

Popular Classics

This panel aims to investigate the potentially self-contradictory concept of “popular Classics.” How do elements of the ancient Greco-Roman world appeal to, and appear to, people who are not invested in the classical tradition as cultural patrimony? While the products of “popular Classics” usually can be explained by scholars within the framework of the classical tradition, and marketers have at times leveraged that connection to appeal to institutional gatekeepers, this identification may not reflect how their creators conceptualized them, nor how their consumers ultimately perceive or value them. But if not as expressions of the classical tradition, what cultural work are elements of Greco-Roman antiquity performing for members of a given society? To what extent is a distinction between “popular” and “elite” culture—as defined by medium, genre, and/or testimony from creators, critics, marketers, or consumers—explanatory of how ancient Greco-Roman material is handled and discussed in a particular place and period?

Wednesday, July 19

Session 1: 1:00-3:00 pm

1:00-1:35 pm: “Thirty-Five Years of Hercules for Children.” Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University (Tel Aviv, Israel)

1:45-2:20 pm: “Parodic Myth and the Millennial Audience: Approaches to Rick Riordan’s ‘Popular Classic’ Percy Jackson.” Patricia Salzman-Mitchell, Montclair State University (New Jersey, USA)

2:30-3:00 pm: Response and moderated Q&A: Benjamin E. Stevens, Trinity University (Texas, USA)

Session 2: 3:15-5:15 pm

3:15-3:50 pm: “Animating antiquity on children’s television: the visual worlds of Ulysses 31 and Samurai Jack.” Sarah Miles, University of Durham (England, UK)

4:00-4:35 pm: “Ludi Saeculares: Classics in the Age of Video Games.” Matthew Taylor, Beloit College (Wisconsin, USA)

4:45-5:15 pm: Response and moderated Q&A: Brett M. Rogers, University of Puget Sound (Washington, USA)

Thursday, July 20

Session 3: 9:00-11:00 am

9:00-9:35 am: “Venus Born Again: A Goddess in the Modern Imagination.” Anise Strong, Western Michigan University (Michigan, USA)

9:45-10:20 am: “‘Everybody’s Making Like Cleopatra.’ American Advertising and the Changing Image of Cleopatra in the Twentieth Century.” Gregory Daugherty, Randolph-Macon College (Virginia, USA)

10:30-11 am: Response and moderated Q&A: Meredith E. Safran, Trinity College (Connecticut, USA)

Session 4: 11:15 am-1:15 pm

11:15-11:50 am: “‘Not the BBC version’: USA’s Helen of Troy (2003).” Ruby Blondell, University of Washington (Washington, USA)

12:00-12:35 pm: “Who’s that Lady? Women’s Historical Fiction and the Experience of Antiquity.” T.J. West, Syracuse University (New York, USA)

12:45-1:15 pm: Response and moderated Q&A: Benjamin E. Stevens, Trinity University (Texas, USA)

Lunch: 1:15-2:30 pm

Session 5: 2:30-4:30 pm

2:30-3:05 pm: “‘Caesar,’ Christ, Pan, Zeus: Iggy Pop and Classical Antiquity.” Alison Poe, Fairfield University (Connecticut, USA)

3:15-3:50 pm: “Antiquity Inscribes Modernity: The Popularity of Ancient Iconography in Contemporary Tattoo Designs.” Marguerite Johnson, University of Newcastle (New South Wales, Australia).

4:00-4:30 pm: Response and moderated Q&A: Brett M. Rogers, University of Puget Sound (Washington, USA)

Friday, July 21

Session 6: 9:00-11:00 am

9:00-9:35 am: “Beyond Cato: Towards a new history of the depiction of the ancient world on the eighteenth-century American stage.” Gary Fisher, University of Nottingham (England, UK)

9:45-10:20 am: “Cato the Youngest: Stephen Colbert and the Classics.” David Wright, Rutgers University-New Brunswick (New Jersey, USA)

10:30-11 am: Response and moderated Q&A: Meredith E. Safran, Trinity College (Connecticut, USA)

Session 7: 11:15 am-1:15 pm

11:15-11:50 am: “Julius Caesar, Super-Villain? Talbot Mundy’s Tros of Samothrace and the ‘Camp-Fire’ Controversy.” Mark Nugent, University of Victoria (British Columbia, Canada)

12:00-12:35 pm: “The Afterlife of Cicero in Fan Fiction.” Melanie Racette-Campbell, Memorial University of Newfoundland (Canada)

12:45-1:15 pm: Response and moderated Q&A: Amanda Potter, Open University (England, UK) (via Skype)

Lunch: 1:15-2:30 pm

Session 8: 2:30-4:30 pm

2:30-3:05 pm: “Acropolis Now: Greek Myth and Editorial Cartoons of the Modern Greek Debt Crisis.” Angeline Chiu, University of Vermont (Vermont, USA)

3:15-3:50 pm: "Pop Go the Classics: Pop Art and Classical Antiquity." Vincent Tomasso, Trinity College (Connecticut, USA)
 4:00-4:30 pm: Response and moderated Q&A: Benjamin E. Stevens, Trinity University (Texas, USA)

