

**THE DANGER OF WOMEN'S SEXUALITY:
SEX LABORERS, ADULTERESSES, AND *LEX IULIA ET PAPIA***

A THESIS

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of History

Colorado College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Arts

By

Red Mayhew

May 2024

Acknowledgments:

There are a few professors I feel it would be disingenuous not to thank for their help both as a history student and specifically for this thesis.

I want to thank Carol Neel for all her help and guidance throughout the research and editing of this thesis. I'd also like to thank her for trusting me with so many of her books over the past two years (the last of which will be returned shortly). Were it possible, I know the other history girls and I would have braided our hair to look like yours.

I want to thank Sanjaya Thakur not only for his continued support of me through the four years I've been at school, (even when I wasn't the best Latin student), but also for introducing me to the joys of Roman history. I also want to thank him for his encouragement and help in this thesis, despite it being outside his department.

I need to thank Tip Ragan for assigning a reading that I hated *so much* that I accidentally found my historical niche in ancient prostitution, as well as for being an amazing academic advisor and professor who has gone to bat for me more than once.

I'd also like to thank Owen Cramer for his insight on this paper and knowledge that rivals the Library of Alexandria that he has been so kind to share.

In 18 BCE, the Roman Senate passed Augustus's *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* and immediately followed it in 17 BCE with *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*. Twenty-six years later, these laws were reinforced with *Lex Papia et Poppaea*. Supported by Augustus Caesar, these laws attempted to exert government control and involvement over marriage, women, and childbirth in an effort to create a more traditional monogamous Roman family. The first set of legislations (*Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* and *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*) was heavily focused on married women and limiting women's adultery. The second wave of social regulation was more family and children-oriented, likely trying to fill gaps in the original laws. However, both pieces of legislation affected Roman women and addressed their sexuality. Stricter regulation was applied to patricians and other elite Roman women than to ordinary people.¹ Some of the most impoverished classes of women were exempt. One of those categories was sex laborers. Underlying the legislation was the idea that sex labor could be a pressure valve for Roman men's sexual urges/desires to keep respectable Roman women from being seduced. The legislation was regulatory in cases of *meretrices* and *scorta* affirming sex labor as a legal and accepted practice, whereas it was preventive and punitive in the case of adulteresses.

Augustan legislation, along with writings by elite males, saw sex labor as an acceptable form of recreational sexuality, but understood adultery as a moral failing, placing the two acts in direct contrast. However, Roman theatre, literature, and personal writings suggest that the two are linked and sometimes even blurred in many Roman's minds. The legal and social/cultural understandings of the relationship between sex labor and adultery seem to have been at odds with each other. This essay will look at the material, legal, and literary evidence of sex labor and

¹ *Lex Iulia et Papia* were made on the tail end of a time of war, disorder, and food insecurity. Additionally, after Civil war, Julius Caesar, Civil war, the Proscriptions, and then more Civil war, the senatorial classes of Rome had been depleted. To fill this void Augustus Caesar moved many peoples' families up in society. While the old members of the upper class may have known how to act through tradition, the new members may have needed a "guiding hand". Sanjaya Thakur, Colorado Springs, April 2024.

adultery in the Roman Republic and Early Empire to better understand the social realities of the interplay between different types of “deviant” female sexuality.

A Brief Discussion of Terminology

This essay will address *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* (18 BCE), *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* (17 BCE), and *Lex Papia et Poppaea* (9 CE). When referring to specifics of each law I will refer to them by their full conventional titles, but I will be following the usual practice regarding this set of legislation and refer to this grouping of laws as *Lex Iulia et Papia*. In some cases, a theme is consistent throughout the laws, making it easier to refer to them as a body. In some cases, however, due to the nature of how we know of these laws, it is sometimes unclear which of these laws is being referenced, as later Romans have occasionally only mentioned Augustus as a laws’ progenitor and otherwise do not specifically reference.²

Specificity of language is especially necessary with ancient/classical sex labor where the multiple classes of sex workers do not necessarily fit into our modern labels. In “Harlots, Tarts, and Hussies?: A Problem of Terminology for Sex Labor in Roman Comedy,” Serena Witzke makes a convincing argument regarding the fraught terminology around Roman sex labor in modern translations of classical authors. Witzke showcases the potential for mistranslation and skewing of original meanings.³ While Witzke’s article is about the translations of plays and other literature, I believe her discussion has value in the historical world as well, so while I will

² There is no surviving written document of *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*, or *Lex Papia et Poppaea*. What we know about them comes from later legal or historical writings often in fragmentary mentions.

³ Serena Witzke, “Harlots, Tarts, and Hussies? A Problem of Terminology for Sex Labor in Roman Comedy” *Helios* 42, no. 1 (2015).

occasionally be using English translations of Latin passages, I will also use the Latin terms *meretrix* and *scortum* when it is appropriate.

While, as in English, Latin usages are sometimes loose in a literary or derogatory context, in this paper they will be understood as *meretrix*: a type of sex worker that was free and considered to be a more high-class sex worker; and *scortum*: the sex laborers who resided in and were owned by or had contracts to brothels in Rome, or those who worked the streets — generally those sex-workers who were impoverished. However, when I refer to both as a general class I will be using the words “sex laborer” or “sex labor” as in many cases legislation likely refers to both or it is unclear which is being referenced. In cases where all types of sex labor are included, there is no issue with mistranslation as I am not attempting to communicate one nuanced societal position, but rather several. The terms “sex labor” and “sex laborer” will only be used to define what we in modernity understand as such: paid sex in a clear-cut financial relationship. While female slaves were often sexually exploited by their masters and marriages did involve both money and the ownership of women, they will not be included under this term. It also must be understood that both men and women performed sex labor in Rome. However, due to both the scope of this paper and the legislation in question, we will only be addressing women sex laborers.

Roman women

Before we can look at the legal rights and agency of sex laborers and/or adulteresses, we must first understand the legal standing and agency of *women* within Rome, both of the upper and lower classes, else we miss what may be directly about class and gender rather than sex work and sexuality. To understand the deviations, we must first explore the norm.

Roman women were regarded as the centers of family life, in charge of the Roman household. In fact, part of the wedding ceremony was a new wife claiming her husband's house and her new role as its domestic head by smearing oil from a torch at the threshold.⁴ While women were not allowed into politics, they were seen as matrons raising the next generation of citizens and, therefore, valuable. Roman women were allowed to be visible, leave the house, host parties, and socialize with other women, but they were still banned from many parts of Roman life, such as politics, monetary independence, or the public Forum.

