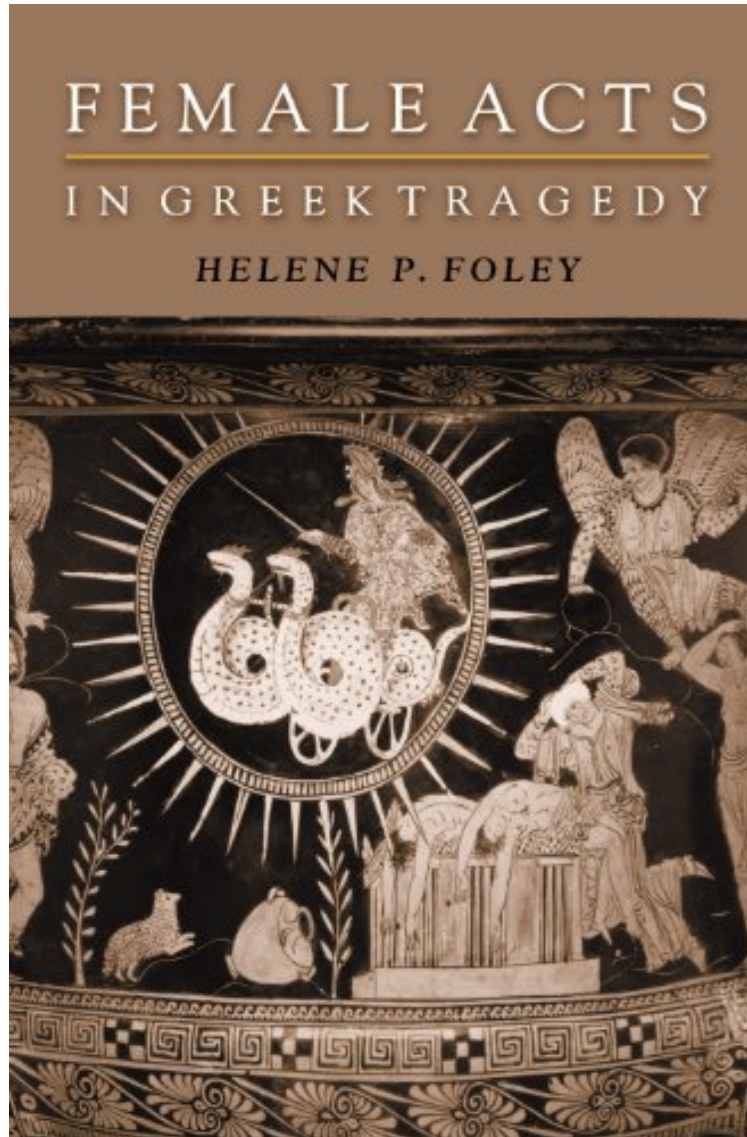


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## Female Acts in Greek Tragedy (Martin Classical Lectures)

*Helene P. Foley*

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**Helene P. Foley : Female Acts in Greek Tragedy (Martin Classical Lectures)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Female Acts in Greek Tragedy (Martin Classical Lectures):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent!By Brenda BryantFoley's study on Greek women is easy to read and very detailed in her analysis. She goes beyond the Greek tragic women to include the importance of female moaning in funeral rites and includes a section on Homer's Penelope. I highly recommend this book for anyone who have a love of Greek literature and many of my students choose to buy the book rather then use the library copies. Her section on the character development and role of Clytemnestra in various Greek tragedies is a must read.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. an interesting aspectBy CJGI like this book. She is basically looking at female

characters in Greek tragedy, but her take on this is from the different roles women filled in Athenian society, so there is more information on more than the title might suggest. It is not militantly feminist and has wider application than women 's studies.

Although Classical Athenian ideology did not permit women to exercise legal, economic, and social autonomy, the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides often represent them as influential social and moral forces in their own right. Scholars have struggled to explain this seeming contradiction. Helene Foley shows how Greek tragedy uses gender relations to explore specific issues in the development of the social, political, and intellectual life in the polis. She investigates three central and problematic areas in which tragic heroines act independently of men: death ritual and lamentation, marriage, and the making of significant ethical choices. Her anthropological approach, together with her literary analysis, allows for an unusually rich context in which to understand gender relations in ancient Greece. This book examines, for example, the tragic response to legislation regulating family life that may have begun as early as the sixth century. It also draws upon contemporary studies of virtue ethics and upon feminist reconsiderations of the Western ethical tradition. Foley maintains that by viewing public issues through the lens of the family, tragedy asks whether public and private morality can operate on the same terms. Moreover, the plays use women to represent significant moral alternatives. Tragedy thus exploits, reinforces, and questions cultural clichés about women and gender in a fashion that resonates with contemporary Athenian social and political issues.

Foley offers new perspectives and complete presentations of several tragedy women. . . . This book may not be read in an afternoon. But every classics scholar should read it once and most will reread sections to consider again Foley's selected women. From the Inside Flap "Helene Foley's book is exemplary in its use of a variety of approaches and it casts new light on both familiar and unfamiliar aspects of the tragic texts and Greek culture. Her treatment of myth, ritual, and dramatic plot, for example, is much richer and more nuanced than readings that have looked almost exclusively at the patriarchal aspects of the representation of women. Written in a fashion that is accessible to nonspecialists, this book will interest anthropologists, philosophers specializing in ethics, and scholars of gender studies--as well as classicists."--Donald J. Mastrorarde, University of California, Berkeley "An important book that will become the standard starting point for studying the representation of female characters in Greek tragedy. Many readers will be relieved to find that the family does after all provide opportunities for worthwhile moral agency on the part of its female members, and that Greek tragedy can be enjoyed and appreciated for its constructive critique, not its reinforcement, of classical Greek political and social inequities. This book should be read by specialists and general readers interested in drama, gender issues, and Greek civilization."--Mark Griffith, University of California, Berkeley "This book will rank with Segal's *Tragedy and Civilization* as one of the most important works on tragedy in this century. The reading is nuanced and sophisticated and covers a wide range of texts while providing considerable social and historical context. The section on women as moral agents comprehensively treats a topic that has been almost entirely ignored in other works on women in tragedy."--Kirk Ormand, author of *Exchange and the Maiden: Marriage in Sophoclean Tragedy* From the Back Cover "Helene Foley's book is exemplary in its use of a variety of approaches and it casts new light on both familiar and unfamiliar aspects of the tragic texts and Greek culture. Her treatment of myth, ritual, and dramatic plot, for example, is much richer and more nuanced than readings that have looked almost exclusively at the patriarchal aspects of the representation of women. Written in a fashion that is accessible to nonspecialists, this book will interest anthropologists, philosophers specializing in ethics, and scholars of gender studies--as well as classicists."--Donald J. Mastrorarde, University of California, Berkeley "An important book that will become the standard starting point for studying the representation of female characters in Greek tragedy. Many readers will be relieved to find that the family does after all provide opportunities for worthwhile moral agency on the part of its female members, and that Greek tragedy can be enjoyed and appreciated for its constructive critique, not its reinforcement, of classical Greek political and social inequities. This book should be read by specialists and general readers interested in drama, gender issues, and Greek civilization."--Mark Griffith, University of California, Berkeley "This book will rank with Segal's *Tragedy and Civilization* as one of the most important works on tragedy in this century. The reading is nuanced and sophisticated and covers a wide range of texts while providing considerable social and historical context. The section on women as moral agents comprehensively treats a topic that has been almost entirely ignored in other works on women in tragedy."--Kirk Ormand, author of *Exchange and the Maiden: Marriage in Sophoclean Tragedy*