

'I am Antony Yet': Reading Mark Antony's Mail



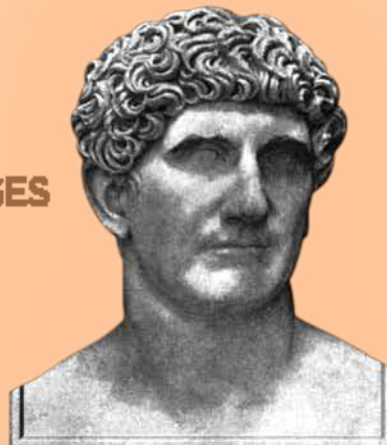
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The flesh and bone Antony, like his Shakespearean incarnation, struggled with Roman demands for constancy, a quality that was absolutely crucial to any aristocrat's public reputation. The question of constancy became a central one during the unstable political conditions of the forties and thirties BCE. Letters by Antony from this period are preserved, sometimes embedded in Ciceronian oratory or epistolography, sometimes recorded in Suetonian biography – always in contexts that put Antony's letters to purposes other than his original designs. Still, these letters help to illustrate for us Antony's exertions, not always successful, in fashioning a sustained and successful image. And reading other people's mail can be fun, not least because we tend to believe, perhaps wrongly, that letters let us recover the truth of a historical figure's personality, as if reading Antony's mail might tell us what he was *really* like.



DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN LANGUAGES
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3:30 – 5:00 pm

Ortega Hall 335



Dr. Jeffrey Tatum is Professor of Classics at the Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. Professor Tatum's research concentrates on the literature and history of the Roman republic, Augustan and imperial Latin literature, and Plutarch and the Second Sophistic. His books include *Quintus Cicero: A Brief Handbook on Canvassing for Office* (2018); *Athens to Aotearoa: Greece and Rome in New Zealand Literature and Society* (2017); *Plutarch: The Rise of Rome*, (2013); *A Caesar Reader* (2012); *Always I am Caesar* (2008); and *The Patrician Tribune: Publius Clodius Pulcher* (1999). Professor Tatum's current research focuses on the difficulties inherent in writing a biography of Mark Antony.