

Susan Bilynskyj Dunning

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Degrees

PhD, Classics (completed June 2016; thesis accepted with no corrections)

University of Toronto; Collaborative Program in Ancient Greek and Roman History

Dissertation: ‘Roman Ludi Saeculares from the Republic to Empire’, <https://hdl.handle.net/1807/89244>.

Supervisor: Andreas Bendlin

2010–16

MA, Classics

University of Toronto

2008–10

BA, Classics (Major) and Linguistics (Major)

Seattle Pacific University

2004–8

Academic Appointments

Maternity leave

2026

SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow

Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford (Supervisor: Beate Dignas)

2019–28

Fulford Non-Stipendiary Junior Research Fellow

Somerville College, University of Oxford

2019–23

Stipendiary Lecturer in Classics

Somerville College, University of Oxford

2022–23

American Council of Learned Societies Barrington Foundation Centennial Fellow

Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford

2022–23

Maternity/carer leave

2020–22

Sessional Lecturer II

University of Toronto, Departments of Classics (St George)

2019

Sessional Lecturer

University of Toronto, Departments of Classics (St George) and Historical Studies (Mississauga) 2018–19

Visiting Fellow

Visiting Assistant Professor

University of Toronto, Department of Classics

2016–17

Research Areas

- Human (esp. non-elite) associations with divinity in Plautus, Pompeian graffiti, and funerary monuments
- Roman religion and history, esp. the development of the Ludi Saeculares and the Roman concept of the *saeculum*.
- Latin epigraphy and its use in undergraduate teaching

Publications

Article

'The Republican Ludi Saeculares as a Cult of the Valerian Clan.' (2020) *Historia* 69.2, 208–236.

Chapters

'The Transformation of the *Saeculum* and Its Rhetoric in the Construction and Rejection of Roman Imperial Power' (2022, in: *Conceptions of Time in Antiquity*, de Gruyter. Peer-reviewed.)

'Human, God, or Hero? Funerary Imagery and Inscriptions in Flux between Greek and Roman Societies'

(Forthcoming, in: *Gods in Translation*, eds. Beate Dignas and Karolina Sekita. Oxford University Press. Peer-reviewed.)

'In the Guise of the Gods: Belief, Authority, and Consolation in Depictions of the Deceased on Roman Funerary Monuments'

(Forthcoming, in 'As If' in *Ancient Religions*, eds. Esther Eidinow and Felix Budelmann. Series: Ancient Religions and Cognition, Cambridge University Press. Peer-reviewed.)

Entries for the Oxford Classical Dictionary

'Secular Games.' In *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, digital edn. Oxford University Press. Article published October 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199381135.013.5781>.

'Saeculum.' In *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, digital edn. Oxford University Press. Article published November 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199381135.013.8233>.

Reviews

Latham, J.A. (2016) *Performance, Memory, and Processions in Ancient Rome: The Pompa Circensis from the Late Republic to Late Antiquity*. New York: CUP. *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, Dec. 23, 2017. <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2017/2017-12-23.html>.

Schnegg, B. (2020) *Die Inschriften zu den Ludi saeculares. Acta ludorum saecularium*. Berlin: de Gruyter. (2022, sehepunkte)

Ker, J. (2023) *The Ordered Day. Quotidian Time and Forms of Life in Ancient Rome*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. (forthcoming, *Classical Review*)

Works in Progress

Monographs

The Ludi Saeculares and the Saeculum: Time, Festival, and Authority in the Roman World (proposal approved by OUP; manuscript to be submitted Dec. 2024)

Humans as Gods from the Roman Republic to Empire

Articles

'Assessing Emendations to Festus with the Lacunae of the Codex Farnesianus (Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS IV.A.3)', co-authored with A. Dunning

'Human Association with Divinity in Plautus and in Funerary Monuments of the Imperial Period'

'Horace's Rejection of the *Carmen Saeculare* in C. 4.7'

