

IRIS

The Newsletter of the Lambda Classical Caucus

Spring 2011

Old News. . .

and New. . .

Congratulations again to the co-winners of the fabulous costume prize at the APA in San Antonio: Amy Richlin and Amy Cohen. Kudos to them for their unspeakable vices! Photos coming soon to a website near you.

It's never too soon to start planning your costume for next year, which as usual will be based on the panel theme, "Getting What You Want!" Sounds naughty. . .and nice.

Other news announced in San Antonio: Cashman Kerr Prince won the Rehak Award and Mark Nugent won the Graduate Student Paper Award.

Rehak Award:

Cashman Kerr Prince, "The Lioness & the Cheese-grater (Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* vv. 231 - 232)," *Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica*, 4th series, 7:2 (2009): 149 - 175.

LCC Graduate Student Award:

Mark Nugent, "si vir fueris... Sexuality and Masculine Self-fashioning in Petronius' *Satyricon*," APA 2010, Anaheim.

** Check out Fem VI. Their website is now up and running at

<http://www.brocku.ca/conferences/feminism-classics-vi> **

Look for the LCC table at CAMWS in Grand Rapids this April 6-9.
We hope to see you there.

The 2012 LCC Graduate Student Paper Award

Have you seen an amazing graduate student paper addressing queer issues? Please consider nominating!

This award is designed to encourage and reward scholarship by pre-Ph.D. scholars on issues related to the LCC's mission, including, but not limited to: homosocial and homoerotic relationships and environments, ancient sexuality and gender roles, representations of the gendered body, and queer theory.

We ask for nominations of oral papers presented by a pre-Ph.D. scholar at a conference (including, but not limited to the APA/AIA and CAMWS) from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 (ca. 20 minutes in length as delivered). To nominate, please email LCC co-chair Deborah Kamen, dkamen@uw.edu, with the presenter's name and email address and the title of the paper. Self-nominations are encouraged; information related to nominations is confidential. Membership in the Caucus is not required to be eligible for these awards. Nominations accepted until October 31, 2011. The winner will be announced at the 2012 WCC-LCC opening night reception at the APA/AIA.

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IMAGES OF ANCIENT GREEK PEDERASTY: Boys Were Their Gods

By: Andrew Lear and Eva Cantarella

New York: Routledge, 2008

Images of Ancient Greek Pederasty: Boys Were Their Gods, by Andrew Lear and Eva Cantarella, is a welcome addition to the study of ancient sexuality and, more importantly, a shining example of the use of iconography and visual language—indeed, of material culture—in the study of ancient societies. The aim of the work, as the authors state in the preface, is to provide “an overview of the portrayal of pederasty on [Athenian] pots,” and in so doing, to “clarify what they show us (or imply) about the actual practice of pederasty and the ideals connected with it.” It is thus, in other words, to survey the representation of one particular cultural practice—pederasty—as it is represented within one genre of visual culture—Athenian vase painting—and then to set this visual language in dialogue with the literary and historical sources in order to arrive at a nuanced, sober, and balanced account of this particular social practice. The bulk of the work, incidentally, stems from Lear’s doctoral dissertation of 2004, entitled *Noble Eros: The Idealization of Pederasty from the Greek Dark Ages to the Athens of Socrates*, supervised by Kathryn Morgan and Sarah Morris.

The work is divided into seven chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion. The introduction includes two sections, written by Cantarella and Lear respectively. The first is focused upon the textual evidence for pederasty, and includes subsections on the age of the individuals, the origins of the practice, a short overview of scholarly paradigms (particularly Dover’s), as well as sections on epic and lyric poetry, philosophy, courtroom oratory, and the famous sculpture of the tyrannicides Harmodius and Aristogeiton, while the second provides an introduction to Lear’s approach to the iconography of the scenes. He describes this as the “elements of which Greek images of pederasty are composed, how these elements are combined and varied, and what these elements, combinations, and variations show or imply about pederasty or the ideals associated with pederasty.” These elements are: scene-type, figure, costume, posture, gesture, prop, synecdoche, symbol, inscription, and decorative program. Most are self-explanatory, although, for example, costume includes both nudity and body size (massive chests and thighs); synecdoche, however, where an object might be metonymic for a context (hare for hunting) is less obvious to the casual reader, and is carefully defined and expanded.