Saturday, July 22

Session 9: 10:00 am-12:00 pm

10:00-10:35 am: "Katniss Gladiatrix: Watching The Hunger Games (2012) through the Lens of Gladiator (2000)." Emma Scioli, University of Kansas (Kansas, USA)
 10:35-11 am: Response and moderated Q&A: Brett Rodgers, University of Puget Sound (Washington, USA)
 11am-12pm: Closing Discussion: Meredith E. Safran, Trinity College (Connecticut, USA)

Abstracts

Thirty-Five Years of Hercules for Children
 Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University (Tel Aviv, Israel)

Many elements of the Hercules myth are unpalatable to modern eyes, particularly when writing for children and young adults; the rape of Alcmena, Hercules' madness and subsequent murder of his children, the episode with Omphale, to give but three examples. Nevertheless, the story has long been beloved of authors of juvenile literature, and over the past three and a half decades, the story has appeared in multiple versions for children from two versions in the early 1980's (I. M. Richardson's *The Adventures of Hercules* (1983) and Bernard Evslin's *Hercules* (1984)), through a rash of post-Disney Hercules' in the late 1990s, e.g. Kathryn Lasky and Mark Hess, *Hercules: The Man, the Myth, the Hero* (1997), Jan Carr, *Hercules: The Hero* (1997), James Riordan and Christina Balit, *The Twelve Labors Of Hercules* (1997), Georges Moroz, *Hercules - The Complete Myths of a Legend/ Hercules: The Twelve Labors* (1997), R. Cerasini, *Twelve Labors of Hercules* (1997), John Whitman, *Hercules: Mighty Chronicles* (1998), Nancy Loewen, *Hercules* (1998), Robert Burleigh and Raul Colon, *Hercules* (1999). A further, approximately thirty, versions have appeared since 2003, the latest of which have been influenced by recent screen depictions of the Greek hero. This paper investigates the ways in which the Hercules myth has been altered in these books, considering all of these works in their social contexts, and focussing on the method and nature of the adaptations, the illustrations used and the didactic or moral messages imparted. It thus aims to examine the moral and ethical messages being transmitted to children, providing an insight into the moral values and ideals of the Western world in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Parodic Myth and the Millennial Audience: Approaches to Rick Riordan's 'Popular Classic' Percy Jackson
 Patricia Salzman-Mitchell, Montclair State University (New Jersey, USA)

Rick Riordan's mythically inspired Percy Jackson series has been astoundingly popular with the middle school readership and beyond. Yet scholarly attention to the books has been somewhat scant; perhaps because the books were not considered "high literature" appealing to elites. Notable studies are Riordan and Wilson (2008), Annes Brown (2017), Maurice (2015) and Jaques (2015). Murnaghan (2011) remarks on the 'anti-academic', anti-establishment aspects of Percy; and Morey and Nelson (2015) recognize the "competing discourses of high and low culture" (240) in the series. Ideas forwarded in Salzman-Mitchell and Alvares' (2018) chapter on the first Percy Jackson movie are seminal for this paper.

But why has this "popular classic" been so impactful in an audience for whom the received auctoritas of the Classics means very little? How do we as scholars approach its parodic, humorous and irreverent relationship with the sanctioned classical texts? The concept of "the classical tradition," so full of gravitas itself, does not seem to fit with the playful reception of these texts by its millennial audience. We propose that the critical concept of parody, as discussed by Bakhtin (1981) and Genette (1997), is useful to understand Riordan's rather irreverent take on myth and its reception by readers of an age which indeed constantly embraces humor and playful imitation, perhaps because the realities of the adult world they are entering are too frightful if taken too "seriously."

The paper focuses on two episodes as case studies and explores their parodic connections with the source texts as well as their re-contextualization in the world of the American middle schooler in the 2000s. We discuss the ideas of temptation, vanity and artificial image construction through the episode of C.C.'s (Circe's) spa (cf. *Odyssey* 10) in *Sea of Monsters*. We show how parody, with all its distancing effects, also serves as vehicle for political and social criticism of the frivolous world of image cultivation and excessive attention to body adornment, a common trap growing children my fall into. Yet the gender reversals in the episode (it is Annabeth who rescues the seduced and transformed Percy and the rest of the men from their "guinea pig" state) are noteworthy. This possibility of girls' heroism appeals to Riordan's millennial readership. We also approach the topic of the environment and the serious yet humorized problem of pollution in the construction of the rivers Hudson and East in *The Last Olympian* (cf. Scamander in *Iliad* 21, Achelous in *Metamorphoses* 9 and Tiber in *Aeneid* 8). Here again, the distancing effects of parody and humor make the treatment of a frightening future more tolerable, yet in the almost cartoonish depiction of the filthy rivers who get "cleaned up" by Percy in return for their help there is a sense of hope, that young readers can and will bear, successfully, the responsibility of improving the health of the planet, as the dying Pan admonishes they should do in the fourth book of the series.

Animating antiquity on children's television: the visual worlds of Ulysses 31 and Samurai Jack
 Sarah Miles, University of Durham (England, UK)

This paper explores how children's animated television of the late 20th and early 21st c. provides a visual re-imagining of antiquity, its stories, its characters and its cultures that is mediated through the contemporary medium of cinema and Japanese anime. I will use two animated children's television series from 1980s-2000s as case studies: Genndy Tartakovsky's *Samurai Jack* and *Ulysses 31*, a Japanese-French production. Both programmes were internationally successful and they employed techniques from anime and Western cinema to express a grandeur and scale in their (re-)presentation of the ancient world, and to make the ancient world accessible and appealing to new, international, child audiences. The paper argues that this cinematic/anime frame is key to how these animations re-formed and re-imagined the ancient world for child audiences. Television series play a powerful role in shaping children's earliest perceptions and receptions of Graeco-Roman antiquity, and these two programmes use contemporary cinema and anime to do so.

