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Natalie Boymel Kampen  
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### FAMILY FICTIONS IN ROMAN ART

In *Family Fictions in Roman Art*, Natalie Kampen reveals the extraordinary ways in which family could be represented in the interests of political power during the Roman Empire. Her study examines a group of splendid objects made over the course of 600 years, from carved gems to triumphal arches to ivory plaques, and asks how and why artists and their elite patrons chose to depict family to speak of everything from gender to the nature of rulership and from social rank to relationship itself. In the process, artists found new and often strikingly odd ways to give form to families from conquered lands and provinces as well as from the Italian countryside and the court. The book's contribution is in its combination of close attention to the creativity of Roman art and interest in the visual language of social and political relationships in a great empire.

Natalie Boymel Kampen is Professor of Women's Studies and Barbara Novak '50 Professor of Art History at Barnard College, Columbia University. Recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Fulbright Commission, she has been a visiting Fellow at St. Hilda's College, University of Oxford, and at the Cornell Society of Fellows in the Humanities. She is the author, most recently, of *What Is a Man? Changing Images of Manliness in Late Antique Art*.

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*Happy families aren't necessarily all alike after all.*

*For Susan and David Udin  
and to the memory of  
Pauline Friedman Boymel  
1913–2007  
and Jules Boymel  
1912–1999*

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## PREFACE

AS ONE READS THIS BOOK, IT WILL BE CLEAR THAT I HAVE SOME THEORETICAL assumptions that emerge along the way. One is that the family is a social construction rather than the sort of natural phenomenon that, in its universality and biological stability, can be taken for granted. The second is that social constructions are always historically contingent and profoundly related to ranking systems and the modes of production that support those systems. Social status, gender, geographic location, age – all of them matter. Third, visual representation is a form of discourse that not only brings social constructions into material form; it is itself socially constructed and therefore shapes those constructions as it renders them visible.

These basic principles animate the choices about which objects to look at and the questions to ask about them. That I have chosen a group of monuments of which most seem to be related by their stubbornly refusing a straight-forward notion of family is hardly accidental. Because I want to show that family is socially constructed, I have picked monuments that make that constructedness obvious. The manipulation of ideas about family, the reconfigurations of what a family is or might be, and the uneasy relations within even the most apparently “natural” of families characterize all the images. Although most of the focus is on elite families, of whom we know more from art and texts, my goal has been to provide some art historical models for thinking about other kinds of family representations, not just those of Roman rulers, within this larger theoretical frame of social construction.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AA</i>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
<i>AAA</i>	<i>Athens Annals of Archaeology</i>
<i>AE</i>	<i>L'Année Epigraphique</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AJPh</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	H. Temporini, ed., <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972–1994)
<i>ArchEph</i>	<i>Archaiologike Ephemeris</i>
<i>AthMitt</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung</i>
<i>BAR</i>	<i>British Archaeological Reports</i>
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
<i>Bjbb</i>	<i>Bonner Jahrbücher</i>
<i>BullCom</i>	<i>Bullettino della commissione archeologica comunale di Roma</i>
<i>CAH</i>	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
<i>CSIR</i>	<i>Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani</i>
<i>Diehl</i>	E. Diehl, <i>Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veterae</i> (Berlin: Weidmann, 1925)
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>EEA</i>	<i>Enciclopedia dell'Arte Antica, Classica e Orientale</i> , ed. R. Bianchi-Bandinelli et al. (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1958–85)
<i>FD</i>	<i>Fouilles de Delphes</i>
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
<i>ILLRP</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae</i>
<i>IstMitt</i>	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen</i>
<i>JbAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>Jdl</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>JRA</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>LIMC</i>	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i> (Munich: Artemis, 1981–99)

## xviii ABBREVIATIONS

<i>LTUR</i>	E. M. Steinby, ed., <i>Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae</i> (Rome: Quasar, 1993–2000)
<i>REG</i>	<i>Revue des Études Grecques</i>
<i>Repertorium</i>	F. Deichmann, with G. Bovini and H. Brandenburg, eds., <i>Repertorium der christlich-antiken Sarkophage I–III</i> (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1967–2003)
<i>RhM</i>	<i>Rheinische Museum für Philologie</i>
<i>RömMitt</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts. Römische Abteilung</i>