The chapters are organized as follows: Chapter One, titled ‘Courtship,’ focuses upon the iconography of courtship scenes, discussing carefully and soberly both the paradigms and the potential exceptions. It is here that Lear sets the tone for his approach to the material and introduces the reader to it. Chapter Two, titled ‘Ideals/Idealization,’ continues an examination of courting scenes but does so with a careful eye to the difficulties inherent to the translation of a cultural act from a cultural paradigm to an artistic representation. Here, Lear explores, among other things, the idealization inherent not only to the contexts for these scenes, but also important aspects of the costume, including, most notably, the size and state of the penis.

Given the disconnect between what is expected and what is represented, Lear concludes that the iconography of pederasty ultimately represents an association between pederasty and certain elite activities, including the gymnasium, the symposium, and warfare, each carrying an idealizing thrust that makes these vases less a 'snapshot' of this custom and more a representation of an ideal version of it: how the Athenians, in a sense, choose to represent themselves. Chapter Three, titled 'Consummation,' describes the tiny percentage of vases depicting both intercrural and anal intercourse, a notably difficult undertaking and one he handles with his characteristic rigor and care. The first he relates closely to the courtship scenes, and suggests intercrural intercourse as "the only means of consummation for pederasty, or for decent, courtship-based pederasty"; the second he presents as problematic, given, on the one hand, the Eurymedon vase, which presents a Greek soldier preparing to anally penetrate an Asiatic figure, characterized, by Kenneth Dover, as 'We've buggered the Persians,' while on the other, the fact that scenes are not wholly excluded from 'proper' contexts of pederastic iconography, making it difficult to dismiss outright anal penetration as improper in opposition to proper intercrural penetration. Chapter Four, titled 'Pederasty and the Gods,' focuses upon the disconnect between scenes of divine rape and human courtship, which, ultimately, serve to further mark the boundaries between the human and divine realms, particularly through the Ganymede motif. In the second half of the chapter, scenes with Eros, which include a marked variety of roles, both represented and symbolized, reflect the phasing out of explicit representations of pederasty and thus turn to more sophisticated allusion and symbolism. Chapter Five, titled 'Kalos-Inscriptions,' asks the question: "why did painters include them in their scenes?" Given the number of cases and the variety of contexts, Lear is suitably careful in attempting to provide a grand interpretive frame for the inscriptions, surveying instead a variety of exempla, and concluding that, though problematized by several scholars, particularly in relation to the related opposite term *katapygon* (penetrated anally, according to most scholars), "the meaning of *kalos* in vase-painting seems to conform to the general Greek view of male beauty." Chapter Six, titled 'Vase Dating,' discusses general trends in the portrayal of pederasty, noting, in particular, that scenes of pederasty did not in fact disappear in the early fifth century, but in fact remain well into the fourth, thus trumping early claims that pederasty declined under the Athenian democracy. Finally, Chapter Seven, titled 'Fragments,' discusses the role of fragments in the analysis of iconographic programs. A 'Conclusion,' penned by both authors, reiterates their arguments and discusses potential interpretive difficulties, while an appendix, almost universally commended by reviewers, includes a catalogue by the late Keith DeVries of 647 pederastic scenes, referenced against the III discussed in the book.

Throughout the work, Lear is careful, balanced, level-headed in his presentation of the material; indeed, I can find no better adjective than 'sober.' He is forthcoming, certainly, in putting forward what he believes to be the case, at times by dismissing a previous scholarly paradigm or claim (see, for example, his argument against Alain Schnapp's interpretation of the symbolism of the hare in pages 86-89, which, however, I found unconvincing), but his *modus operandi* is to present an iconographic element, offer possible interpretations, briefly touch upon the benefits and shortcomings of each, and either make a pronouncement or leave the issue to the reader's interpretation. It is a welcome approach in a field fraught with potential difficulties and polarized between conflicting camps.