Genndy Tartakovsky's Samurai Jack (about a time-travelling samurai) contains an episode in which Jack meets the 300 Spartans. However, the visual aesthetic of the episode is heavily reliant on Varley/Miller's graphic novel *300*, and it employs a cinematic style of animation. Indeed, the makers of the subsequent film *300* cite this *Samurai Jack* episode as influencing how they conceived the live-action film.

Ulysses 31 was a Franco-Japanese production, which set the adventures of Odysseus in 31st century space. This animation engaged directly with developments in anime and cinema of the mid-late 20th century. The most prominent cinematic influences were George Lucas' *Star Wars* and Stanley Kubrick's 2001 *A Space Odyssey*. *Samurai Jack* and *Ulysses 31* indicate how cinema and anime offer a point of mediation for translating the perceived power, scale and grandeur of classical antiquity using internationally-recognised forms of 20th-21st c. popular culture.

Ludi Saeculares: Classics in the Age of Video Games
 Matthew Taylor, Beloit College (Wisconsin, USA)

From proud Roman generals to ravening Spartan demi-gods, classical history, mythology, and iconography have become staple features of the richly imaginative worlds of video games. But these features need to be understood as more than mere window-dressing, and instead as fundamental elements of a game's design that serve to motivate, immerse, and reward players as they interact with its particular system. Indeed, just as scholars of classical reception have had to develop robust, interdisciplinary modes of analysis to unpack the role of the ancient world in film and television, so, too, do classically-themed video games deserve a mode of analysis that is sensitive to the peculiar modalities through which they represent the ancient world.

Those who encounter our field through video games do so as players, and this paper will demonstrate how a proper respect for the intricacies of the player-game relationship is essential to understanding the way classics is deployed in this particular popular art. The paper will thus serve as an introduction to the field of Video Game Studies, outlining some of the approaches developed by scholars of that discipline to analyze video games in an appropriately media-specific fashion; these perspectives include Ian Bogost's (2006, 2011) concept of procedural rhetoric, Miguel Sicart's (2009) work on ethics in video games, and Brendan Keogh's (2013, 2014) phenomenological framework for their analysis. In order to establish a broader impression of the way classical material is employed by designers and developers, the paper will examine a range of games released at different times, in different genres, and across different platforms, specifically Rome: Total War (2004, PC), Shadow of Rome (2005, PS2), God of War (2005, PS2), Ryse: Son of Rome (2013, Xbox One), and Okhlos (2016, PC). By investigating how classics is used to complement the particular ludic priorities of each game, the paper will demonstrate the diversity of ways the material we study is presented to—and consumed by—video game audiences.

Venus Born Again: A Goddess in the Modern Imagination
Anise K. Strong, Western Michigan University (Michigan, USA)

What does it mean to look like a goddess? For many 20th century and 21st century American women and the artists that shaped their images, to look "divine" has meant to invoke images of classical antiquity. These representations have ranged from simply wrapping oneself in a convenient sheet, as in various depictions of college toga parties, to self-consciously mimicking specific works of classical and Renaissance art, most commonly Botticelli's "Birth of Venus," which itself echoes the Venus de Medici and Praxiteles' lost classical sculpture of Aphrodite.

This paper traces the particular reception of "The Birth of Venus" in a wide variety of media, ranging from modern painting to burlesque to films like *The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* to children's television to advertising for women's razors. I will explore how many different modern creators have offered their own interpretations of classical antiquity in general and the goddess Aphrodite or Venus in particular. These different receptions often grapple both with the objectification of a female deity and with the potential expressed sexual desire of Venus herself. Representations can become a shortcut for the entire concept of the male objectifying gaze. The images often invoke a paradoxical and alluring combination of modesty and promiscuity, just as Venus herself is in many ancient stories and artistic representations.

I also seek to explore how divorced a representation of a classical goddess might become from its initial inspiration – at what point is a modern version simply evoking "that famous painting" rather than a collection of ideas and symbols surrounding the deity herself? What does it mean to want to look at Venus or to be like Venus oneself when that process of self-transformation involves using a specific pink razor?

"Everybody's Making Like Cleopatra." American Advertising and the Changing Image of Cleopatra in the Twentieth Century
Gregory N. Daugherty, Randolph-Macon College (Virginia, USA)

This title is taken from an article in *Colliers* (11/26/1954, p. 21-25) by Murray Robinson. It celebrates a new round of Egyptomania in American popular culture. The range of that influence is boldly displayed on the first page with a Helena Rubenstein model in stark contrast as comedienne Imogene Coca "goes Egyptian." This layout embodies the "Mid Century Modern Cleopatra" as it had been shaped by the images of the previous fifty years (e.g. *The New Woman*, Theda Bara, *The Palmolive* ad campaign of 1918-29 and Claudette Colbert) and hints at where it was to lead in the next half century: *Peplum* Queens, *Lizpatra* and *Vampires*. Cleopatra was featured in Films, Novels, Art of every description, Pornography, Comics, Cartoons and TV shows, so it is no surprise that she was also invoked in Advertising of all sorts of products. Given her image, using her to sell fragrance, beauty and luxury items is not surprising, but some of the choices are puzzling: fruit, soft drinks, thread and canned meat.

