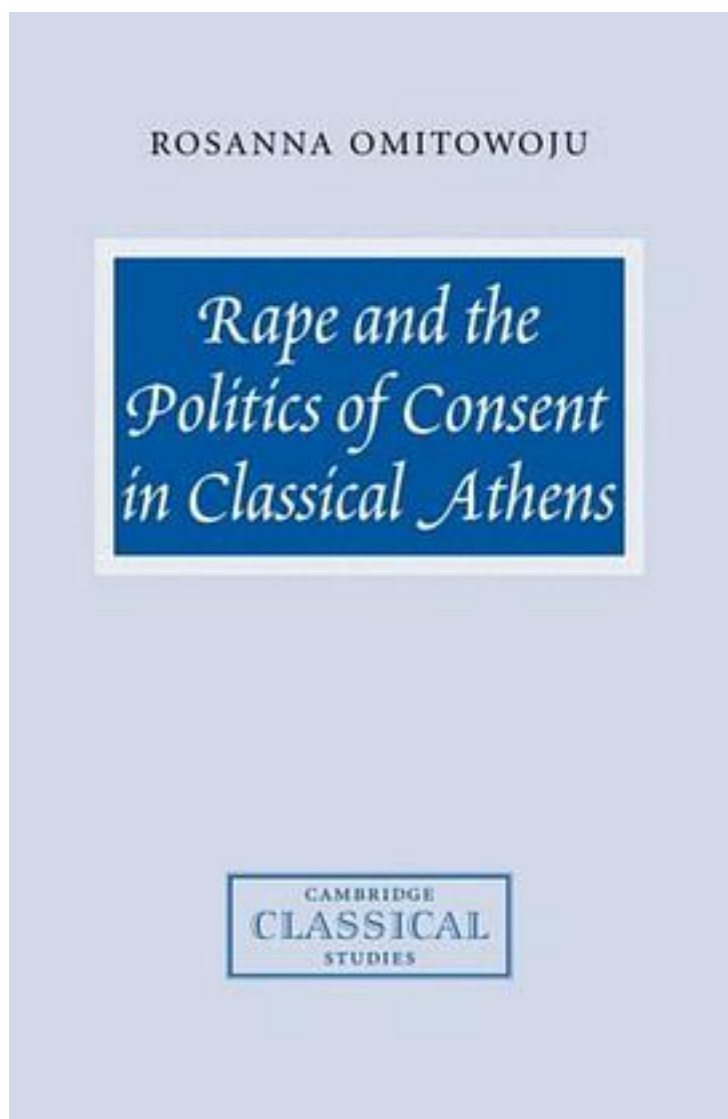


Rape and the Politics of Consent in Classical Athens



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This book is an in-depth study of the topic of rape in classical Athens. Its central focus is on violent sexual encounters but it also raises questions about the nature and ingredients of any type of sexual activity in Athens. In particular it concentrates on two related areas: the law of classical Athens, especially as represented by speeches delivered in court, and the plays of Menander. These work at complementary levels in respect of period, subject matter and concerns with social conformity, while at the same time being widely different genres of discourse. It is argued that within the evaluation of heterosexual activity in Athens considerations about the consent of the female party were never the key factor. Rather it was the status of the two parties, in social, marital and political terms which ultimately determined whether or not a sexual act was regarded as acceptable.

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