

Fashioning Ancient Women on Screen

Scholarship in Classics in the 21st century has included significant work on ancient dress (e.g. Edmondson and Keith 2008; Llewellyn-Jones 2001; Olson 2008; Sebesta and Bonfante 2001). But it is only recently that scholars in Classical reception studies have turned to considering fully the design of the ancient world on screen. This panel will focus on one visual aspect of the recreation of the ancient world: costume design. More specifically it will consider the dressing of female characters in ancient-themed films and TV series stretching from the 1930s to the most recent onscreen depictions. Costumes are a powerful tool of filmmakers to fashion women, both in terms of their explicit visual appearance and of the very characters they represent (on the power of costume design, see e.g. Bruzzi 1997; Street 2001). Costumes, in part, determine how an audience interacts with the ancient world.

The three presentations plus one response will address the ways costume designers strategically manipulate/change/keep images from antiquity to re(create) ancient women on screen. It will explore the difficult negotiation for costume designers, who are trapped between ancient images and modern fashions known to the viewing audience. The papers will explore issues of accuracy and authenticity, gender, class, and politics.

AV Requirements: LCD digital projection & sound cables for PPT with embedded video clips.

Works cited

Bruzzi, Stella. 1997. *Undressing Cinema: Clothing and Identity in the Movies*. London and New York: Routledge.

Edmondson, Jonathan and Alison Keith, eds. 2008. *Roman Dress and the Fabrics of Roman Culture*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Llewellyn-Jones, Lloyd, ed. 2001. *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World*. Swansea: University of Wales Press.

Olson, Kelly. 2008. *Dress and the Roman Woman: Self-presentation and Society*. London and New York: Routledge.

Sebesta, Judith Lynn and Larissa Bonfante, eds. 2001. *The World of Roman Costume*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Street, Sarah. 2001. *Costume and Cinema: Dress Codes in Popular Film*. London: Wallflower Press.