This paper will present an overview of selected advertising campaigns featuring Cleopatra, focusing on how the images were shaped by contemporary popular culture (especially films) and how they in turn altered the image of the Egyptian Queen over the years. Sometimes these changes reflected the cultural power of Films and Novels, but a case will be made that occasionally it was the advertising itself altering the popular conceptions. Particular attention will be paid to the impact of the *Palmolive* soap campaigns, the marketing of the major and minor films and the advent of dark themed Cleopatras inspired by Anne Rice, primarily in graphic novels.

'Not the BBC Version': USA's Helen of Troy (2003)
Ruby Blondell, University of Washington (Washington, USA)

In most popular renditions of the ancient world, antiquity's most obvious function is to attract audiences by offering famous or canonical stories which are both well known and culturally authorized, while at the same time promising the exoticism, adventure, romance, and/or fantasy that are grist to pop culture's mill. Publicity for the USA Network's 2003 miniseries *Helen of Troy* (directed by John Kent Harrison) suggests that it is no exception, promising a "special event" that dramatizes "an epic story of love and war".

Yet the scriptwriter, Ronni Kern, had little investment in "the classical tradition as cultural patrimony", and no interest whatsoever in perpetuating or popularizing it as such. On the contrary, she used that tradition's canonicity as a springboard for challenging both its hegemony and the masculinism of the epic genre. Kern used a wide range of ancient sources for her script, but developed, interpreted, and supplemented them in order to give Helen a voice that had been denied to her by men, since, in Kern's words, "history is not written by the women".

In this paper I shall trace the development of the Helen miniseries from Kern's original concept to the final product. (This portion of the paper will be based on an interview with Kern that I conducted in September 2016, and if possible, an interview with the director, which has yet to take place.) I shall then offer an analysis and interpretation of the film text, assessing, in particular, ways in which it might or might not be construed as a feminist intervention, and as such resistant to the authority of "the classical tradition". I shall argue that the influence of "feminine" genres (melodrama, soap opera, romance), the portrayal of Helen as a naive teenager, and the use of a rape-revenge structure displace the patriarchal epic tradition by turning the Trojan War into a coming-of-age story for 21st century teenage girls. Next, I shall examine audience response, with particular attention to the ways in which viewers' judgment seems to be affected by their gender, their prior knowledge (if any) of antiquity, and the degree to which they are (or are not) invested in its authority. Most professional reviews were hostile, and the IMDb audience ratings were mediocre. I argue that the film's "femininity" contributed to this generally negative reception. But if we scratch beneath the surface of the IMDb data, there is evidence that the film was more popular with women, and especially girls, than may at first be apparent.

I conclude that the film may ultimately have succeeded most with the demographic that it seems to address—namely teenage girls—which is also, arguably, the demographic that stands in greatest need of a critical stance towards the authority of the classical tradition and the epic genre.

"Who's that Lady? Women's Historical Fiction and the Experience of Antiquity"
Thomas J. West III, Syracuse University (New York, USA)

While the world of antiquity has frequently provided novelists with a canvass on which to explore the ancient world and to fill in the gaps in the historical record, the narrative emphasis of these novels has frequently been on the actions of historical men. Series such as Colleen McCullough's *The Masters of Rome*, while providing some attention to women and their experiences, mostly focused on the political fortunes of the great men of the later Republic, including figures such as Marius, Sulla and, of course, Julius Caesar. Recently, however, a number of historical novelists have shifted the emphasis onto the experience of the historical women of the ancient world. Authors such as Michelle Moran, Stephanie Dray, Kate Quinn, and Stephanie Thornton have depicted the lives and struggles of ancient women, ranging from Hatshepsut and Nefertiti to Cleopatra Selene and Faustina the Younger. These novels emphasize the importance of abjection and suffering for the women of antiquity—many of whom must overcome tremendous hardship as they chart their course through the fraught political and social landscape of antiquity—and this suffering is key to the historical visions these novels evoke. Whether they are aristocrats or empresses, the women of these novels must constantly contend with a world that does not value their lives or their experiences. As a result, they must frequently battle and claw their way into the upper echelons of power, and even then their triumph remains tinged with loss.

This paper will explore the role that women's historical fiction has in shaping an experience of the ancient world, as well as how such fiction remains an important means through which 21st Century readers engage with the question of ancient history and women's role in it. Through readings of three contemporary writers of women's historical fiction, Kate Quinn (author of a series of books about Roman empresses), Stephanie Dray (author a trilogy on Cleopatra Selene), and Stephanie Thornton (author of several novels about ancient women), I argue that this particular subgenre of historical fiction aims to provide 21st Century women readers the opportunity to vicariously experience the connected political and personal suffering and eventual triumphs of the

women of Greco-Roman antiquity. As such, they render visible not only the struggles faced by the women of the ancient world, but also aim to provide ancient women—largely denied their own voice by the historical record—an opportunity to tell their own stories. Though the women of these novels suffer greatly on their journey toward political and social empowerment, this suffering grants meaning to their eventual triumph and, ultimately, the sense of historical agency and vocalty these narratives create. Modern readers gain a sense of the fundamental unfairness of this suffering, and it is this evocation of melodramatic virtuous anguish that grants these novels their emotional—and, I would argue, intellectual—force. As a result, these historical novels utilize the ancient world to provide an experience of the ancient world and a vicarious feeling of historical female empowerment.

