Frankness, Greek Culture, and the Roman Empire by Dana Farah Fields (review)

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writes as a first-rate storyteller, historian, and archival researcher. Her book stands as a model for those learning how to do archival research as well as more experienced researchers who desire to learn FHM and become more self-reflexive about researcher positionality in personal collections and histories of rhetoric.

[1] Consider, for example, Suzanne Bordelon, "'Courtship-by-Correspondence': Seduction through Mentoring," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 36, no. 3 (2018): 296–319, https://doi.org/10.1525/rh.2018.36.3.296; Ames Hawkins, *These Are Love(d) Letters* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2019); Pamela VanHaitsma, *Queering Romantic Engagement in the Postal Age: A Rhetorical Education* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2019).

[2] See especially Zosha Stuckey, *A Rhetoric of Remnants: Idiots, Half-Wits, and Other State-Sponsored Inventions* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2014).

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Dana Farah Fields, *Frankness, Greek Culture, and the Roman Empire*, Routledge Monographs in Classical Studies, Abingdon, NY: Routledge, 2021. 236 pp. ISBN: 978-0-429-29217-0.

In an ancient context, the term *parrhēsia* is most often associated with the Athenian democracy of the fifth century BCE, where free or frank speech became a key egalitarian and therefore democratic value. But it also featured prominently in Greek literature of the Roman period (1st-3rd centuries CE), a time when a single man ruled over the Mediterranean world and social hierarchies dominated life on a local level. Although *parrhēsia* has been a topic of recurrent interest over the past three decades (thanks in large part to the influence of Michel Foucault), later Greek literature has been largely sidelined in discussions of this virtue.[1] Dana Fields's *Frankness, Greek Culture, and the Roman Empire* begins to fill this gap by providing a thought-provoking exploration of how Greek sophists, philosophers, and satirists of the second century CE deployed free and frank speech. Most importantly, Fields's study challenges the prevailing assumption that, after Alexander the Great, the connotations of the term shifted radically from a political right to a personal, ethical virtue. Instead, Fields argues, *parrhēsia* retained political significance in the second century CE, both in terms of local institutions and, more importantly, in the interpersonal relationships that so often defined politics at this time.

Fields's discussion proceeds in six chapters, the first of which lays out the book's approach and establishes Aristophanes, Socrates, Diogenes, and Demosthenes as "icons of frankness" for later practitioners of *parrhēsia*. Chapter 2 further sets the stage by considering *parrhēsia* in the classical

period, where it was associated not just with citizenship but with further restrictive statuses, such as categories of social class and gender. Of particular interest in this chapter is Fields's discussion of *parrhēsia* and slavery, which considers not just the well-worn example of Roman Saturnalia but also Aelian's *On the Nature of Animals*, an often overlooked work.

Following these first two introductory chapters, the next three chapters focus on different addressees of frank speech, specifically kings, cities, and elites. Chapter 3 explores how a speaker might adopt an adversarial style when addressing a king or emperor, a posture that Fields argues benefits both speaker and addressee by showcasing the former's courage and wisdom and the latter's self-control. As is the case with all but the last chapter, Fields does not focus on an individual author but instead draws on a variety of authors and texts. Chapter 3 consequently juxtaposes Dio Chrysostom's *Kingship Orations* with Philostratus's *Apollonius of Tyana* and examples of frank speakers culled from Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*. Dio and Philostratus's Apollonius remain the focus in Chapter 4, where Fields provides first a survey of Dio's civic orations before turning to consider how Apollonius offers frank criticism to cities both orally and through his letters. As Fields argues, Dio and Apollonius "occupy a space somewhere between rhetoric and philosophy" and present themselves as itinerant wise men (131). Dio and his appropriation of previous models (e.g., Socrates, Diogenes, and Demosthenes) is really the star of this chapter, and it is worth noting here that Fields might have also considered Dio's relationship to the tradition of iambic speech, particularly in the *First Tarsian* and *Alexandrian* orations, both of which are covered in this chapter.

Our surviving sources suggest that urban elites navigated local internal hierarchies through delicately and carefully contrived speech. If the cities of the Greek east were in essence being run by oligarchic governance and through patronage relationships, *parrhēsia* and the language of friendship reduced the visibility of these social differences. Chapter 5 offers a fascinating read of Plutarch's *How to tell a flatterer from a friend* alongside Artimedorus's *Oneirocriticon*, Aelian's *On the Nature of Animals,* and other texts. Here, Fields challenges the conventional reading that *parrhēsia* in Plutarch's treatise is apolitical. As she convincingly shows, the text does not just position itself to help the rich and powerful tell friends from flatters, it also seeks to guide the socially inferior member of a patronage relationship and help them avoid both flattery and causing offense.

In the final chapter of the book, Fields shifts her focus to the satiric and ironic Lucian of Samosata. Beginning with a broad survey of examples of frank speech in Lucian's corpus, the chapter homes in on the *Fisherman* and lays out the various traditions of frank speech (e.g., Aristophanic, Socratic, and Cynic) at play. Given that Fields includes Aristophanes among the "icons of frankness" discussed at the opening of the book, she could have done more with Lucian's adoption of him as a model in this chapter. As Fields notes, the opening of Lucian's *Fisherman* replays the *agon* of Aristophanes's *Acharnians,* a play in which Aristophanes boasts about the fact

that he got in trouble for mocking the demagogue Cleon in a pervious play. Whether or not we take the comic poet at his word, that premise certainly informs Parrhesiades's defensive stance towards his own practice of frank speech. It is not just, as Fields observes, that Lucian calls our attention to the ease with which *parrhēsia* could be undermined in his own day but also in the context of classical Athens.

Fields's study is an important one that expands our understanding of *parrhēsia* as an ancient virtue and of the literary period under discussion. While it might have been nice to connect the authors studied here to the changing role of *parrhēsia* in Christian sources, this is not a major deficit. Fundamentally, what Fields offers her readers is a new way to think about the development of *parrhēsia* in the Greek and Roman worlds, a perspective that classicists and scholars of rhetoric alike will find of value.

[1] See, for example, Ineke Sluiter and Ralph M. Rosen, *Free Speech in Classical Antiquity*, Mnemosyne, bibliotheca classica Batava, Supplementum 254 (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2004); David Konstan, "The Two Faces of *Parrhēsia*: Free Speech and Self-Expression in Ancient Greece," *Antichthon* 46 (2012), 1–13, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0066477400000125; and Irene van Renswoude, *The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, GB: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

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Michelle C. Smith, *Utopian Genderscapes: Rhetorics of Women's Work in the Early Industrial Age*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2021. 234 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8093-3835-1.

In her 1863 self-researched and self-published *The Employments of Women: A Cyclopaedia of Woman's Work*, Virginia Penny points out that "the false opinion that exists in regard to the occupations suitable for women must be changed ere women have free access to all those in which they may engage."[1] Penny's research may have expanded her readers' views on women's work in the nineteenth century; however, Michelle C. Smith's *Utopian Genderscapes: Rhetorics of Women's Work in the Early Industrial Age* illustrates for the contemporary reader the "social, economic, and cultural shifts" and contexts during the antebellum period that effect gendered labor issues today (11).

Comprised of five chapters, *Utopian Genderscapes* presents three rhetorical case studies of intentional communities: Brook Farm (1841–1847) in West Roxbury, Massachusetts; the Harmony Society (1804–1905) settling near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1825; and the Oneida Community (1848–1881) in Oneida, New York (3). These examinations on gendered labor are framed at the beginning of the book with Smith's theoretical lens, historical