Marriage was expected of Roman women, and comprised five types, all with varying degrees of rights afforded to the wife, but at its core marriage was a contract between men, as marriage rituals emphasized.⁵ In a typical marriage, ceremony, the following might have happened: the wife gave away all her childhood clothes and toys from her father's house, the marriage took place in her father's house, and then the wife was escorted to her husband's house, which she would claim as its new domestic leader, to be carried across the threshold, the marriage would be consummated (with the exception of some political marriages), and the next morning she would be understood as the matron of the house.⁶ All this signified a woman's changing hands, from being her father's property and responsibility to being her husband's. The husband had significant control over the wife's actions and was seen as responsible for her faults.⁷ Marriages included a dowry to the husband. The wife did not have access to these funds. The dowry was seen as a way to alleviate extra expenses caused by having a wife. The money was usually invested in land or business to increase revenue rather than simply being a sum of

⁴ Paul Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2015), 39.

⁵ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 37.

⁶ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 41.

⁷ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 49.

cash. Additionally, the dowry afforded a bit of security for women, as if they were divorced, they might retain the dowry and their ex-husband would be obliged to find a way to return it to their father,

To begin with, the woman brought you a big dowry: next she retains a large sum of money which she does not entrust to her husband's control, but gives it to him as a loan: lastly, when she is annoyed with him she orders a 'reclaimable slave' to chase him about and pester him for it. (Gellius 17.6.8; Quoting Cato. Gardner 1986)

This ability to majorly impact the finances of the household gave women, specifically upper-class women, some power within the marriage. However, when divorced, the leveraged dowry would return to the woman's father, and *his* house, as would she. The dowry gave her some power within her marriage, but not agency.

While divorce was legal, during the Roman Republic it was primarily instigated by men and could take place due to suspicion of adultery, lack of children, and a woman being seen as not upholding her wifely duties. In the Late Republic, divorce rates increased both for men and women, additionally, a trend toward male serial divorcers caused many marriages to be brief, leaving women in a difficult position as they were young but no longer virgins and therefore less desirable.⁸ For these women, there were only two real ways to be secure — one was through marriage, and the other was through their inheritance. Women did not usually inherit from their fathers but could from their husbands. Becoming a widow with wealth of her own was one of the only ways for a woman to gain agency in Roman society, making the legal right to inheritance an extremely important topic to Roman women. An elite woman who had neither a husband nor a living father but had not been widowed was supposed to be assigned a “tutor” to serve as her

⁸ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 44-45.

legal guardian, in charge of her monetarily and legally.⁹ However, while it was still law, it is questionable how strictly the stewardship of women's finances was followed in the Late Republic.¹⁰

Working-class women, while in a similar legal situation regarding money and property, experienced the added complication of working. Their income was seen as the household's, and therefore the husband's income. Like upper-class women, they could not be in charge of their wills, represent themselves in court, or own their own property. *Lex Iulia et Papia* leveraged many of these restrictions to incentivize women's behavior.

Material evidence: brothels and *scortum*

One of the ways sex laborers could attempt to raise themselves out of their situation of slavery, poverty, or multiple clients was by creating a long-term emotional relationship with one of their patrons. Multiple sources, including a court case involving a long-term affair between a *meretrix* and her client, as written about by Quintilian, purport this as a typical occurrence.¹¹ Still more material evidence suggests the frequency of this situation in the form of graffiti on the wall of a Pompeii brothel, as well as material gifts found in the brothel explored by Sarah Levin-Richardson in *The Brothel of Pompeii: Sex, Class, and Gender at the Margins of Roman*

⁹ Thomas McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), 42; Gaius Institutiones 1.194, poste 1890; “Guardianship terminates for a freeborn woman by title of maternity of three children, for a freedwoman under statutory guardianship by maternity of four children: those who have other kinds of guardians . . . , are released from wardships by title of three children.”

¹⁰ Elaine Fantham, “Republican Rome II: Women in a Wealthy Society — Aristocratic and Working Women from the Second Century B.C.E.” in *Women in the Classical World* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995), 264.

¹¹ Sarah Levin-Richardson, *The Brothel of Pompeii: Sex, Class, and Gender at the Margins of Roman Society* (Seattle, Cambridge University Press, 2019), 117.

Society.¹² This graffiti includes greetings to male names, likely from the *scortum* in an attempt to cultivate a continuing relationship with their client, such as greetings like: *Ias Magno Salute*, “Ias [sends] greetings to Magnus” and *Iias cum Magno ubique* “Ias with Magnus everywhere.”¹³ Using both the name of the sex worker and their clients in greetings or messages of connection reminded the client of the relationship they had to this *scortum*. It was likely intended to make them feel special — to be the one client of the *scortum* that she chooses to acknowledge and greet, in an attempt to stroke the client's ego through a show of favoritism. Graffiti that only included the client's name likely served a similar role but also would have allowed the *scortum* to potentially leave messages for — and cultivate relationships with — multiple clients without bruising the clients’ egos by informing them that they were one of many.

This personal connection was also built into the services offered in the brothel. Wine vessels and cups found within the brothel, as well as the brothel’s architecture, suggest that a wine service was offered within the walls of the brothel, allowing the men to lounge and drink with sex laborers, a popular trope in Roman literature.¹⁴ Social time spent with clients allowed the *scortum* to talk, compliment, and build up their male clients, forming a more emotional connection. This leisure time not only allowed discussion and personal connection, but also allowed *scorta* access to their clients in a more relaxed and inebriated state.

The water vessels and razors preserved here suggest that the women of this brothel offered a shaving service, another bodily personal service emulating and implying an intimate romantic relationship. This service, given the razor, would take about forty-five minutes for a

¹² Levin-Richardson, *The Brothel of Pompeii*, 36, 117; Her work is a case study on a brothel found in Pompeii, however, it is likely this brothel shared traits with other brothels of the same time. Therefore this essay will use this brothel as compernda.

¹³ Levin-Richardson, *The Brothel of Pompeii*, 117.

¹⁴ Levin-Richardson, *The Brothel of Pompeii*, 36-37, 116.

close shave of the face and neck.¹⁵ The service gave *scortum* and clients another opportunity to talk in a non-sexual context but also involved proximity and touching. It implied a level of trust, allowing the woman to wield a sharp blade close to the client's neck and face. This amount of closeness, gentle touching, and caregiving by a woman might make the client feel as if they shared a more intimate connection than if they simply had sex. Both of these activities built in a time for women to create a rapport with their clients that might lead to long-term attachment and all the possibilities that could come with emotional proximity.