'Antiquity Inscribes Modernity: The Popularity of Ancient Iconography in Contemporary Tattoo Designs'
Marguerite Johnson, The University of Newcastle (New South Wales, Australia)

From Spartan shields and hoplite helmets, gods and goddesses, or quotations from Sappho, this paper examines some of the reasonings behind the proliferation of ancient iconography in contemporary tattoo designs. Since the mid-1990s, the tattoo industry has exploded: in Australia, 25% of people below the age of 30 years have a tattoo; 20% of central European adults have one or more tattoos; and three in ten Americans have at least one. Tattoos are imbued with a range of meanings by the wearer, and about the wearer. The choices behind these symbols are often narrativised by the wearer to enhance meaning. From a subculture associated with anti-authoritarianism and taboo, tattooing is now regarded as a mainstay of popular culture that both inspires it, and in turn, is inspired by it. The marking of the modern body with ancient symbolism can be interpreted in multiple ways. Acknowledgement of one's ancestry, whether real or imagined, is often a factor in the choice of Celtic images, whereas the display of particular icons such as Roman legionary designs and Spartan armoury, communicate contemporary expressions of masculinity that privilege warrior codes, and both physical and mental strength. On Spartan tattoos, for example, one blogsite reads: "Tattoos of a Spartan have masculine undertones because it was the men who were warriors". When it comes to tattoos, size matters in a physical display designed to show strength, fortitude and 'code.' The body becomes a canvas for pages of Frank Miller's graphic novel 300 (1998), or a full Roman insignia. While personal display is the mainstay, another motivation is to show allegiance to a particular ideology or lifestyle (such as gaming or fandom). The connection between blockbuster films and the proliferation of tattoo designs featuring ancient imagery cannot be dismissed. This interdisciplinary analysis, which references classical reception studies, sociology, anthropology and popular culture scholarship, also examines films such as *Braveheart* (1995), which sparked a wave of Celtic-inspired tattoos, and *Gladiator* (2000) and *300* (2006), which created a wave of tattoo trends based on Roman and Spartan iconography. To inscribe one's body is to claim ownership of idealised ancient 'codes' but these values are often modern constructions. For many people, access to ancient cultures is almost exclusively through popular culture, where the ideas about these cultures are filtered through a modern lens. The divide between the cultural stewards of antiquity and the pop culture claimants sees a skewing, and reinvention of traditional meanings which begs the question: when does reception become a new reality?

"Caesar," Christ, Pan, Zeus: Iggy Pop and Classical Antiquity
Alison C. Poe, Fairfield University (Connecticut, USA)

This paper examines the reception of classical antiquity by American rock singer-songwriter Iggy Pop (b. James Ostergard, Jr., 1947; 23 studio albums, 1969-2016). For a musician who "presided over quite some reign of perverted rock & roll terror" (Hedegaard 2003), Pop has engaged with ancient history and imagery in remarkably complex ways. In 1995, Pop published a short essay in the journal *Classics Ireland* describing his experience of reading *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. He noted the "grandeur of the subject" and urged "anyone who wants life on earth to really come alive for them to enjoy the beautiful ancestral ancient world." The author also expressed fascination with the violence and intrigue of ancient Rome, explicitly identifying their agents with "modern American money and muscle-myth." Pop thereby characterized antiquity both as the majestic cultural patrimony of all seekers of life, including himself, and as the model for a rapacious American power elite. Pop cited Gibbon's opus as the inspiration for his spoken-word "Caesar" on his 1993 American Caesar LP. Here, the "people of America" are the subjects of Caesar, with his army, banquets, and luxuries; a refrain enjoins, "Throw [the Christians] to the lions!" Caesar is old and "addled," though, and "no one believes in the old gods"; the cry becomes, "Put [the emperor] in the fiery pit!" Pop's Caesar thus represents the Establishment of the contemporary U.S.; early Christians, the ultimately victorious underdogs. In a 2003 interview, Pop equated the latter with his motley early fan base and compared his onstage self-mutilations to Christ's suffering "for the good of the whole" (Hedegaard 2003). At least one image of Pop expressly evokes antiquity: Esther Friedmann's cover photograph for Pop's 1982 autobiography *I Need More*, which depicts the shaggy-haired singer licking the nipple of a classicizing female statue beside a fluted column. In addition to signifying the defilement of tradition, this paper argues, the image casts Pop as the libidinous Pan or a satyr, as in Hellenistic statue groups with nymphs. The myriad photographs of Pop's famously toned bare torso readily interact with classical notions of male beauty, power, and sexuality; depending on their style and setting, they can summon to mind not only the salaciousness of satyr-nymph sculptures but also, or alternatively, the idealization of Archaic kouroi and/or the battered quality of the Terme bronze boxer (or of Christ in medieval *Ecce Homo* paintings). Finally, several drawings from the 2016 "Iggy Pop Life Class" led by British artist Jeremy Deller at the Brooklyn Museum show the nude musician seated gravely and frontally with his hand on a staff, a pose that made Pop think of Velázquez's 1640 Mars (Deller and Matt Atkins 2016, 11) and that also recalls Pheidias' Olympian Zeus. By enshrining the 69-year-old singer as a Greek deity, these drawings bespeak the respect Pop now enjoys among the American and European creative-intellectual elite – perhaps one aim, this paper proposes, of Pop's classical reception.

