

NEW HAMPSHIRE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE 35TH CLASSICS DAY FOR TEACHERS FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2012, THE PENMEN ROOM, SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE UNIVERSITY MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Registration and coffee lasted from 8:30 to 9:30 A.M.

At 9:35 A.M., President Richard Clairmont of UNH called the meeting to order. After thanking our special guest Mr. Ken Relihan from the State Department of Education, he introduced our first speaker, Professor Kathleen Coleman of Harvard University, and her talk *The Virtues of Violence: Amphitheatres, Gladiators, and the Roman System of Values*. She emphasized how the Romans exported these games to all parts of the empire as a representation of power. She began with a deconstruction of the Coliseum pointing out that the hypogeum had two floors (complete with elevators and ramps that led to trap doors) and that the building was designed to emphasize the stratification of the social classes. She also spoke about the references to scenery in the arena that would make the entrance of wild animals from all parts of the empire more believable. Showing us representations on coins, she pointed out how this building was used as a symbol of the power of the emperor throughout the empire.

Professor Coleman then went on to discuss various images of gladiators in training, in victory/defeat, and in death. She contradicted the commonly held idea that the games were a free-for-all that generally ended in death. There were slides from Ephesus of a gladiatorial graveyard and she discussed the mystery of how the majority of wounds were to the heads of the bodies. Returning to images in Italy (Pompeii), she showed various inscriptions of advertisements and graffiti that demonstrated the local fan base for various gladiators and schools. She finished with other mosaics and funerary stelae from parts of the Empire about the games and the gladiators (including lady gladiators).

The amount of material record shows how imbedded this spectacle was in the Roman world. Professor Coleman also mentioned the high cost of these games and how they may have contributed to their final demise. She moved on to images of animals (after the audience agreed to forego questions in the interest of time). Some of the mosaics indicated that the animals were not always immediately killed and also how highly they were prized. The images were ubiquitous -- even in the bottom of bowls and the borders of mosaics. She continued with a brief discussion of the public execution of people, *damnatio ad bestias*. The community watched justice being done and had a sense of the wealth of the Empire in its "disposable income" (people and animals). After a 15-minute break, the meeting resumed with a brief question and answer period with Professor Coleman.

Then at 10:50 A.M., President Clairmont introduced Doctor Susanne Ebbinghaus, Curator of Ancient Art at the Harvard Art/Arthur M. Sackler Museum for her visual presentation *Simply Snapshots? Scenes of Daily Life on Greek Vases*. Doctor Ebbinghaus began by explaining the strength of pottery (even broken) and how they seem to be simple scenes of daily life. However, her point was that these were staged images and having a contextual background makes a difference in our understanding of what we see. For the Greeks, they would have been seeing/holding these vessels in context which makes a difference. She gave the example of a cup used at a Greek symposium that had a woman drinking undiluted wine on it. This would have been entertaining for the all male audience who would have used it. Another one had funerary activities on funerary markers of the 8th century BC.

Continuing forward in time, Doctor Ebbinghaus showed the introduction of black figure pottery and the combination of mythological and daily life scenes. The Attic vases were exported all over the Mediterranean throughout the 6th century. Toward the end of the 6th century red figure pottery was introduced. It is important to remember the message that a picture can send -- she showed us a crater for a symposium that showed how too much wine can lead to recklessness, so it stood as a visual reminder to be moderate. There were also an amusing donkey head and eye bowl that would “transform” the drinkers as people watched them into a braying donkey and a masked actor. After that, Doctor Ebbinghaus gave examples of representations of theatre, athletic events and the prizes awarded (olive oil in the vases). With the progression of time, the scenes changed -- red figure pottery seems to have become more personal, signaling the move from aristocracy to democracy. Also in the newer pottery, women show up more frequently and the battle scenes are less “equal.” Rather than two equally matched opponents, there are more scenes like the bloody image of Neoptolemos killing Priam on the altar. This indicated a sympathy with the Trojans rather than the Greeks. Perhaps it was painted at the same time the Persians were attacking Greece?

Finally she finished with idealized images of family life. Some may have been custom made for women as wedding presents. There were also perfume vessels for tombs (with pictures of women bringing the vessels themselves) that had false bottoms. The final point that she wanted us to take away was that pottery can tell us a lot about daily life because they were a part of daily life, but we should always keep in mind context, use, and the time period in which they were painted.

