Agnieszka Maciejewska, "Entry on: You Wouldn't Want to Be Cleopatra! An Egyptian Ruler You'd Rather Not Be by Jim Pipe ", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/724. Entry version as of November 01, 2026.

Jim Pipe

You Wouldn't Want to Be Cleopatra! An Egyptian Ruler You'd Rather Not Be

United Kingdom (2007)

TAGS: Antinous (Hadrian's Favourite) Cleopatra VII Egypt Octavian Rome





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	You Wouldn't Want to Be Cleopatra! An Egyptian Ruler You'd Rather Not Be
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2007
First Edition Details	Jim Pipe, *You wouldn't want to be Cleopatra! An Egyptian Ruler You'd Rather Not Be.* Brighton: The Salariya Book Company, 2007, 40 pp.
ISBN	9781912006069
Genre	Biographies, Didactic fiction, Illustrated works
Target Audience	Children (and Young Adults)
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Jim Pipe , b. 1966
(Author)

Jim Pipe was born in 1966. He studied ancient and modern history at Oxford University. Before he became an author, he was a publisher. Currently he lives in Dublin with his wife Melissa and two sons – Daniel and Evan. He has written many historical books for children e.g.*London: A Very Peculiar History*, *You Wouldn't Want to Be an Aristocrat in the French Revolution!: A Horrible Time in Paris You'd Rather Avoid* or *You wouldn't want to be Cleopatra! An Egyptian ruler you'd rather not be*.)

Sources:

Profile at the amazon.com(accessed: August 30, 2018)

global.oup.com (accessed: August 30, 2018)

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Additional information

Summary

You wouldn't want to be Cleopatra! An Egyptian ruler you'd rather not be describes Cleopatra's life in a unique way. It is written from a very personal perspective which helps the young readers identify with Cleopatra. The first lines in the book already introduce a strong identification with Cleopatra: *You are Cleopatra, a princess living in Egypt 2,000 years ago* (p.9). The whole narration of the story flows in this personal style. This specific style helps young readers understand what the young princess' and later queen's life looked like and how she could feel. The plot of the story has a rich historical and cultural background of the Ancient Egypt. The first few chapters are about Cleopatra's childhood and youth. Later on, readers along with Cleopatra become rulers who face all the difficulties she had to overcome in her life as a Queen. In the last chapter, which is a description of Cleopatra's final moments, the author includes a small mini vocabulary and a summary of three important matters: Caesar's murder, Egyptian fashion and the top Egyptian Gods. The book is illustrated with many beautiful drawings in the form of comics.

Analysis

The book is as easily accessible to older as to younger children. It's enriched not only with historical background but also with cultural references to Ancient Egypt and Rome. It is a great example of a book which educates through play and entertainment. Historical and cultural facts might be amusing also for adults. The great strength of this book is the variety of rich and beautiful illustrations and their unique comic style. These visual additions are a great help in remembering Cleopatra and her story in an easy, pleasant way. Cleopatra is drawn in a unique manner highlighting her characteristic make up and her famous nose. On the coins from the times of her reign we can see her profile with rather large and sharp nose. In the later art representations her nose was changed because it did not fill into the Cleopatra's beauty canon. Pascal wrote that if Cleopatra's nose was different maybe the fate of our world would be different too. Cleopatra's nose representations are either pretty and complimentary or realistic based on ancient historical coins. Readers can also admire the variety of colorful clothes which remind us that Antiquity is not all about white garments. In the last chapters we find a detailed description of Caesar's murder and historical reasons behind that assassination. There is also a fascinating presentation of the Ancient

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	Egyptian culture during Cleopatra's reign with many curiosities, funny illustrations which help a young reader to understand better the culture of Ancient Egypt.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Antinous (Hadrian's Favourite) Cleopatra VII Egypt Octavian Rome
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Death Love Teenagers War

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