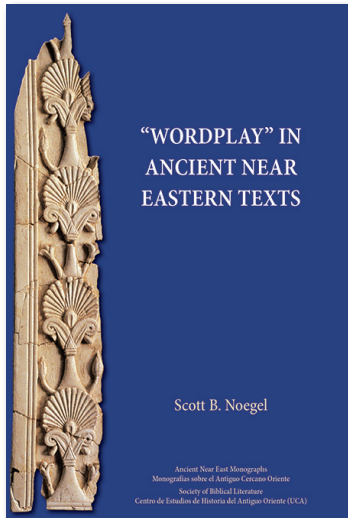


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## “Wordplay” in Ancient Near Eastern Texts

Scott B. Noegel

**The first comprehensive taxonomy of functions and types of “wordplay” in ancient Near Eastern texts**

Scott B. Noegel’s latest work offers a comparative study of the various functions that “wordplay” serves in ancient Near Eastern texts and provides a comprehensive taxonomy for the phenomenon. Languages covered include Sumerian, Akkadian, Egyptian, Ugaritic, Biblical Hebrew, and Aramaic. Noegel illustrates that wordplay was based not just on words but often on individual consonants, syllables, or signs (in cuneiform and hieroglyphic writing systems). Also discussed are issues of terminology, genre, audience, grammaticality, interpretation, and methodology. The book further considers the distribution and preferences of these devices among the languages and discusses a number of principles and strategies that inform their creation, such as ambiguity, repetition and variation, delayed comprehension, metaphor and metonymy, clustering, and the use of rare words. The book concludes by suggesting potential avenues for future research.

**Scott B. Noegel** is Professor of Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization at the University of Washington. He has authored, coauthored, and edited ten books and more than ninety articles on diverse topics related to ancient Near Eastern languages, literature, and culture, including *Nocturnal Ciphers: The Allusive Language of Dreams in the Ancient Near East* (2007) and *Solomon’s Vineyard: Literary and Linguistic Studies in the Song of Songs* (coauthored with Gary A. Rendsburg, 2009).

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