A brief Q & A period followed. The two professors said kind goodbyes and thanked the audience for their efforts in their classrooms. Ebbinghaus reminded us that the MFA and Harvard sites have many images available online for classes.

At 11:45 A.M., President Clairmont began the Business Meeting. He mentioned the success of Classics Day for Students and the state exams. The Secretary’s minutes having been distributed earlier both in electronic and paper form, Diane Provost made the motion to accept; Flora Sapsin seconded. The motion passed unanimously with no corrections.

Flora Sapsin proceeded to the Treasurer's Report, explaining the expenditures and income for the year. There is \$6423.84 in the checking account and \$5338.52 in the savings. Motion to accept: Brianna Kula. Second: Mat Olkovikas. The report was accepted by unanimous vote.

After the Treasurer’s Report, Mat Olkovikas discussed the state exams and the winners, which are listed on NHCA website. Their names are at the end of this report.

Next, Dr. Paul Langford, our Representative to the Classical Association of New England, was called to the podium. The 2013 CANE meeting will be at the University of Connecticut on March 15 and 16. All proposals are due by December 1. He reminded the audience that there is money available for travel and attendance. He also announced the writing contest winners for N.H. Dover High (Jennifer Connelly, teacher) won the top three state prizes, The students were Joshua Bean, Frances Graff and Jacob Muscoto. This year the new writing topic is “Kings and Tyrants, Senators and Citizens: Political Power in Myth and History.” Go to CANEweb.org for more details. The question came up about the cancellation of the summer program last year and there was a general feeling that much of the problem was economic. There will be a meeting coming up this weekend to discuss next summer’s program, but CANE does not anticipate that the summer program will not occur. There was also discussion about having the topics appeal to a broader audience as well as opening some of the sessions to interested high school students in the Dartmouth area.

After Dr. Langford's report, the President opened the floor to new business. Dr. Stephen Brunet reminded people about the upcoming Rouman lecture and encouraged teachers to have their students come and visit the Classics department for a day at UNH.

We then took a break for lunch and socializing. At 1:20 the group reconvened for the newest addition to the program, "Teachers Teaching Teachers." Mat Olkovikas of Pinkerton began with a series of activities that he does in his regular classroom and in the language lab, including ways to promote the Latin program at the 8th grade level. Emily Ellis of Exeter shared how she creates a triumphal parade (among other things) and Brianna Kula of Winnacunnet talked about how color-coding vocabulary sheets has made a big difference in student comprehension of endings usage. Finally Kathryn Ford, Goffstown, shared organizational tips and review games, such as Gladiators and Circus Maximus.

The main meeting was adjourned at 2 PM with the board staying behind for a follow-up meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Ford
Secretary of NHCA

Winners of the 2012 NH Classical Association (in descending order)

Latin I

Sarah Walter, Phillips Exeter
Katharine, Liptak, Phillips Exeter
Preston Massingham, Dover

Latin II

Bethany Fennessey, Windham
Timothy Wood, Pinkerton
Angus Gorman, Phillips Exeter
Ian Vossoughi, Pinkerton (tied for 3rd)

Latin Prose

Paul Maravelias, Windham
Andrew Kim, Phillips Exeter
Christopher Hunter, Woodsville
Philip Wu, Exeter (tied for 3rd)
Andrew Sheets, Pinkerton (tied for 3rd)
John Grout, Pinkerton (tied for 3rd)
Hyungee Kim, St. Thomas Aquinas (tied for 3rd)

Latin Poetry

Oishi Banerjee, Phillips Exeter
Patrick Ahern, Phillips Exeter
Alex Yang, Phillips Exeter
Morgan Chalue, Dover

Mythology

Jack Myhaver, Manchester Central
Shannon Larkin, Manchester Central (tied for 1st)
Jenna Butt, Dover
Mathew Palczynski, Dover (tied for 2nd)
John Menard, Spaulding
Alicia Watkinson, Spaulding (tied for 3rd)
Mathew Geary, St. Thomas Aquinas
Hayden Middleton, St. Thomas Aquinas (tied for 4th)