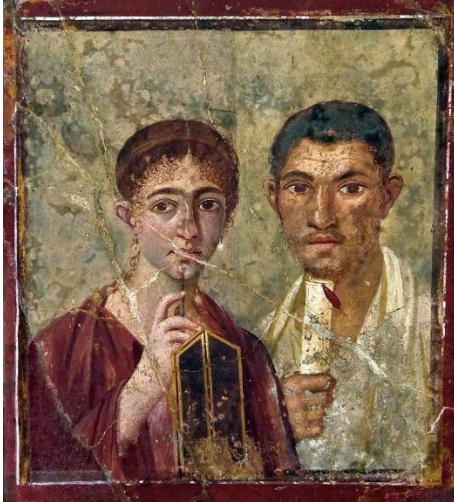


Introducing a new class! ANCS 350-02 Topics in Ancient Studies:

ROMAN LAW



Terentius Neo and an unknown woman, possibly his wife. Pompeii ca. 50 CE

Dr. Molly Jones-Lewis

Thursday evening seminar, 7:00-9:40p

First-time Ancient Studies students welcome!

Are bees property? And if so, can you sue someone for stealing them? When is it OK to put a bear pit beside a public road? If someone is squatting in your house, are you allowed to evict them? Does an elephant count as livestock? If you decide to be a barber next to a ball field, are you liable for killing your client when a ball hits your razor-arm? And if someone kills you with a frying pan, is it premeditated murder, or just an accident?

And most importantly, how do you sue your neighbor for using sorcery curse your crops?

In this exciting new upper-level Ancient Studies class, you'll learn about the history of Roman law and legal theory. The class format is inspired by the way Romans educated their own lawyers and legal experts: informed by modern scholarship, we will read Roman cases carefully, debate the issues involved, and develop our own arguments using Roman rhetoric. The final capstone will be a day in Roman court – you will use your new competence in Roman legal argument and litigation to fight for your clients and get them some very old-fashioned justice. We will focus on private law: property, libel, inheritance, and family. There will be a shorter unit on public law (murder, adultery, theft, treason).

TOPICS COVERED

- How Roman laws were made and how they were enforced
- How all kinds of Romans accessed Rome's self-help legal system
- Where Roman courtrooms were and how they worked
- Citizenship, freedom status, and human rights in Roman concepts of personhood
- Lawbreakers, activists, and the legal precedents they inspired
- Roman penal policy in Italy and the provinces
- The rescript system: How writing the emperor a complaint letter can change legal policy
- How non-citizens interacted with Roman law in and out of the empire
- How the jurists invented the academic study of law
- The strengths, failures, and limitations of this early attempt to create a reliable justice system

No Latin language ability is required: all readings are in English. The course format assumes no prior knowledge of Roman history, but is an upper-level humanities course, so be prepared to read extensively (ca. 50-100 pages/ week). Graded work will be primarily oral discussion and presentation (rather than written papers): guidelines and grading criteria will be clear and specific. Students with speech impediments, lack of speaking experience, non-native English, slow oral processing etc. will be treated supportively and inclusively. Many famous lawyers of the ancient world had speech-related disabilities too!