"Beyond Cato: Towards a new history of the depiction of ancient world on the eighteenth-century American stage"
Gary Fisher, University of Nottingham (England, UK)

Joseph Addison's 1712 play *Cato: A Tragedy* dramatizes the last days of Cato the Younger's unsuccessful resistance to Julius Caesar and culminates in Cato choosing to fall upon his own sword rather than submit to the tyranny of Caesar. Addison's *Cato* is typically regarded in standard histories of the American theatre as one of the fundamental staples of the eighteenth-century American stage and a core text in the history of colonial-era theatre. Yet, outside discussions of the fondness for the play exhibited in the discourses of key figures in the American Revolution such as George Washington and Nathan Hale, little significant effort has been made to process the vast corpus of available resources pertaining to performances of *Cato*, such as newspaper advertisements, playbills, and reviews. These resources not only reveal the frequency with which Addison's *Cato* and other such plays set in the ancient world were performed, but can also provide a unique and invaluable insight into how eighteenth-century American audiences engaged with the classical world through the medium of theatre. This paper will therefore utilise this largely unexploited pool of material and present the findings of a long-running data collection exercise that has sought to compile extant references to the performance of a play in eighteenth-century north America that was either explicitly set in or implicitly referred to the ancient world. It will argue that numerous other classically inspired plays such as William Whitehead's *The Roman Father* and David Garrick's *Lethe*, while they may not have received as much prominence in the discourse of eighteenth century political elites as *Cato*, enjoyed considerable popularity on the eighteenth-century American stage and were able to exert considerable influence on contemporary theatrical culture and popular classical awareness. This paper will examine the differing performance contexts of these plays in order to understand how the many diverse groups within contemporary American society were engaging differently with the Classics on stage. In particular, this information will be used to examine how members of the classically educated American political elite were engaging with the ancient world differently from other sections of American society, who had received no such education. Finally this paper will use this data alongside contemporary newspaper articles and reviews to examine how, after gaining independence, the lines between popular and elite theatrical culture were increasingly blurred as the post-revolutionary political elites used the popular depiction of the ancient world on stage as a medium through which to generate a new national and republican identity. By providing a more wide-ranging perspective on classical influences on American theatre, this paper will extend our understanding beyond its current narrow focus on Addison's *Cato* and towards a more comprehensive and wide-reaching history of the Classics on the American stage.

Cato the Youngest: Stephen Colbert and the Classics
David Wright, Rutgers University (New Jersey, USA)

Stephen Colbert made frequent allusions to the classical world -- both through uses of Latin phrases and references to Greco-Roman culture -- in his award-winning *Colbert Report* (2004-2014) to support the development of his satirical character. For centuries, knowledge of the Classics has been the key to membership in Western elite society. Colbert's affected interest in the field of Classics thus bolsters the exaggerated conservative elite persona that he assumes for his show. For example, Colbert displays his knowledge of the Perseus myth by bringing out a mirror during an interview with Bill Clinton lest he

look at the politician directly and be overcome by the “Medusa of his political persuasiveness” (April 8, 2013). He also has shown his familiarity with figures from Roman history such as the Catos (January 9 and May 29, 2012), Scipio Africanus (January 9, 2012), and Elagabalus (October 24, 2012). Another major component of his conservative persona is his Catholic identity. Catholic traditionalists continue to show their preference for Latin in liturgical services. Colbert shows his audience that he has a good handle on the foundational language of Western Civilization and the Catholic Church in several ways: 1) his rendition of “Happy Birthday” to his mother in Latin (November 6, 2008); 2) the *videri quam esse* inscription on his fireplace; and 3) his quoting of “Carthago delenda est” on three occasions (January 9, May 29, and October 24, 2012). On the surface, we can see Colbert’s use of Latin phrases and classical allusions as part of his role as conservative traditionalist. At the same time, Colbert’s allusions to the classical world go deeper than simply helping to construct his persona. Much like authors of classical antiquity, he often uses an exemplum to prove a point he is making about a current political issue. Just as with the Roman antiquarians of old, for Colbert’s persona, the oldest example is almost always the most desirable. The audience quickly realizes, however, that these exempla are not ideal models at all. Two examples illustrate this point. In one segment (January 9, 2012), Colbert criticizes New Hampshire Republicans who suggest a new rule that lawmakers must cite an article from the Magna Carta as an authority when proposing a new bill. He, in response, suggests that his home state of South Carolina should take this rule to the next level and cite speeches of Cato the Elder. In another episode (February 14, 2013), after discovering the “true origin” of Valentine’s Day, Lupercalia, the faux pundit then enjoins his audience to celebrate the holiday in a “traditional” fashion: “by guzzling a couple of skins full on wine, sacrificing a goat to Venus, wearing its skin, and then racing through the town, whipping any women you pass with a short leather thong to promote fertility -- you know... romance.” In sum, he uses the humor of Classical models in a modern context to show the inherent absurdity of conservatism and originalism if taken too far.