Because the work has been both well-received and widely reviewed, I should like to limit my comments to one of the central premises in the book, indeed its interpretive frame: the understanding, decoding almost, of a visual language whereby material culture can serve as evidence for a cultural practice, a practice that permeates, in a sense, both that culture's daily life as well as its moral universe. 'Ancient Greek Pederasty,' after all, comprises countless individual acts, expectations, the repeated daily actions, thoughts, feelings, words undertaken by a variety of individuals throughout the Greek world across a significant span of time, not to mention, of course, the social structures that define and regulate them, indeed idealize them, now translated into a variety of communicative media. By framing their approach to this messy, complex, possibly insurmountable task through the careful and focused attention they bring to this particular dataset, that of scenes of pederasty in Athenian vase painting, Lear and Cantarella provide us—both scholars and the wider public—with an important service: a rigorous understanding of how the practice of pederasty was represented in Ancient Athenian vase painting, and how these representations interact with other sources. As such, they historicize an important aspect of human sexuality, firmly locating it within its particular cultural context, which in turn allows us to confront our own understanding of human sexuality with and against this particular iteration, significantly enriching our understanding of both.

Reviewed by: Juan Sebastian de Vivo

Our New Co-Chair

Bruce W. Frier is the John and Teresa D'Arms Distinguished University Professor of Classics and Roman Law at the University of Michigan. He is the author of numerous books and articles on economic and social history, focusing especially on Roman law. His publications include *Libri Annales Pontificum Maximorum: The Origins of the Annalistic Tradition*, *Landlords and Tenants in Imperial Rome*, *The Rise of the Roman Jurists*, *A Casebook on the Roman Law of Delict*, *A Casebook on Roman Family Law*, and, most recently, *The Modern Law of Contracts*, written with law faculty colleague J.J. White. He is a member of both the American Philosophical Society and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Professor Frier received a B.A. from Trinity College and a Ph.D. in classics from Princeton University. He was a fellow of the American Academy in Rome and taught at Bryn Mawr College before joining the Department of Classical Studies at the University of Michigan in 1969; he has also taught at the Law School since 1981.

During 2003-2004, Frier chaired the Provost's Task Force on the Campus Climate for Transgender, Bisexual, Lesbian, and Gay Faculty, Staff, and Students at the University of Michigan, and subsequently he served on the Advisory Board of the Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Affairs. In 2009 he chaired a Faculty committee that wrote Michigan's Academic Freedom Statement. Currently, he is a Financial Trustee of the American Philological Association.

The LCC co-Chairs would like to bring your attention to some of the exciting new opportunities we've been providing for graduate students. For a number of years now we've been co-sponsoring an LCC/WCC graduate student cocktail and networking hour at the APA, which has been tremendously successful. Two years ago we initiated the Graduate Student Paper Award, granted yearly to the best orally delivered paper by a pre-PhD scholar on a topic related to the LCC mission. Our most recent development is the newly created Graduate Student Travel Award, which will help finance qualified graduate-student members of the LCC delivering papers at the APA!

To apply for the Graduate Student Travel Award, students must detail their involvement in the LCC; demonstrate their financial need; and provide the title of the paper they will be delivering at the APA. Recipients of the travel award will be expected to provide a brief report on their use of the award for Iris. Applications should be submitted to LCC co-Chair Deb Kamen (dkamen@uw.edu) by October 31, 2011.

LAMBDA DUES 2011

Use this form to pay your LCC dues for calendar year 2011 and beyond. You may also pay via PayPal at <http://www.lambdacc.org/membership.html>, in which case please email any new or updated information to blondell@uw.edu. (We never share membership information with other organizations.)

If you are a life member, please consider making an additional contribution to the Rehak fund. Any questions about your membership status should be directed to Ruby Blondell (blondell@uw.edu).

Renewing members: you need only fill out your name plus any information that has changed in the past two years or since you last paid your dues.

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