



# Gender: Antiquity and Its Legacy (Ancients & Moderns)

*Brooke Holmes*

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Gender has now become a pervasive topic in the humanities and social sciences. Yet despite its familiarity within universities and colleges, some have argued that the radical debates which first characterized gender studies have become ghettoized or marginalized -- so that gender no longer makes the impact on creative thinking and ideas that it once did. Brooke Holmes here rescues ancient ideas about sex and gender in order precisely to reinvigorate contemporary debate. She argues that much writing on gender in the classical age fails to place those ancient ideas within their proper historical contexts. As a result, the full transformational force of that thinking is often overlooked. In this short, lively book, the author offers a sophisticated and historically rounded reading of gender in antiquity in order to map out the future of contemporary gender studies. By re-examining ancient notions of sexual difference, bodies, culture, and identity, Holmes shows that Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Epicureans and others force us to reassess what is at stake in present-day discussions about gender. The ancient world thus offers a vital resource for modern gender theory.

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