Julius Caesar, Super-villain? Talbot Mundy’s Tros of Samothrace and the “Camp-Fire” Controversy
Mark Nugent, University of Victoria (British Columbia, Canada)

In 1925-1926, Talbot Mundy published a series of seven novellas about Julius Caesar’s invasions of Britain in the pulp magazine *Adventure*. These novellas—subsequently collected and published under the title *Tros of Samothrace* (Appleton-Century, 1934)—depict the exploits of a Greek freedom-fighter named Tros, who joins with native Britons to thwart Caesar’s imperialist ambitions. Caesar appears in these adventures as a super-villain: an unscrupulous brute and a destroyer of conquered peoples’ liberty. Mundy’s portrait of Caesar provoked an enormous controversy among the readership of *Adventure*, and ultimately the wider public; readers wrote letters to *Adventure* in great numbers either protesting or praising Mundy’s depiction of Caesar (Grant 1983; Ellis 1984; Taves 2006). *Adventure* printed many of these letters in its “Camp-Fire” column, along with Mundy’s responses, and the controversy continued unabated for almost a year. In the end, the debate about Mundy’s treatment of Caesar proved to be the greatest such controversy in the history of any pulp magazine (Grant 1983; Taves 2006). My paper explores both Mundy’s revisionist portrait of Caesar and the popular debates that followed upon the publication of the *Tros* novellas. Although Mundy’s depiction of Caesar can be situated within contemporary receptions of Caesar’s military career as explored by Wyke (2012), the author’s approach—which is profoundly anti-classical in spirit—was inspired primarily by his anti-colonialist politics and Theosophic beliefs (Taves 1985; 2006). (In private correspondence, Mundy described the *Tros* novellas as a “roasting [of] Julius Caesar and the whole damned Roman Empire” [quoted in Ellis 1984]; in a response to his critics printed in the July 30, 1925 issue of *Adventure*, he drew parallels between Roman imperialism and British rule in India [Taves 2006].) Given that the political character of Mundy’s reassessment of Caesar was an important factor behind the intensity of the popular reaction to the *Tros* novellas, the “Camp-Fire” controversy can serve to illuminate ways that a popular audience responds—negatively and favourably—to a subversive depiction of a historical figure who, like Caesar, looms large in the classical tradition. My paper, then, considers the cultural work performed by a debate about Julius Caesar’s ethics and legacy in the letters column of a pulp magazine.

The Afterlife of Cicero in Fan Fiction
Melanie Racette-Campbell, Memorial University of Newfoundland (Canada)

This paper investigates Cicero’s afterlife in a surprising place: online fan fiction. Fan fiction generally takes the form of short stories which incorporate characters and situations from other media, usually television but also movies, novels, comic books and video games. It is generally considered to have begun in the 1970s with homoerotic treatments of the relationship between the two main characters of the original *Star Trek* series, but has found a much wider audience and immense popularity online. One might also see it as a literary descendant of works such as the pseudo-Ovidian and Virgilian poems, in that it attempts to re-work and capture the flavour of more famous works of art. The quality of this fan fiction varies wildly, and it attracts authors and readers from all walks of life. Given the television-centric nature of fan fiction, it is not entirely surprising to find Cicero in stories based on the HBO/BBC series *Rome*. What are significantly more surprising, however, are the examples that do not appear to draw on this or any other modern fictional representation, but rather suggest a familiarity with Cicero’s own writings. The majority of the stories include romantic or sexual relationships between Cicero and friends or enemies (including Atticus, Tiro, Marc Antony, and Catiline). I argue that the homosocial world of late Republican Rome found in the Ciceronian corpus provides a fertile field for the homoeroticism that characterizes a significant subset of fan fiction. Indeed, the relationships are contextualized in a historical social and political world that is familiarly Roman. In this paper, I seek to formulate an understanding of what relevance these ancient characters have in a genre that is particularly modern, and how they reflect a continued interest in and dialogue with Roman literature and society outside of high culture and the academy.

Acropolis Now: Greek Myth and Editorial Cartoons of the Modern Greek Debt Crisis
Angeline Chiu, University of Vermont (Vermont, USA)

From the *New Yorker* to the *Economist* to numerous other newspapers and publications both in the US and abroad, editorial cartoons and illustrations have drawn heavily on Greek myth in their artistic commentaries on the ongoing modern Greek debt crisis. This paper examines a selection of such cartoons as examples of classical adaptation and reception of particular myths both expected (for instance, Sisyphus, Atlas, Achilles’ heel, Trojan Horse) and surprising (e.g., Hercules, Icarus, Prometheus) in a specific, discrete, contemporary context (circa 2010-present, with emphasis on 2015).

