

### Document A

Cassius Dio was a second- and third-century-CE Roman writer. In this selection we read about the minimum age at which girls could marry.

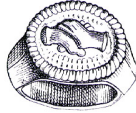
... girls are held to have reached the marriageable age on the completion of twelve full years.

Source: Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 54.16.7, Vol. VI, trans. Earnest Cary (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1960), 325.

### Document B

Pliny the Younger was a first- and second-century-CE writer. In this letter, addressed to his friend Aefulanus Marcellinus, he reports the death of a young bride-to-be.

I am writing to you in great distress: our friend Fundanus has lost his younger daughter. ... She had not yet reached the age of fourteen ... She was already engaged to marry a distinguished young man, the day for the wedding was fixed, and we had received our invitations. Such joy, and now such sorrow! No words can express my grief when I heard Fundanus giving his own orders ... for the money he had intended for clothing, pearls, and jewels to be spent on **incense, ointment, and spices**. ...



Source: *The Letters of Pliny* 5.16, Vol. I, trans. Betty Radice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1972), 379-81; source of image of betrothal ring: VRoma, [http://www.vroma.org/images/mcmanus\\_images/sandysdextrunct.jpg](http://www.vroma.org/images/mcmanus_images/sandysdextrunct.jpg)

### Document C

In this letter by Pliny the Younger to his friend Junius Mauricus we read that marriages could be arranged by someone outside the family.

You ask me to look out for a husband for your brother's daughter, a responsibility which I feel is very rightly mine; for you know how I have always loved and admired him as the finest of men. ... I should have had a long search if Minicius Acilianus were not at hand, as if he were made for us.... His native place is Brixia, one of the towns in our part of Italy which still retains intact much of its honest simplicity along with the rustic virtues of the past. ... [He] has held the offices of **quaestor, tribune, and praetor** with great distinction ... I am wondering whether to add that his father has ample means ...

Source: *The Letters of Pliny* 1.14, Vol. I, trans. Betty Radice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1972), 43-5.

### Document D

Metellus Macedonicus was censor in 131 BCE; he began a speech with these words.

If we could survive without a wife, citizens of Rome, all of us would do without that nuisance; but since nature has decreed that we cannot ... live in any way without them, we must plan for our lasting preservation [and marry].

Source: From a collection of speech fragments, in Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook in Translation* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2005), 103.

### Document E

Cassius Dio was a second- and third-century-CE Roman writer. Here we read about another one of Augustus' laws.

[Augustus] laid heavier assessments upon the unmarried men and upon the women without husbands, and on the other hand offered prizes for marriage ...

Source: Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 54.16.1, Vol. VI, trans. Earnest Cary (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1960), 323.

### Document F

Columella was a first-century-CE Roman writer. In this selection he remembers the "good old days" when every woman was devoted to her household and family.

For both amongst the Greeks, and afterwards amongst the Romans down to the time which our own fathers can remember, domestic labor was practically the sphere of the married woman, the fathers of families betaking themselves to the family fireside, all care laid aside, only to rest from their public activities. For the utmost reverence for them ruled in the home in an atmosphere of harmony and diligence ... Nowadays, however, when most women so abandon themselves to luxury and idleness that they do not deign to undertake even the superintendence of wool-making ...

Columella, *On Agriculture* 12, preface 7, 9, Vol. III, trans. E. S. Forster (London: William Heinemann, 1955), 177-9.

### Document G

Pliny the Younger was a first- and second-century-CE writer. This is a part of a letter he wrote to Calpurnia Hispanica, the aunt of his much younger wife Calpurnia.

If I am giving a reading [of my work] she sits behind a curtain nearby and greedily drinks in every word of appreciation. She has even set my verses to music and sings them, to the accompaniment of her lyre ...

Source: *The Letters of Pliny* 4.19, Vol. I, trans. Betty Radice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1972), 299.

### Document H

Musonius Rufus was a first-century-CE Roman writer. In this selection we find the reason why he believes women should be educated.

Women have received from the gods the same ability to reason that men have. ... In the first place a woman must run her household and pick out what is beneficial for her home and take charge of the household slaves. In these activities I claim that philosophy is particularly helpful, since each of these activities is an aspect of life, and philosophy is nothing other than the science of living ... Now, wouldn't the woman who practices philosophy be ... devoted in her responsibilities towards her husband and her children?

Source: Musonius Rufus, *Discourses* 3.4.13a, qtd. in Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook in Translation* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2005), 50-1.

### Document I

Cassius Dio was a second- and third-century-CE Roman writer. In this selection he writes about the wife of the emperor Septimius Severus.

For this reason she began to study philosophy and passed her days in company with sophists. ... she devoted herself more and more to the study of philosophy ...



Source: Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 76.15.7, 78.18.2, Vol. IX, trans. Earnest Cary (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1960), 233 and 327; image source: De Imperatoribus Romanis, <http://www.roman-emperors.org/sevjulia.htm>

### Document J

Tibullus was a first-century-BCE Roman writer. In his *Elegies* he preserved parts of the work of one of his contemporaries, the poet Sulpicia.

Birthday Juno, accept these holy heaps of incense  
from the soft hand of an educated girl. ...  
That hateful birthday's near, which must be sadly spent  
in tedious countryside and without Cerinthus, ...

That dreary journey's lifted, you know, from your girl's heart.  
Now she can be in Rome for her birthday.  
Let the day that chance now brings you unexpectedly  
be spent as a birthday by us all. ...

Do you feel real concern, Cerinthus, for your girl  
now that [I am ill]?  
Ah, I would not choose to conquer wretched illness  
unless I thought that you too wished it. ...

Source: Tibullus, *Elegies* 3.8-18, trans. Guy Lee (Leeds, UK: Francis Cairns, 1990), 101-3.

### Document K

Juvenal was a first- and second-century-CE writer of satires. In this selection we read that not all elite men liked educated women.

But she's much worse, the woman who as soon as she's taken her place at dinner is praising **Virgil** and forgiving **Elissa** on her deathbed, who pits the poets against one another and assesses them, weighing in her scales [Virgil] on this side and Homer on the other. The schoolteachers give way, the teachers of rhetoric are beaten, the whole party falls silent, there'll not be a word from any lawyer or auctioneer—and not even from another woman. ... Don't let her know the whole of history. Let there be a few things in books that she doesn't even understand. ...

Juvenal, *Satire* 6, trans. Susanna Morton Braund (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2004), 275-7.

### Terms

<b>Elissa</b>	Dido, the tragic heroine of Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i>
<b>incense, ointment, and spices</b>	materials used in funerals
<b>quaestor, tribune, and praetor</b>	three kinds of magistrates
<b>Virgil</b>	first-century-BCE author of the <i>Aeneid</i>