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978-1-107-14875-8 - Prostitutes and Matrons in the Roman World

Anise K. Strong

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Prostitutes and Matrons in the Roman World

Prostitutes and Matrons in the Roman World is the first substantial account of elite Roman concubines and courtesans. Exploring the blurred line between proper matron and wicked prostitute, it illuminates the lives of sexually promiscuous women like Messalina and Clodia, as well as prostitutes with hearts of gold who saved Rome and their lovers in times of crisis. It also offers insights into the multiple functions of erotic imagery and the circumstances in which prostitutes could play prominent roles in Roman public and religious life. Tracing the evolution of social stereotypes and concepts of virtue and vice in ancient Rome, this volume reveals the range of life choices and sexual activity, beyond the traditional binary depiction of wives or prostitutes, that were available to Roman women.

Anise K. Strong, winner of the Women's Classical Caucus Award for best presentation in classical gender studies, received her B.A. from Yale and her M.Phil and Ph.D from Columbia University before beginning her professional career at Northwestern, Stanford, and Western Michigan Universities. She is also a consultant for various television series in their depictions of antiquity.

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*In memory of my mother,
Helene Keyssar,
who taught me how to be a feminist,
and
Natalie Boymel Kampen,
who taught me how to look beyond the surface.*

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