'Acts of Thanksgiving in the Comedies of Plautus'

Teaching

Tutor, University of Oxford

Roman History I.4: 241–146 BC	2024–25
Roman History I.6: 46 BC–AD 54	2022–25
Roman History I.5: 146–46 BC	2020, 2025
Tacitus and Tiberius	2023
Nero to Hadrian	2023
Religions in the Greek and Roman World	2022–23
Augustan Rome	2020, 2023, 2025

Primary instructor, University of Toronto

Introduction to Classical Mythology (CLA204)	2014, 2018, 2019
Introduction to Roman Society and Culture (CLA233)	2016, 2018, 2019
Latin Oratory I & II (LAT342/442)	2018
Latin and Greek in Scientific Terminology (CLA201)	2018
Classical Spaces, Sites, and Monuments (CLA389)	2018
Topics in the Study of Roman History: Time, Festival, and Memory (CLA371)	2017
Intermediate Latin II (LAT202)	2017
Augustus and the Julio-Claudians (CLA368)	2017
Topics in Classics: Greek and Roman Drama and Theatre (CLA395)	2016
Religion in the Greek World (CLA308)	2016, 2018
Introduction to Classical Studies (CLA160)	2015
Introductory Latin II (LAT102)	2015
Introductory Ancient Greek II (GRK102)	2014
Religion in the Roman World (CLA310)	2012
Introduction to Roman History (CLA231)	2012, 2016
Introductory Latin I (LAT101)	2011, 2016

Tutorial leader, University of Toronto

Introduction to Roman Society and Culture (CLA233)
Introduction to Classical Studies (CLA160)

2010, 2015
2010

Teaching assistant, University of Toronto

Introduction to Roman History (CLA231)
Ancient Mythology II: Greece and Rome (CLAA06)
Introduction to Classical Mythology (CLA204)
History and Culture of the Greek World (CLAB05)
Introduction to Classical Studies (CLA161)

2015
2011
2011
2009
2009

Invited Lectures

Human, God, or Hero? Funerary Images and Inscriptions in Flux between Greek and Roman Societies

Ancient History Seminar, Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford 2021

Calling Your Girlfriend ‘Venus’ in Plautus’s Comedies and Pompeii’s Graffiti
Oxford University Philological Society, Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford

2019

‘The Most Blessed Age of Our Lords’: Creating Authority over the *Saeculum* in Coinage, Inscriptions, and Literature of the Imperial Period

Oxford-Princeton Seminar, Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford 2019

Deifying Your Lover, Deifying the Emperor? Politics of the Gaze in the Roman Imperial Cult
SCR/MCR Symposium, Somerville College, University of Oxford

2019

The Ludi Saeculares and *Saeculum*-Rhetoric in the Roman Empire

Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Munich, Germany

2014

Numismatic Evidence for Imperial Performances of the Ludi Saeculares

Oxford Roman Discussion Forum, University of Oxford 2013

Peer-reviewed Presentations

The Significance of Greek and Latin Funerary Divine Associations.

The Value of Languages in the Ancient World, Leiden University 2025

In the Guise of the Gods: Belief, Authority, and Consolation in Depictions of the Deceased on Roman Funerary Monuments

‘As If’ In Ancient Religions, University of Oxford/University of Bristol 2022

The Deifier’s Gaze? The Gender and Power Dynamics of Divine Associations in Plautus’s Comedies

Classical Association of Canada Annual Conference 2021

Decessit de Saeculo: Christian Rejection of the Imperial ‘New Age’ in Martyrdom Accounts and Funerary Inscriptions

‘Christian Origins and the Mediterranean Landscape’, CRASIS 10th Annual Meeting and Masterclass, University of Groningen, NL

2021

The Subversion of the Imperial *Saeculum* in Christian Apologetics of the Second and Third Centuries CE

