



AAUW Fredericksburg (VA) Area Branch

“Caesar's Wife Must Be Above Suspicion”:

Politics, Religion, Sex, and Drama in Ancient Rome

Saturday, February 22, 2025, at 2:00 PM

Location: University of Mary Washington, Combs 139, located on College Avenue near William Street. Free parking is available on College Avenue. Visitor spaces are located on Double Drive immediately upon entering the University's gates off College Avenue. The building is fully accessible using a ramp on the campus side of the building.



The phrase, "Caesar's Wife Must Be Above Suspicion," often shortened simply to "Caesar's Wife," is brought forth in op-ed articles today when a public figure, or someone associated with a public figure, is accused of scandalous behavior. But where did the phrase come from? This talk explores its origin in Late Republican Rome, when a scandalous affair interfered with an important celebration of the "Good Goddess" and affected the careers of the famous Julius Caesar, the infamous Publius Clodius, and the political mastermind Cicero. While historians make us most familiar with the men of ancient Rome, we will also see the considerable power women wielded behind the scenes.

OUR SPEAKER

Liane Houghtalin, Professor *emerita* of Classics at the University of Mary Washington, received her degrees in Latin and classical archaeology from the University of Michigan (BA) and Bryn Mawr College (MA, PhD). She worked as an archaeologist in Britain, Tunisia, Spain, Italy, and Greece, publishing coins found at sites in Italy, Greece, and Tunisia. She is currently working on the publication of coins found in the circus (the arena for racing chariots) in ancient Carthage (Tunisia). Prof. Houghtalin taught at Hollins University and Randolph-Macon College, before arriving at the University of Mary Washington in 1995. Although she officially retired from Mary Washington in May 2024, she returned to teach there part-time ("Archaeology of the Greek and Roman World" and "Ancient Epic") this January.



The meeting is free and open to the public.

The AAUW Fredericksburg (VA) Area Branch is collecting feminine hygiene products for female students in grades 5 – 12 to be distributed during School Dressing Days in July 2025. School Dressing Days is an annual event that provides new school clothes and supplies to financially disadvantaged families in the city of Fredericksburg and the counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford. You are invited to participate in the program by donating products (sanitary pads) and/or cash for the purchase of these products. You may bring products and/or cash to the meeting.