Material evidence demonstrates some of these *scorta* were successful in cultivating long-term relationships, or at least their client's emotional attachment to them. Like the graffiti of *scorta* greeting clients, men's graffiti addressed women, likely clients' responses to the woman who left a message for them.¹⁶ Additionally, the brothel contains evidence of gifts, such as cosmetics and perfume, luxury items a *scortum* would be unlikely to be able to buy for herself, and gifts denoted as common gifts of affection to sex laborers in Roman literature.¹⁷ Small gifts and objects of affection could be early signs of emotional attachment that might ultimately lead to a *scortum* being freed, being left something in their client's will, or being brought up into better circumstances through their client's funds. Before *Lex Iulia et Papia*, a *scortum* might have even hoped to be elevated through marriage, but the legislation at issue here severely limited that option.

¹⁵ Levin-Richardson, *The Brothel of Pompeii*, 34-35, 113.

¹⁶ Levin-Richardson, *The Brothel of Pompeii*, 62-63.

¹⁷ Levin-Richardson, *The Brothel of Pompeii*, 117-118.

Roman Law

Lex Iulia et Papia did not operate the same as modern social laws; it was not a law according to which the offenders would be sent to prison. The modern understanding of punitive incarceration was not something that would have been used on Roman citizens, especially for laws meant to promote and correct behaviors. Instead, it was a code that set up rights and restrictions. Some classes of people were afforded certain rights and protections, whereas other classes were exempt. Those who violated the codes would no longer be afforded the same rights or protections that those who followed them were promised. In many cases, such as childbirth and marriage, certain behaviors were encouraged by promised rewards. What gained those rewards was delineated along class lines. For example, a freedwoman had to have four legitimate children to gain the right to write her own will without a male tutor, whereas a freeborn woman only had to have three children.

Those who started in a higher bracket of rights and protections could fall to the lowest level of rights and protections if the law was violated. For example, *lenones*, or pimps, never had the right to advocate for themselves in a praetor's court (essentially allowing for them to plead their case in a court of law), but a freeborn person had to be convicted of a crime to lose this right.¹⁸ Thus, those who started in the lowest social bracket faced little to no punishment for breaking the law, as they already had little to no protection, but also had everything to gain by following it, as, from where they stood in society, they could only gain if they followed these moral codes. Alternatively, those in the highest brackets had the least to gain and the most to lose.

¹⁸ McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*, 44.

Sex Labor:

Regulation of *meretrices* and *scorta* under *Lex Iulia et Papia* both allowed and encoded sex labor as an institution. However, sex labor was also segregated and relegated into its own social space. Restrictions on sex labor under *Lex Iulia et Papia* served the dual purpose of keeping sex laborers from integrating with larger Roman society while ensuring that sex laborers continued to exist. Under *Lex Iulia et Papia*, sex laborers were prevented from marrying freeborn citizens of Rome. While the legislation protected sex laborers' right to marry freedmen, it encoded a monetary incentive for sex laborers *not* to marry or have children and continue working in sex labor.¹⁹ This was done through inheritance incentives — the primary way to gain wealth in the Roman world — one of the few ways for women to become financially independent.

No punishment was afforded to sex laborers in marriages to freeborn citizens, but at the same time, no protections and rights were afforded to such women. While a couple that currently or previously involved sex for payment would not be dragged before the court, women whose marriages violated this law were barred from any inheritance. However, a sex laborer could be bequeathed an inheritance in a citizen's will (perhaps up to a fourth). This meant that a sex laborer might be afforded more wealth and stability if they remained a sex laborer for wealthy clients; then they not only had the chance to inherit wealth but might inherit more than once depending on their clientele.²⁰ Further, while *Lex Iulia et Papia* encouraged upper-class women to have children, sex laborers were encouraged *not* to reproduce under the same laws.²¹ Sex

¹⁹ McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*, 97.

²⁰ McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*, 96.

²¹ McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*, 98.

laborers were then encouraged to remain single and unattached within their jobs. This restriction limited complications for people connected to sex laborers or who might raise these women out of sex labor. While sex laborers might inherit, there was a cap on how much, limiting their fortune — nor were they allowed to marry freeborn citizens. As reported by Ulpianus in his *Epitome* “by the Lex Julia . . . other freeborn persons are forbidden to marry a common prostitute.”²² Thus limiting the two ways women had upward mobility: wealth and marriage. These restrictions allowed Rome to keep the social safety valve of sex labor without polluting the upper social orders.

Furthermore, the distinction between sex laborers and others was heightened by the exemption of sex laborers from other parts of the morality clauses, such as adultery, unwed sex, and so forth. Sex labor therefore became a legal category, in which sex laborers had to be registered, keeping them safe from accusations of sexual deviancy. Registration of sex work as a profession allowed for later laws such as Caligula's taxation of sex laborers, but it also legitimized *meretrices* as a legal class, encoding sex labor into the Roman legal system more explicitly than in the Republic.

Adultery:

The same legislation that encoded sex labor as a legally recognized social class also set parameters that addressed the issue of adultery, but adultery was legislated differently from sex labor. While sex labor was restrained legally, keeping it in its social place through rewards for certain behaviors, adultery was encoded punitively. Adultery, unlike sex labor, represented the falling of a respectable woman. Women who committed adultery were considered morally corrupt: it was even asserted that those who committed adultery could easily commit murder as

²² Ulpianus, *Epitome*, ed. and trans. Abdy J.T. and Bryan Walker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1879), 13-14.

they had already committed the foulest of acts.²³ There was no greater depth of depravity. In fact, poisoners (the most common form of women murderers) were assumed to be adulteresses — because women with a polluted mind must have a polluted body — and vice versa.²⁴ Therefore while sex laborers had inherent rights and limitations, those found guilty of adultery were essentially devoid of all rights. In fact, in some cases, women found guilty of adultery would quickly try to register as sex laborers to save themselves from the complete loss of rights.²⁵ Where a sex laborer could inherit in a will, an adulteress could not. Sex laborers could marry freedmen, whereas adulteresses were completely prohibited from marriage.²⁶ Sex laborers and adulteresses alike were unable to testify in a court of law.²⁷

Thus sex labor was regulated to be a cessation of mobility, keeping its workers socially sedentary, whereas adultery was regulated to affect a sharp downward mobility, punishing those involved.²⁸ Adultery, as an act, was the ruin of existing Roman families and marriages and therefore had to be avoided at all costs. Harsh legislation about adultery, therefore, was likely aimed at scaring Roman women from committing the act. *Lex Iulia et Papia* was thus a preventative legal measure.²⁹ Its aim was the creation and upholding of moral Roman families,

²³ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 44; There is also a case Quintilian references a case in which a *meretrix* poisons her long time lover, (Levin-Richardson, 117.) Interplay between adultery, poisoning and sex labor.

