



## **From Abortion to Pederasty: Addressing Difficult Topics in the Classics Classroom**

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# From Abortion to Pederasty: Addressing Difficult Topics in the Classics Classroom

## **From Abortion to Pederasty: Addressing Difficult Topics in the Classics Classroom**

This volume had its origins in a very specific situation: the teaching of ancient texts dealing with rape. Ensuing discussions among a group of scholars expanded outwards from this to other sensitive areas. Ancient sources raise a variety of issues—slavery, infanticide, abortion, rape, pederasty, domestic violence, death, sexuality—that may be difficult to discuss in a classroom where some students will have had experiences similar to those described in classical texts. They may therefore be reluctant to speak in class, and even the reading themselves may be painful.

*From Abortion to Pederasty: Addressing Difficult Topics in the Classics Classroom*, edited by Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz and Fiona McHardy, is committed to the proposition that it is important to continue to teach texts that raise these issues, not to avoid them. In this volume, classicists and ancient historians from around the world address how to teach such topics as rape, pederasty, and slavery in the classics classroom. The contributors present the concrete ways in which they themselves have approached such issues in their course planning and in their responses to students' needs.

A main objective of *From Abortion to Pederasty* is to combat arguments, from both the left and the right, that the classics are elitist and irrelevant. Indeed, they are so relevant, and so challenging, as to be painful at times. Another objective is to show how Greco-Roman culture and history can provide a way into a discussion that might have been difficult or even traumatic in other settings. Thus it will provide teaching tools for dealing with uncomfortable topics in the classroom, including homophobia and racism.

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