

Perceiving Penelope: a feminist reanalysis of Homer's *Odyssey*
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Hidden in plain sight for centuries, the classic character of Queen Penelope has been reintroduced to popular audiences by Emily Wilson's bestselling translation of Homer's *Odyssey*. Historically, translators of the epic from Ancient Greek to English have been men who purposefully obscure Penelope's critical role to instead focus on male characters. To analyze the portrayal of Penelope in translations across the past fifty years, I first created my own translation of scenes where Penelope is being described by various male characters including her suitors, son, and Odysseus himself. I translated from the original Greek with text supplied by the website Perseus (run by Tufts University) to provide a baseline to compare other translations against. I then compared translations by Richmond Lattimore, Robert Fitzgerald, and Wilson. I discovered that, with Lattimore at the extreme, both male translators minimized the agency and impact of Penelope in the epic. Wilson's translation emphasizes the role of women as I found the original text does, giving due recognition to a character iconic across the ancient world. As interest in the *Odyssey* increases (an upcoming film by Christopher Nolan, a play by Kate Hamill, and a novella by Margaret Atwood), feminist translations of the tale accurately represent the role of women in ancient literature.