²⁴ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 44.

²⁵ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 49; Amy Richlin, *Arguments with Silence: Writing the History of Roman Women* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014), 49.

²⁶ McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*, 99.

²⁷ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 43.

²⁸ McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*, 99.

²⁹ This is not to say that punishment wasn't real and didn't happen: in the case of Augustus's own daughter and granddaughter, Julia the elder and Julia the younger, it is clear the threat of enforcement was very real. However, I assert that the *Function* of the law was first and foremost to scare and prevent, which could not have happened if the letter of the law was seen as an empty threat.

as legislated by the government. In fact, in the case of adultery or pre-marital sex, the Roman state took punitive measures out of the hands of the family and put them in the hands of the law.³⁰

Sex labor, by contrast, was not the ruin of families but rather a tool to help keep them stable. Young men learned about sex from sex laborers without despoiling “good” Roman women. Additionally, sexually frustrated men had the option to visit sex laborers rather than married women. Rather than attempting to control male sexuality, sex labor provided a way for it to be rerouted to avoid causing damage to upper-class Roman families. *Lex Iulia et Papia* encoded sex labor in a way that prevented it from bleeding into greater Roman society but legitimized it and ensured its continued existence, while at the same time trying to completely blot out adultery. The first measure was likely seen as a tool to support the second. Sex labor was protected to give an outlet for men other than sleeping with married women. Nevertheless, *Lex Iulia et Papia* is seen by many as a failure of legislation, and Augustus’s least successful measure, perhaps due to a disconnect between the legislation and the cultural understanding of what it regulated.

Literature

While the legal context is clear that women's sex work and adultery were regulated completely differently and seen at variance with each other by Augustan law and the government that regulated them, we cannot, through law, understand the way Roman people viewed these matters. Laws rarely reflect the lived realities of the things they regulate; if they did there would be no need for such regulation. Nor do laws reflect the cultural understanding of the acts and identities they regulate. To get a better understanding of the cultural opinion of the relationship

³⁰ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 49.

between adultery and prostitution, this paper will address the Roman literature leading up to and directly following *Lex Iulia et Pappia*. Literature, of course, comes with its own interpretive problems, as, by definition, it is not an objective report of reality. We will not take it as such. Instead, we will look at how multiple authors' literary discussions of sex labor and adultery compare within their own works, and why they may express ambivalence or even espousal in contrast to legal notions.

Plautus:

Around 150 years before *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, the works of the comic playwright Plautus were being performed in Rome. These comedies' plots focused on lovers, usually young men, who got in and out of trouble to end up with their female love interest. In Roman comedy, it was not uncommon for the female lover to have a bit part, sometimes never speaking or even appearing on stage, instead simply existing as a device around which the play revolves. Nor was it uncommon for the female love interest in these plays to be a sex worker. Sex workers here usually fit one of two archetypes: the beautiful young girl who has fallen in love with a youth or a *meretrix mala*, a wicked sex laborer. Such a *meretrix* could not stop trying to be alluring and seduce men, as her life is dependent on continuously gaining men's money. The *meretrix mala* is often depicted as trying to swindle drunkards, slaves, or old men out of their money.³¹ One would think, given Roman's sensibilities regarding femininity, the first type would be seen as good and worthy of reward, and the second as wicked and punishable. Yet the

³¹ María Teresa de Luque Morales, "Roman Prostitution Through Plautus' Theatre," *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization*, 26 (2022): 58-60, <https://doi.org/10.12797/SAAC.26.2022.26.03>.

sex laborers in Plautus's plays always get a positive ending of love or money and are not punished.³² This outcome was not seen as a tragedy, but rather a happy ending.

The theatre and actors in general were considered to be morally loose and of low social status by Romans. Others who worked with their bodies — gladiators and sex laborers — were seen as similarly unclean by Roman society, so it is not surprising that a playwright who existed in the world of theatre would have more sympathy for the sex laborer than other authors. An additional influence on Plautus's sympathies were the heavy Hellenistic influences throughout his works, in theme, characters, and setting. Even further, Plautus was himself a bit of an outsider, an Umbrian, not a Roman. However, despite these influences, Plautus's plays were for Roman audiences and performed in Rome. His repetition of the trope of sex workers' happy endings suggests that the Roman audience enjoyed this outcome because poorly received tropes were unlikely to reappear in such an interactive and reactive medium as comedy. This circumstance shows Plautus and his audience's sympathy or empathy with the sex laborer's character rather than a desire for her to be punished, maybe even a desire to believe that a sex laborer might someday be raised from her station to something better.

While Plautus did not often write of women as adultresses, he notably did so in *Amphitryon*, an adaptation of the myth of the birth of Hercules. Here Plautus portrays Hercules' mother, Alcmene, with sympathy. His choice of adulteress is one who is originally portrayed as a Royal woman who, despite being Greek, has the traits of a perfect Roman matron and wife and almost exclusively experiences joy through her marriage with her husband.³³ She is then tricked into adultery by the god Jupiter and is ultimately rewarded with a painless childbirth (a variation

³² Morales, "Roman Prostitution Through Plautus' Theatre," 58-60.

³³ Plautus, *Amphitryon*, ed. and trans. Paul Nixon (London, 1916; Project Gutenberg, 2005), 637-653.

on the myth we do not have record of before this, hence seemingly Plautus's own authorial choice). The play ends with Jupiter explaining his trick to Alcmene's husband, and her husband being *grateful* to have shared his wife with the king of the gods and happily going to see her: "I'll go in and see my wife!"³⁴

Plautus here chooses to write about women's adultery with the same sympathy that he exercises in his writing on sex laborers, giving the woman a happy ending. She is depicted as not being at fault for her situation. In fact, Plautus treats his adulteress here better than he does a male adulterer in another of his works. In Plautus's *Casina*, Cleostrata sets up an elaborate trick to keep her husband from adultery and punishes him for the attempt. This adultery ends not with the wife accepting what happened and thanking her husband's lover, but rather with a happy ending in the husband's repentance.

