

convincingly argue that Alexander's eventual success was down to effective use of the efficient Macedonian military machine bequeathed by Philip.

Rowson finishes with a brief summary concerning Alexander's Asian conquests. Although this is compressed, Rowson still commendably lays out the relevant archaeological debates, such as whether Persepolis was burned accidentally or intentionally. The chapter thus proves a fitting climax to the book.

Aside from archaeology and novels, one might suggest Rowson could acknowledge, if not engage with, the leading modern scholars more explicitly. For example, he uses Miltiades Hatzopoulos' argument that Philip organised Macedonian regional government; this is somewhat different to the view of Robin Lane Fox concerning the family clans in Macedonia, and comparison of the two perspectives would be interesting.

Furthermore, some may say Rowson should be more critical of evidence in primary literary sources. For example, he quotes Valerius Maximus as evidence that Philip II was generous with money, without acknowledging that the source is secondary and based on unverified evidence. Similarly, he uses Plutarch's memorable story of how Alexander tamed Bucephalus the horse, without questioning how an inexperienced teenager could accomplish such a deed.

The addenda to the book are very useful; Rowson includes maps which the reader finds oneself looking back at continually, whilst the images of wall paintings and archaeological remains help the reader to picture the scenes described by Rowson, contributing to the readability of the book. A glossary of key words also renders the book a useful reference point.

Since the book is so readable, it would be stimulating reading for sixth form students taking the Alexander module as part of the Ancient History A Level. Additionally, Rowson's (less-than-flattering) analysis of the evidence for Demosthenes could stimulate discussion in any sixth form class studying the *Democracy and the Athenians* option for Classical Civilisation A level. For teachers, the book is a timely and informative reminder of the enduring appeal of Alexander as a historical figure, well worth a read.

doi: 10.1017/S2058631023000089

Oh My Gods

Sheppard (A). Scholastic 2019. pp. 352. Paper, £7.41. ISBN: 978-1407188737

Alina Flint

Thomas Mills School, Suffolk, UK
aflint@thomasmills.suffolk.sch.uk

Oh My Gods follows Helen, Zeus' teenage daughter as she navigates a new school, new family, new home... and her very first kiss, all while trying to conceal a very big secret; her family are really gods.

Helen has been living with her Jamaican grandmother since her mother died, but now she has moved to London to live with her father Zeus and his unusual family. Zeus is either too interested in what Helen is up to, insisting on Sunday study sessions, or totally absent spending every moment with his 'lady friend'. The house is



rarely empty though, as her incredibly beautiful and annoying older sister Aphrodite has a room upstairs and Eros (agony aunt) and Apollo (musician) are always in and out.

There are two key rules they all have to live by or the council of the gods could recall them to Olympus or, worse, remove their immortality: One: 'gods must not reveal their immortal identity for any reason'; Two: 'gods must not use their powers to interfere with the fate of mortals for any reason'.

Zeus has an extra rule, too: no mortals in the house. This means Helen can never have a sleepover with her new friends and is destined to be the school weirdo. With Apollo and Aphrodite both seeking fame and money, the family is on thin ice, and to add fuel to the fire, Helen's new boyfriend is not as benevolent or mortal as he seems.

The strengths of this book are in its supportive female friendships and how it deals with teenage emotions and desires. It successfully blends Jamaican, Greek and British cultural elements and handles a deceased parent sensitively and beautifully.

Unfortunately, the plot may fail to engage many readers as the points of drama are being able to throw a cool house party and having a first kiss; that is, until near the very end, when the family are put on trial for breaking the rules - which is when the novel is at its best. The characters of the gods feel two-dimensional to any reader familiar with Greek mythology, and the teenage characters do at times feel like stereotypical teen caricatures.

While it does offer a different take on Greek gods that may draw some readers to Classics, it is more teen flick than meaningful modern reception, and young people interested in Greek mythology may be put off by the premise.

doi: 10.1017/S2058631023000065

Stoic Wisdom. Ancient Lessons for Modern Resilience

Sherman (N.) Pp. x + 294, ill. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. Cased, £18.99. ISBN: 978-0-19-750183-2

Clive Letchford

University of Warwick, Coventry, UK
clive.letchford@warwick.ac.uk

While philosophy has long been one strand in the study of the classical world, not everyone clicks with Plato or Aristotle. Stoicism provides a more practical approach to the question of how to live the good life, but it has tended to be regarded as the poor relation. However, it has been staging a comeback over the last few years. Ryan Holiday's *Daily Stoic* podcasts have had over 100 million