



# **"Why Ask My Name?": Anonymity and Identity in Biblical Narrative**

*Adele Reinhartz*

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Unnamed characters--such as Lot's wife, Jephthah's daughter, Pharaoh's baker, and the witch of Endor--are ubiquitous in the Hebrew Bible and appear in a wide variety of roles. Adele Reinhartz here seeks to answer two principal questions: first, is there a "poetics of anonymity," and if so, what are its contours? Second, how does anonymity affect the readers' response to and construction of unnamed biblical characters? The author is especially interested in issues related to gender and class, seeking to determine whether anonymity is more prominent among mothers, wives, daughters, and servants than among fathers, husbands, sons and kings and whether the anonymity of female characters functions differently from that of male characters.

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