Oh Lord! I think I'd rather take your word for all you say. (Almost in tears.) But do pardon your husband this time, my dear, Myrrhina, beg her to. If I ever make love to Casina after this, or so much as show a sign of it — let alone making love to her— if I ever do such a thing again, I give you leave to hang me up, my dear, and use a whip on me. (Plautus, *Casina*, 107-109. Nixon 1916)

At the conclusion of this comedy, the man begs for forgiveness and promises never to commit adultery again.³⁵ While, there is obviously more nuance to the plot, the overall outcomes of the plot and the "happy ending" speaks more forcefully than any specific dialogue. What makes a Roman play a comedy is the fact that it has a happy ending, so this key element of the play is unlikely to be out of line with what the majority of Romans would consider to be a good ending

³⁴ Plautus, *Amphitryon*, ed. and trans. Paul Nixon (London, 1916; Project Gutenberg, 2005), 1126-1127: "Well, well, well! I make no complaint at being permitted to have Jove as partner in my blessings."

³⁵ Plautus, *Casina*, ed. and trans. Paul Nixon, (London, 1916; Google Books, 2023), 107-109.

for the characters. While the dialogue is up for interpretation on how it was written and received, what is considered to be a good outcome gives us a concise value judgment.³⁶

Plautus's "happy endings" subvert and contradict what would be encoded into Roman law a century and a half later. While the sex laborer's happy ending in his comic scenarios was elevation above her station, *Lex Iulia et Papia* minimizes this possibility, especially through marriage. Where the female adulteress is seen as sympathetic and the male adulterer is shamed in Plautus's works, *Lex Iulia et Papia* punishes women's adultery harshly, but represents little to no punishment for male adultery.

Horace:

Seventeen years before *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* passed and more than 150 after Plautus, Horace published his satires. In Satire 1.2, he discusses what makes a good lover. In this passage, Horace uses the negative to emphasize the positive. He describes a bad lover, whom he understands to be a sex laborer, a slave, or someone else's wife:

Equal the folly, whether in pursuit
of wife or slave or loose-robed prostitute;
Unless you mean, content to be undone
to hate the person, not the vice to shun. (Horace, *Satires*, 191. Francis 1822)

Here he describes sex laborers and married women as equally undesirable. Later in the same satire, Horace's language becomes even less distinct, describing a bad lover as: "who play the coy one with cold 'anon' 'A guinea more;' or 'when my husband's gone.'"³⁷ Horace no longer

³⁶ I'm starting to think Plautus is a feminist? Despite all the rape, and all the misogynistic jokes, and the lack of women with speaking lines and . . . (This might be my next paper)

³⁷ Horace, *Satires*, ed. and trans. Philip Francis, *British Poets* 98 (Chiswick: C. Whittingham College House, 1822), 71.

bothers to make a distinction between the adulteress and the sex laborer. They have become the same, Horace quotes to the reader what a sex laborer and a married woman might say without making a distinction between the two. The language of sex labor and adultery merges and eventually crosses; when discussing the dangers of adultery, Horace uses language like “pay the fair” and “shows her wares”³⁸ about adulterous women. Throughout, Horace writes about adultery using the language of sex labor, positing that a man would pay to sleep with a man's wife just as much as he would with a sex laborer without being entirely explicit. He does not exactly condemn adultery, sex labor, or the men who visit adulteresses and sex laborers. Rather, he expresses the hassle of relations with adulteresses and *meretrices*. The perfect lover, he suggests, is the one who, impossibly, comes without the hassle of a price tag or husband. Both are unnecessary complications, equally irritating.

Ovid:

In 2 CE, the Roman elegiac poet Ovid wrote *Ars Amatoria*, a cheeky “how to” guide on the seduction of lovers, especially married women. Ovid wrote this work with full knowledge of *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* and *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*. Like many other Latin writers, he was associated with the imperial family and other elites. His witty poetry made him a favorite of many Roman elites, but not of Augustus. Only six years after the publication of his *Ars Amatoria*, Ovid was exiled from Rome by the *princeps*.³⁹ Likely *Ars Amatoria* is a work of cultural kickback against Augustan laws about sex and procreation. The relationship between

³⁸ Horace, *Satires*, 70-71.

³⁹ This was the official reason given for his exile. The truth behind this (and its six year delay) will remain the debate for historians.

Ovid and Augustus — and the reason for Ovid's exile — was fraught. Many historians have examined them without conclusion, nor are they at issue here. Rather, I will focus less on these historical figures and more on the literary content of Ovid's work in dialogue with the legislation of sexual relations.

Ars Amatoria promotes adultery over sex labor, likely in direct response to or critique of the Augustan laws, or even to showcase the reality of sexual relations *despite* the laws; hence Ovid's work represents a social commentary promoting the exact opposite of the aim of Augustan legislation as moral reform. While *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* and *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* attempt to eliminate women's (especially elite women's) adultery, by creating punishments for those who commit it, Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* is about how men can seduce elite women.⁴⁰ *Ars Amatoria* book one, in its address to the aspiring lover, puts the responsibility of adultery on men. Men seduce and take other men's wives, hence men are responsible for adultery. Women always desire and are hoping for sex.⁴¹ Further, Ovid's guide to love is addressed to non-elite men, challenging the social stratification found in *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* and *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*, in which elites are encouraged to have relations with other elites. Classes are discouraged from intermingling by *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* and *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*.

⁴⁰ Ovid, *Ara Amstoria*, ed. and trans. Henry T. Riley (London, 1885; Project Gutenberg, 2014), Book I

⁴¹ Ovid, *Ara Amstoria*; “Call it violence, if you like; such violence is pleasing to the fair; they often wish, through compulsion, to grant what they are delighted to grant. Whatever fair one has been despoiled by the sudden violence of passion, she is delighted at it; and the chief is as good as a godsend. But she, who, when she might have been carried by storm, has escaped untouched, though, in her features, she should pretend gladness, will really be sorry.”; “First of all, let a confidence enter your mind, that all women may be won; you will win them; do you only lay your toils. Sooner would the birds be silent in spring, the grasshoppers in summer, sooner would the Mænalian dog turn its back upon the hare, than the fair, attentively courted, would resist the youth. She, however, will wish you to believe, so far as you can, that she is reluctant.”