Pop Go the Classics: Pop Art and Classical Antiquity
Vincent Tomasso, Trinity College (Connecticut, USA)

The focus of this presentation will be on the relationship between two cultural phenomena that on the surface could not be further apart: Pop Art and the discipline of Classics. Pop Art, a late twentieth-century art movement, was strongly anticlassical in its use of items from everyday consumer life, such as soup can labels, comic book panels, and newspapers. Classics, on the other hand, was often understood as the domain of elite culture and thus removed from everyday life, both in its lofty subject matter and in its origins thousands of years ago in countries not usually associated with Pop Art. This relationship has been explored in certain aspects in certain respects in e.g., Bader (2011), Goldhill (2011), and Nygard and Tomasso (2016), which this presentation will build upon and expand. Before and during the rise of Pop Art, the Classics had been the domain of the highly-educated in high schools and colleges (e.g., Winterer 2002) and of fine artists, such as Pablo Picasso (e.g., Rutledge 2008 and Prettejohn 2012). Pop Artists took these elite-culture usages and turned them into the everyday. The vehicle for this transformation was the peplum film genre, which was enormously popular (e.g., Hercules [Levine 1958] did enormous business in the US according to Bondanella 2009: 167) and had a deep influence on American culture just when Pop Art was coming onto the American scene (D’Amelio 2009: 24-5). As a result, this presentation argues, Pop Art encouraged its viewers to see the everyday in classical antiquity, appropriating “high culture” symbols via “low culture” signifiers. This presentation will analyze closely three pieces of Pop Art: Roy Lichtenstein’s *Temple of Apollo* (1964), Andy Warhol’s *Alexander the Great* (1982), and Jim Dine’s *Looking Towards the Avenue* (1989). Lichtenstein reproduced the subject of his 1964 painting, the temple of Apollo at Corinth, by looking at a postcard (Waldman 1993), rather than visiting the site as a traditional painter might have. In addition, he rendered the building using the Ben-Day Dot method, commonly used to produce comic books, one of the lowest, mass-produced cultural forms at that time. Warhol’s 1982 print takes a broken statue of Alexander the Great as its subject and is produced using his typical silk screening process, which mass produces copies, a process antithetical to the modern idea that antiquity created priceless individual works of art. Dine’s 1989 bronze sculptures look like the *Venus De Milo* statues but are headless and covered in green patina. *Looking Towards the Avenue* plays with the stark contrast between the rough, green surfaces of Dine’s pieces and the supposedly smooth, white marble of the *Venus De Milo*. All of these artists thus draw attention to the populism of their techniques and the idea that their “elite culture” subjects have everyday connotations. By doing so, Pop Art deconstructs the divide between “high” and “low” art, “elite” and “popular” culture and creates a popular Classics.

Katniss Gladiatrix: Watching The Hunger Games (2012) through the Lens of Gladiator (2000)
Emma Sciole, University of Kansas (Kansas, USA)

The Hunger Games series, a trilogy of young adult novels set in a dystopian future where children are forced to fight to the death in an annual ritual designed for spectacular entertainment, owes much to the paradigm of ancient Roman gladiatorial games for its basic concept. Author Suzanne Collins has claimed that, "I send my tributes into an updated version of the Roman gladiator games" (interview on Scholastic.com). Furthermore, Collins populates her world of Panem (Latin for "bread") with characters bearing Roman names like Caesar and Octavia. Scholars of the books have also taken interest in the connection between ancient Rome and Collins' fictional world. Adam Barkman (2012), for example, analyzes the immorality and decadence of the Hunger Games from the perspective of ancient Roman history and philosophy. What happens to this underpinning of Roman influence when the novels are adapted for the screen, a domain in which the recreated arenas of ancient Rome have served as sites for the critique of violence as entertainment throughout the history of cinema? This paper will focus on the first of the four film adaptations of the books (The Hunger Games [2012], dir. Gary Ross), arguing that the film amplifies the books' thematic connections to ancient Rome through a series of visual and structural allusions not to ancient Rome itself, but to ancient Rome as filtered through the lens of popular cinema, in particular Ridley Scott's blockbuster film *Gladiator* (2000). While the recent work of Kelly Oliver explores the connections between Hunger Games protagonist Katniss Everdeen and other "hunter/hunted girls" of the big screen (Oliver 2016, 128-34), I will argue for her allegiance to Ridley Scott's protagonist, the gladiator Maximus. By positioning Katniss as a futuristic avatar of Maximus, a rebel who challenges the notion of violence as entertainment while participating in this very activity, Ross signals his adherence to a cinematic tradition, diverging from Collins' appeal to history. In addition to Maximus, Ross' Katniss is also the descendant of the female "gladiators" (the pop stars Pink, Britney Spears, and Beyoncé) of the 2004 Super Bowl Pepsi commercial, itself a pastiche of elements from *Gladiator* laced with a message of "female empowerment." In both cases, female fighters challenge male hegemony (the emperor figure) while embodying a role that had hitherto been played by men (the gladiator), thus subverting tradition while reinforcing certain stereotypes (such as the objectification of the fighter's body on stage/in the arena). At the end of the commercial, the stars defy audience demands for a fight by laying aside their weapons and drinking soda together. This action resonates in the gambit of Katniss and Peeta at the end of *The Hunger Games*, when they refuse to fight one another, aware that the audience will be aligned with them in their defiance of expectation. Too often when we teach students about the "classical tradition" in popular film, we overlook the influence of other popular media in our search for a direct connection to ancient source material. This paper will draw upon my experience in teaching *The Hunger Games* as the culminating film in a course on spectacle in ancient Rome, and will share some of the methods I have developed for encouraging students to appreciate the films they study as part of a tradition of cinematic representation.

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