



Women in Greek Myth

Mary R. Lefkowitz

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In the first edition of "Women in Greek Myth", published in 1986, Mary R. Lefkowitz convincingly challenged narrow, ideological interpretations of the roles of female characters in Greek mythology. Where some scholars saw the Amazons as the last remnant of a forgotten matriarchy, Clytemnestra as a frustrated individualist, and Antigone as an oppressed revolutionary, Lefkowitz argued that such views were justified neither by the myths themselves nor by the relevant documentary evidence. Concentrating on those aspects of women's experience most often misunderstood - life apart from men, marriage, influence in politics, self-sacrifice and martyrdom, misogyny - she presented a far less negative account of the role of Greek women, both ordinary and extraordinary, as manifested in the central works of Greek literature. This updated and expanded edition includes six new chapters on such topics as heroic women in Greek epic, seduction and rape in Greek myth, and the parts played by women in ancient rites and festivals. Revisiting the original chapters as well to incorporate two decades of more recent scholarship, Lefkowitz again shows that what Greek men both feared and valued in women was not their sexuality but their intelligence.

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