‘Apologists and Empire’, King’s College London, UK

2020

The Cold Comfort of Cyclical Time in Horace’s Lyric Poetry

‘Timepieces’, 29th Annual Conference, Centre for Comparative Literature, University of Toronto

2019

Statius’s *Silu. 5.1* and Private Deification in the Imperial Period

Classical Association of Canada Annual Conference, St John’s, Newfoundland

2017

Flavian Restoration and Innovation in Domitian’s Ludi Saeculares

Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting, Toronto, Ontario

2017

Horace C. 4.7 As a Rebuttal of the *Carmen Saeculare*

Classical Association of Canada Annual Conference, Quebec City, Quebec

2016

Imperial Authority and *Saeculum* Rhetoric from Augustus to Constantine

Society for Classical Studies Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California

2016

The Tarentum in the Campus Martius as a Commemorative Space for the Ludi Saeculares

Archaeological Institute of America Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana

2015

Establishing Dynasty: Officiating the Ludi Saeculares of Augustus and Severus

Classical Association of Canada Annual Conference, Montreal, Quebec

2014

The Invention of the Ludi Saeculares of Emperor Honorius

Classical Association of the Middle West and South Annual Meeting, Waco, Texas

2014

Valerian Tradition and the Ludi Saeculares of 17 BCE

American Philological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois

2014

***Ego tibi salus sum:* Human Identification with Gods in Plautus**

Classical Association of Canada Annual Conference, Winnipeg, Manitoba

2013

(Re)constructing the Republican Ludi Saeculares in Augustan Rome

Classical Association of Canada Annual Conference, London, Ontario

2012

Fabricating Ritual Tradition: The Relationship of the Republican and Augustan Ludi Saeculares

13th International Spring School on Ancient Religions, University of Erfurt, Germany

2012

Communicating with Divine Others in Horace’s *Carmen Saeculare*

11th International Spring School on Ancient Religions, University of Erfurt, Germany

2010

Other Presentations

'Unto Ages of Ages': The Development of Christian Usages of the Terms *Saeculum* and *Aἰών* in Late Antiquity

Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies, The University of St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto 2018

Epigraphic and Numismatic Evidence for the *Saeculum* and the Creation of Roman Imperial Identity

Ancient History Proseminar, Department of Classics, University of Toronto 2015

Women as Goddesses in Plautus's Comedies and Funerary Monuments of the Roman Empire

Department of Historical Studies Prandium Series, University of Toronto Mississauga 2015

Augustus, the Valerii, and the Ludi Saeculares: The Transformation of a Gentilician Cult

ColPAH Work in Progress Seminar, York University, Toronto, Ontario 2013

Gentilician Cults in Republican and Augustan Rome

17th New Frontiers in Graduate History Conference, York University, Toronto, Ontario 2013

Song and Sacrifice in Ancient Greece and Rome

WIDEN Lecture Series, Massey College, Toronto, Ontario 2011

Popular Outputs

Did the Romans Believe in Their Gods?

https://lisa.gerda-henkel-stiftung.de/did_the_romans_believe_in_their_gods?nav_id=9347
Video produced as schools outreach for Somerville College, University of Oxford, and for the L.I.S.A. Wissenschaftsportal, Gerda Henkel Stiftung 2020

Has Boris Johnson been picking up tips from the Roman emperors?

<https://theconversation.com/has-boris-johnson-been-picking-up-tips-from-the-roman-emperors-131535>
The Conversation, UK 2020

Adapting the male gaze theory in Roman religion

<https://www.some.ox.ac.uk/news/adapting-the-male-gaze-theory-in-roman-religion/>
Somerville College blog, University of Oxford 2019

Time, Festival, and Authority in the Roman Saecular Games

<https://ics.blogs.sas.ac.uk/2017/12/20/time-festival-and-authority-in-the-roman-saecular-games/>
Institute of Classical Studies blog, School of Advanced Study, University of London 2017