Even in *Ars Amatoria*, where adultery is purported to be the better option than sex laborers, Ovid still cannot escape the language of sex labor. He discusses the monetary component of sexual relationships with women, writing that to sleep with elite women, the men may have to spend money on gifts for their lovers — or on their maids as a way to get close to them. Ovid compares a woman's trying to get a gift from her lover on her birthday to a courtesan scheming for money in every interaction.⁴² Ovid writes about money and seduction in the context of adultery in the understanding that women and sex are something men pay for one way or another. Such a transactional relationship is not immoral in his view. Notably, in this period, marriage included the exchange of money. Adultery, for all intents and purposes in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, is simply sex labor, but with the added component of seduction.

In the literature of both the second century BCE and the Augustan period proper, similar paradigms are expressed regarding women's sexual behavior. Plautus writes of sex laborers and adulteresses as women who deserve a happy ending. His plays usually end with the woman in question living happily with a man who loves her. Horace writes that engaging with sex laborers or adulteresses is a bad idea, but he does not condemn the man who does so, rather warns him of the drawbacks that come with sleeping with such women. While Ovid purports to prefer seducing married women, he offers no condemnation of those who sleep with sex laborers in the understanding that sex is transactional, regardless.

⁴² Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*; “Besides, too; when she asks for a present, as though for the birth-day cake, and is born for her own pleasure as often as she pleases. And further; when, full of tears, she laments her pretended loss, and the jewel is feigned to have fallen from her pierced ear. They ask for many a sum to be lent them; so lent, they have no inclination to return them. You lose the whole; and no thanks are there for your loss. Had I ten mouths, with tongues as many, they would not suffice for me to recount the abominable contrivances of courtesans.”

Livy:

However, not all literary depictions of adultery were in line with this lack of condemnation. A notable example of an author whose work fell in line with the Augustan moral programming was Livy, an elite Roman from the city of Patavium. It is unclear whether Livy's political sensibilities completely aligned with Augustus's, as Tacitus, several generations later, recounts that Augustus referred to Livy as a Pompeian, that is a Republican, Livy was unquestionably close to the veiled monarchy; Suetonius cited Livy as having encouraged Claudius to pursue his study of history as a child.⁴³ Livy's discussion of adultery, written in the first decade of the Roman Empire, suggests a normative elite perspective aligned with Augustan discourse on the issue.

Livy's depiction of Lucretia in *Ab urbe condita* is a well-known and important depiction of ideal Roman womanhood.⁴⁴ While Livy's version of this story is by no means the original, "each historian infused his version of events with his own (and his class's) literary, moral, and political concerns."⁴⁵ The story is twofold: how an ideal Roman wife should act and how an ideal husband should act. The first is more important. Lucretia, the wife of a leading Roman, is shown to be a hard-working wife who spends her time weaving even late into the night rather than socializing or attending evening parties.

⁴³ Tacitus, *Annals*, ed. and trans. Cynthia Damon, (London, Penguin Classics, 2012); Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, ed. Thomas Forester, trans. Alexander Thomson, (London, 1909; Project Gutenberg, 2004), Claudius, XLI; "By the encouragement of Titus Livius, and with the assistance of Sulpicius Flavius, he attempted at an early age the composition of a history."

⁴⁴ Livy, *The Early History of Rome*, ed. and trans. Aubrey De Séincourt, (London, Penguin Classics, 2002), 100-103.

⁴⁵ S.R. Joshel, "The Body Female and the Body Politic: Livy's Lucretia and Verginia" in *Sexuality and Gender in the Classical World: Readings and Sources*, ed. Laura K. McClure (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 2002,) 166; this quote was directly about Ovid's depiction of Lucretia

When she was raped by the king's son, she resisted even to the point of death, giving in only when her attacker tells her that if she does not yield he will make it look as if she has willingly committed adultery with a slave. After the rape takes place Lucretia informs her husband and father, and even though she and they alike understand her to be innocent, she kills herself so that her honor is completely above reproach.⁴⁶ Additionally, she cites a reason for her suicide as that no unchaste woman may ever cite her as precedent.⁴⁷

The perfect Roman wife, Livy suggests, spends her time working on approved tasks and exists within her own domestic realm. She does not indulge in pleasure, whether sexual, material, or social, but rather understands her place in her husband's and family's image. Notably, Lucretia kills herself before there can ever be the question of a child from this attack. Livy's vision of the perfect wife, however, assumes an equally virtuous husband — one who understands and appreciates his wife's virtue, and, if that virtue is challenged, avenges her appropriately. Collatinus, in this story, represents that correspondence. He serves almost as a promise to Roman women that if they are the perfect wives, they will be afforded the respect they deserve. While Lucretia's husband understands her to be virtuous, so do others. As Livy represents it, all who hear of what happened to Lucretia are horrified and incensed that this has happened to such a good woman. Reputation, for an elite woman, is everything.

As in Plautus's *Amphitryon*, Livy does not suggest that the wife is at fault within the text.

Both Alcmena and Lucretia are forgiven by their husbands and understood to be respectable

⁴⁶ This somewhat mirrors Caesar's divorce from Pompeia, Caesar claiming that he has no belief that his wife committed adultery but with his image as *pontifex maximus* his wife must be above even the rumor of it: "my wife ought not even to be under suspicion". However, in Livy's story, the wife is the one to understand this and "remove" herself as to not taint her husband and future marriages in Rome. Story of a woman upholding values we know men to have had.

⁴⁷ Precedent was an incredibly important idea in Rome, as the "Roman constitution" was not a written document but rather understood to be a matter of precedents, all things made legal in the senate were understood as being able to be used as precedent in future votes.

matrons. However, for Livy that is not enough: reputation and image are more important than for Plautus. Livy conveys an understanding that the actions of a respectable woman in the public eye might affect the actions of other women. Elite women were always moral role models and must appear as such. Lucretia's goodness is tied to her chastity *and* the perception of her virtue. In Livy's depiction, the only thing Lucretia finds worse than being forcibly raped was her husband's believing her to have been a willing adulteress. Livy's perfect Roman woman understands what makes her valuable — her chastity, her reputation, and how both those things affect her husband — and when her value has been taken from her, she understands herself as no longer useful and kills herself.

Conclusion

In both *Lex Iulia et Papia* and all the literature referenced in this paper, the men who engage in consensual extramarital sexual behaviors did not seem to be at fault. It seems that not even the strictest of Romans would object to the prevalence of prostitution. Men visiting sex laborers were universally acceptable. According to Cicero, there was no time in Rome when young men visiting a sex laborer was ever unacceptable.

