voyeurism, the gaze, spectacle, illusion, dreams, hallucinations, epiphany, and similar topics. We also encourage abstracts that construe the theme of vision more broadly: What can we know about self-perception in the ancient Mediterranean world, particularly among women and other groups defined as Others? How have post-antique cultures envisioned or reimaged Classical material, whether in art, theater, literature, theater, film, or other media? What is to be learned from looking at the history of women and feminism in Classical studies, and what paths forward can we envision, both for scholarship and for pedagogy? What can views from outside (e.g., outside Classics, the humanities, academia, the United States, the West) teach us, and how does the field look from within different parts of the academy (e.g., students, adjuncts, tenured or tenure-track faculty, librarians, museum staff)? Are there new lenses through which we might profitably examine old material?

In addition to inviting individual abstract submissions, we welcome proposals for panels and roundtable discussions, especially from related interest groups (such as the Lambda Classical Caucus or EuGeSta) and from allied non-Classical disciplines (e.g., philosophy, English, comparative literature, media studies). Abstracts should be no longer than 300 words and should contain a clear initial statement of purpose, a brief explanation of the paper's relationship to important previous literature on the topic (with citations), and a summary of the argumentation. Authors who require audiovisual equipment should specify their equipment needs in the last sentence of the abstract. (Bibliography and equipment requests should not be included in the word count.) Abstracts must be submitted by September 1, 2015 to <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=femconvii2016>. (You will need to create an Easychair account in order to submit an abstract; follow the directions found at the link.) Please email Prof. Deborah Kamen (dkamen@uw.edu) with any questions.