Grants and Recognitions

**American Council of Learned Societies Barrington Foundation Centennial Fellowship
(US\$65,000 total)**

Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford

2022–23

Humans as Gods in the Roman World (C\$172,500 total)

Postdoctoral Fellowship, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

2019–27

Divine Associations in Roman Societies (€61,545 total)

Research Scholarship, Gerda Henkel Stiftung, Düsseldorf, Germany

2018–21

Undergraduate Teaching Experience Fund Award (C\$900)

Department of Historical Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga

2019

Doctoral Completion Grant (C\$17,500)

University of Toronto, Department of Classics

2015–16

Jacobi Scholarship (€2,100)

Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik at the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Munich,

Germany

2014

School of Graduate Studies Travel Grant (C\$5,280 total)

University of Toronto

2013, 2016

Award for Outstanding Accomplishment in Classical Studies

Classical Association of the Middle West and South

2013

M.B. Wallace Memorial Graduate Award in Classics (C\$5,500 total)

University of Toronto, Department of Classics

2011, 2013

School of Graduate Studies Conference Grant (C\$470)

University of Toronto

2012

Rene Efrain Memorial/Ontario Graduate Scholarship in Classics (C\$60,000 total)

University of Toronto

2011–12, 2013–14, 2014–15, 2015–16 (*declined*)

Jackman Junior Fellowship in the Humanities (C\$15,000 total)

University of Toronto

2010–13

Leonard Woodbury Fellowship (C\$1,500)

University of Toronto, Department of Classics

2010

Lilly Graduate Fellowship (US\$9,000 total)

Lilly Fellows Program in Humanities and the Arts

2008–11

Professional Development

Advanced University Teaching Preparation

Teaching Assistants' Training Program, University of Toronto

2010–14

Postgraduate Summer Course in Epigraphy

British School at Rome

2014

Research Assistantships

Editing appendix for monograph

Department of Classics, University of Toronto (Seth Bernard)

2016

Editing index for monograph

Department of Classics, University of Toronto (Victoria Wohl)

2014

Editing indices for monograph

Department of Humanities, York University (Philip Harland)

2014

Assistance with SSRHC application

Department of Classics, University of Toronto (Andreas Bendlin)

2012–13

General editing, creation of indices for several books, research on slave names in inscriptions

Department of Classics, University of Toronto (Alison Keith)

2008–13

Outreach, Service, Affiliations

Supervision and examinations

Undergraduate thesis co-supervisor; confirmation of status examiner; University of Oxford

2024–25

Somerville College Open Days

Advising prospective students on our programmes in Classics; Classics, Asian, and Middle Eastern Studies; Classical and Modern Languages; Classical Archaeology and Ancient History; and Ancient and Modern History

2022–23

Digital presentations for schools outreach

'Greek and Roman Religion' (Wymondham High Academy); 'Greek Daily Life' (St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Academy)

2022

'Roman Household Cults', presentation and tutorial

UNIQ, summer school for disadvantaged students, University of Oxford

2021

Presenter at student information session 'Applying for JRFs and the Pathway to Academic Careers'

Somerville College, University of Oxford

2020, 2021

Undergraduate admissions interviews

Somerville College, University of Oxford

2019–25

School visit academic taster sessions: Somerville College, University of Oxford

Live presentations: Kingston Academy, Landau Forte Academy Amington, Bourne End Academy 2019–20

Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford

Visiting Associate

2013

Department of Classics, University of Toronto

Library and Resources Committee

2016–17

Voting Representative for Undergraduate Business

2012–13

New Student Orientation Coordinator

2012

Massey College, University of Toronto

Resident Junior Fellow

2009–12

Junior Fellow Lecture Series Committee member

2009–10

Professional Memberships

Society for Classical Studies

Classical Association of Canada

British School at Rome

Languages

English (native), Latin (advanced reading), Ancient Greek (advanced reading), French (reading, basic speaking and writing), German (reading, basic speaking), Italian (reading)