But if there be anyone who thinks that youth is to be wholly interdicted from amours with courtesans, he certainly is very strict indeed.⁴⁸ I cannot deny what he says; but still, he is at variance not only with the license of the present age, but even with the habits of our ancestors, and with what they used to consider allowable. For when was the time that men were not used to act in this manner? when was such conduct found fault with? when was it not permitted? (Cic. *Cael.* 20.48)

⁴⁸ Word courtesans translated from the latin *meretrix*

Even in works like Horace's *Satire* 1.2, suggesting (perhaps disingenuously) that sex laborers and adulteresses are bad lovers, men are not shamed for visiting them. Nothing about such expressions of male sexuality was purported to be morally wrong, only inconvenient. Similarly, men who committed adultery were not stripped of rights or banned from remarrying. Adultery was a crime only for married women, not for married men. Traditionally, women caught in the act of adultery could be killed by their husbands. The men with whom they were sleeping, however, were only in danger from women's husbands if those men were slaves or a subaltern class of men. Fathers could take an offending man's life only if they took their daughter's lives as well.⁴⁹ Women were shamed for an act that required both sexes. Sex was understood as transactional — something women wanted, not shameful for men, but shameful for women. Expressions of Roman male sexuality were not a danger that concerned either the elites or the non-elites of Rome.

Domitian reinstated *Lex Iulia* during his reign, between 81 and 96 CE, implying that the law was no longer observed by that time and required reinforcement. Whether it had been reversed or simply neglected due to mass non-compliance we cannot know for sure— nor how long the parts of this law involving sex laborers and their marriages, children, and inheritance were maintained.⁵⁰ All we can know is that *Lex Iulia et Papia* seemed to have been unsuccessful. In a set of laws primarily focused on the elite and preserving their status, the possibility of a poor man marrying a sex laborer and leaving his few items to her in his will may have been overlooked. Furthermore, sex laborers who were slaves, foreign, or uneducated may have had very little idea that these laws were even being passed, let alone what that meant for their

⁴⁹ Chrystal, *In Bed with the Romans*, 42.

⁵⁰ The author finds it likely that widespread non-compliance is the reason for its failure.

personal lives. While *Lex Iulia et Papia* offers little insight into the reality of sex labor after its initial promulgation, it does reveal realities of sex labor before its passage that gave elites anxieties. A sex laborer's gaining money was a minor concern, thus the law capped how much they received in a will. A sex laborer's marrying into a free society was a primary anxiety. Those who did completely lost their inheritance. A sex laborer marrying at all was something that was not to be encouraged, probably as it increased the likelihood of another anxiety — that a sex laborer might have a child leading to the pollution of the Roman elite bloodlines. A sex worker bearing children was therefore something to be limited, and they were offered a monetary incentive not to reproduce.

Quintilian's writings imagine a legal case involving the son of a prostitute to discuss some of the important issues of the court system. In this scenario, he suggests the legal obligations and rights of the family: "Children shall support their parents under penalty of imprisonment."⁵¹ A son's job is to keep his mother from sex labor. If he did not, he would be socially shamed and would not have certain rights: "The son of a harlot shall not address the people."⁵² People with good families should not — and cannot — end up in this situation. Such safeguards both kept the lower classes of men from mixing with the upper classes and maintained a double check on elite Roman women. While Roman women were legally monitored, their families were also legally obliged to monitor them. The husband's role was to keep the wife from adultery, safeguarding women's honor, hence family honor. A woman's chastity was her male relative's legal obligation.

⁵¹ Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, ed. and trans. H.E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library 126 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 95.

⁵² Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 95.

Sex laborers could not legally commit *stuprum* and could not be accused of adultery. Men could not be considered to have committed adultery with a sex laborer, and sex laborers were exempt from all morality laws that had to do with adultery. Sex that a sex laborer had could never be considered a crime.⁵³ Instead, sex work was seen as a necessity; a “remedy for the security of wives” sex labor existed to preserve the moral fidelity of Roman women.⁵⁴ However, if sex labor existed to protect the chastity of Roman women, then sex laborers could not, legally and culturally speaking, be Roman women. Did their status as a sex laborer strip them of the right to be considered Roman or to be considered a woman? Or was it simply that they were too lowly to care either way?

At the same time, sex laborers were integral to Roman festivals and on some occasions almost took on a quasi-religious role. For example, during *Vinalia* “ [f]or the sake of decency, wine was forbidden to Roman women.” Hence, while *matronae* were expressly forbidden from drinking wine, *meretrices* were not and *could* participate in the ceremonies.⁵⁵ “Therefore, [Venus], associated with Jupiter, became the protector of *meretrices*.”⁵⁶ Additionally, sex laborers had an explicit role in *Floralia*, part of which involved nocturnal celebrations in which sex laborers, sometimes fully naked, showed off their charms representing and becoming the embodiment of female sexuality.⁵⁷ Perhaps it was their subaltern status that allowed for this performance, as if to say: Look here at the expression of natural female sensuality! Are we not lucky Roman women are sophisticated enough to repress such a nature? Or maybe it was the

⁵³ Morales, "Roman Prostitution Through Plautus' Theatre," 59.

⁵⁴ Morales, "Roman Prostitution Through Plautus' Theatre," 59.

⁵⁵ Morales, "Roman Prostitution Through Plautus' Theatre," 61.

⁵⁶ Morales, "Roman Prostitution Through Plautus' Theatre," 61.

⁵⁷ Morales, "Roman Prostitution Through Plautus' Theatre," 62.

eroticism of the other that allowed them to be given such a role, something desirable because it was seen as so diametrically opposed to the ideal of a Roman woman, to a wife. In any case, these festivals cemented the character of Roman sex work as integral to Roman society. Sex workers existed in an entirely different social framework than other women. The key to this divergence in classification lies in value, specifically women's value to men — elite Roman men.

Legislation protecting sex labor and encouraging sex laborers not to leave their employment was a tool to keep sex laborers from mixing with and forming binding relationships with elite members of Roman society. Preventive and punitive laws against adultery were intended to preserve women considered valuable and useful to the men to whom they belonged. If they could not be kept chaste, elite women lost value, and Augustan legislation made sure their devaluation was final. The moral implications for men were the same for adultery and engaging in sex labor, because sex outside of marriage was, for them, equivalent, and a non-issue.

