

**CLASSICS DEPARTMENTAL COLLOQUIUM 2011-12:  
Lost in Time: Modern categories vs. Ancient “Realities”**

**A one-year seminar series (every third Friday of each month, September to May) on the issues raised by using modern theoretical tools to study the complexities of ancient phenomena.**



As scholars of antiquity, we frequently encounter the challenge of working with modern categories and testing their applicability to ancient texts, monuments, artifacts, historical events and socio-economic phenomena. “Democracy”, “Religion”, “Character”, “Fiction” are just a few examples of modern terms, which, scholars have argued, fit uneasily the dynamics of ancient data. This series will explore what happens when we are confronted with the shortcomings of modern theoretical tools in capturing the complexities of ancient phenomena and how in turn managing the sense of distance from the past that arises from this conceptual clash informs our work as scholars of antiquity.

The colloquium, which will run during the academic year 2011-12 every third Friday of each month (September-May), is designed to foster an exchange of ideas on work-in-progress by faculty, students and outside guests. In the Fall semester, a graduate seminar on the historian “Livy” (CLSS 810, Prof. Kraus) will offer further opportunities to pursue the conversation on the colloquium’s overarching theme.

**Questions that might be asked include but are not limited to**

- ♦ To what extent is it helpful or even possible to work exclusively with ancient terms and concepts?
- ♦ How might we turn the apprehension of the chronological divide between us and antiquity into a productive moment, and what kind of strategies might we adopt?
- ♦ Is the gap between the present and the past necessarily an impediment?
- ♦ How is the realization of the chronological divide helpful or even essential for testing our categories in their own right?
- ♦ To what extent is the discipline of Classics predicated on a sense of alienation from the classical past rather than on a perception of continuity and cultural affinity?

**Organizers:** Milette Gaifman and Irene Peirano

**List of speakers:**

September 16 – Christopher Simon (Yale)

October 21 – Nancy Worman (Barnard College)

November – Laurel Fulkerson (Florida State) and Jessica McCutcheon (Yale)

December 9 – Maurizio Bettini (Università di Siena-Berkeley)

January 20 – Barbara Sattler (Yale)

February 17 – Paul Allen Miller (University of South Carolina)

March 23 – Giovanna Ceserani (Stanford)

April 19 – Robin Osborne (University of Cambridge)

May 11 – Kirk Freudenburg (Yale)