

**Kathryn Tempest (University of Roehampton), “I am not a vain man”:
Cicero and the Pragmatics of Self-Praise**

Cicero was not a modest man: contemporary detractors accused him of boastfulness, while later readers found his self-praise immoderate and interminable. But, if Cicero’s self-aggrandizing presentation in his speeches may be explained by the political and legal arenas in which he operated, Cicero’s deployment of self-praise in his correspondence opens an equally revealing window on the culture of late Republican letter-writing. In this paper I investigate the pragmatic strategies and contexts of Cicero’s self-praise in the letters to argue that his efforts to avoid appearing egocentric are essential to his epistolary ethos.