For women, the act of sex — whether legally sanctioned or legally punished — was morally similar. The difference lay in whether or not the women were ever perceived to have had value, to begin with. Whereas elite women had value as mothers and as the property of their husbands, sex workers were almost always impoverished women seen as having little to no value to begin with. Therefore, they could not lose status. Legislation protected this difference — an attempt to keep valuable women from depreciation and women without value from gaining value. Women were understood to be inherently sexual beings. For valuable women, sexuality was something to be discouraged, but it was allowed to exist and given a place. Women without value did not endanger the elite Roman family or the legitimacy of children.

Romans understood themselves as inherently sexual beings, and this was not restricted solely to the male gender; women were also understood to have sexual appetites. However,

unlike in men, women's unfulfilled sexuality was feared because it had the potential to cause instability.⁵⁸ A husband's sex outside of wedlock did not taint his patriarchal line, but a wife's sex outside of wedlock could bring problems of legitimacy. A child of a non-elite man could be passed off as an elite and could inherit elite money, property, and name. Valuable women's sexuality threatened male lines, but it also threatened class structure.⁵⁹

Rome was a city where the elite class was based around bloodlines. Patricians were understood to be the descendants of the first one hundred men appointed as senators by Romulus. They had different rights and privileges than plebeians, entirely according to family and bloodline. To threaten the lineage of a patrician was to threaten the patrician class, a paramount concern of the Roman elite, who had a vested interest in maintaining the traditional Roman social order, as playwrights from Sarsina or poets of lower social status did not.

Roman non-elites had much less cause to condemn adultery than those trying to maintain the social strata. Their view of women's sexuality was hence less fraught with the class implications of elite women having affairs. While, personally, non-elites probably would not be pleased with their wives committing adultery, they had much less at stake than elite Romans had. Women's adultery, to the elite, could be a world-crumbing event, so elite women's sexuality must be feared and suppressed. At the same time, non-valuable women's sexuality was beneficial to them, allowing them to step out of their elite roles and enjoy a taste of less refined life, a variety of women, and pleasures. The only concern was that these women, or their offspring,

⁵⁸ Joshel, "The Body Female and the Body Politic," 172; "The Roman discourse on chaos often joins loose women with male failure to control various appetites. Uncontrolled female sexuality was associated with moral decay, and both were seen as the root of social chaos, civil war, and military failure."

⁵⁹ Augustus and his fairly dysfunctional family played the role of the leading Roman family and depicted themselves as such in art, monuments, and coinage. One of Augustus's many titles was the father of Rome. Livia, (despite the reality of the marriage,) played the part of the traditional pious wife and was depicted as such—she even weaved and made Augustus's clothes—and her iconography incorporated both ideas of maternity and fertility. While depicting themselves as a sort of mother and father to Rome, there was even more at stake in keeping the family unit stable.

might try to integrate. To the non-elites, by contrast, whether they viewed non-traditional forms of women's sexuality as sympathetic, or bothersome, it all came down to personal preference.

While valuable females' sexuality was feared by the elite, Augustus's attempts to regulate it through the *Lex Iulia et Papia* were not in line with past cultural understanding, found pushback, and ultimately failed. Sex outside of marriage, regardless of form, seemed to remain unaffected by these laws, and adultery and sex labor remained understandably intertwined in the cultural imagination. As powerful as Augustus Caesar may have been, even he could not regulate people's hearts and beds.

Annotated Bibliography

Secondary Sources:

- Baird, J.A. "On Reading the Material Culture of Ancient Sexual Labor." *Helios*, 42, no. 1, (2015): 163-175.
- Chrystal, Paul. *In Bed with the Romans*. Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2015.
- Fantham, Elaine. "Republican Rome II: Women in a Wealthy Society — Aristocratic and Working Women from the Second Century B.C.E." in *Women in the Classical World*, 260-279. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Fantham, Elaine. "Women, Family, and Sexuality in the Age of Augustus and the Julio-Claudians" in *Women in the Classical World*, 294-329. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995
- Glazebrook, Allison. "Beyond Courtesans and Whores: Sex and Labor in the Greco-Roman World" *Helios*, 42, no. 1, (2015): 1-5.
- Hubbard, Thomas. *A Companion to Greek and Roman Sexualities*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2014.
- Joshel, S.R. "The Body Female and the Body Politic: Livy's Lucretia and Verginia." In *Sexuality and Gender in the Classical World: Readings and Sources*, edited by Laura K. McClure, 163 - 190. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002.
- Larson, Jennifer. "Prostitutes and Courtesans." In *Greek and Roman Sexualities: A Sourcebook*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012.
- Levin-Richardson, Sarah. *The Brothel of Pompeii: Sex, Class, and Gender at the Margins of Roman Society*. Seattle: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- McGinn, Thomas. *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- . *The Economy of Prostitution in the Roman World*. Michigan: Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2004.
- Morales, María Teresa de Luque. 2022. "Roman Prostitution Through Plautus' Theatre". *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilisation*, 26, (December): 57-72. <https://doi.org/10.12797/SAAC.26.2022.26.03>.
- Witzke, Serena. "Harlots, Tarts, and Hussies? A Problem of Terminology for Sex Labor in Roman Comedy" *Helios*, 42, no. 1, (2015): 7-27.

Translations of Primary Sources:

Horace. *Satires*. Edited and translated by Philip Francis. British Poets 98. Chiswick: C. Whittingham College House, 1822.

Martial. *Epigrams*. Edited and translated by J.A. Pott, and F. A. Wright. Broadway Translations. London: Routledge and Sons, 1925.

Ovid. *Ars Amatoria*. Edited and translated by Henry T. Riley. London, 1885; Project Gutenberg, 2014. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/47677/47677-h/47677-h.htm#link2H_4_0001

Petronius. *Satyricon*. Edited and translated by H.E. Butler. Loeb Classical Library 126. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020.

Plautus. *Cistellaria*. Edited and translated by H.E. Butler. Loeb Classical Library 126. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Quintilian. *Institutio Oratoria*. Edited and translated by H.E. Butler. Loeb Classical Library 126. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Seneca. *De Vita Beata*. Edited and translated by Sir Roger L'Estrange. Chicago, 1882; Project Gutenberg, 2017. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/56075/56075-h/56075-h.htm>.

Ulpianus. *Epitome*. Edited and translated by Abdy J.T. and Bryan Walker. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1879.

