

## The Family in the Classical World

Classics 21 (Sec. 1)  
MWF 1:00 p.m.

Fall 1998  
D. Konstan

This class meets on MWF. Class participation is a major part of the course, and attendance at all sessions is required; failure to attend classes will result in a lower or unsatisfactory grade.

Three papers will be assigned during the semester, of five, ten, and fifteen pages (final paper). Papers must be prepared in an appropriate scholarly format; topics will be suggested. There will be no final examination.

### SYLLABUS

(NB: \* = on reserve; | = on reserve as honors packet; available also as course book at Jo-Art).

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
<b>I. The Greek Family</b>	
Week 1	
<b>Sept. 9</b> (Wed.)	Introduction: Some case studies
	<i>Unit 1: Defining the Family</i>
11 (Fri.)	Menander <u>Dyscolus</u> ; *Lacey ch. 1; *Pomeroy pp. 1-23
Week 2	
14 (Mon.)	Menander <u>Samia</u> , <u>Shorn Hair</u> ; *Lacey ch. 5; *Pomeroy pp. 23-39, 60-66
16 (Wed.)	Menander <u>Aspis</u> ; *Lacey ch. 6; *Pomeroy pp. 100-108, 121-123
	<i>Unit 2: The Household and its Members</i>
18 (Fri.)	Xenophon <u>Oeconomicus</u> chh. 1-10
Week 3	
21 (Mon.)	Xenophon <u>Oeconomicus</u> chh. 11-21, <u>Memorabilia</u>

2.2-3; \*Pomeroy Oeconomicus pp. 31-67

23 (Wed.) |Aristotle Politics 1, |[Aristotle]  
Oeconomicus; |Aristotle Nicomachean Ethics  
(selections); \*Golden pp. 1-12, 23-50

*Unit 3: Tragic Families*

24 (Fri.) Euripides Alcestis, Medea, Ion; \*Golden ch. 4

Week 4

28 (Mon.) Sophocles Women of Trachis, Oedipus the King,  
Antigone; \*Slater pp. 3-33

30 (Wed.) Aeschylus Oresteia

Oct. 2 (Fri.) Euripides Andromache, Heracles, Hippolytus

*Unit 4: Comic Families*

Week 5

5 (Mon.) Aristophanes Lysistrata, Clouds

7 (Wed.) Aristophanes Assemblywomen

*Unit 5: The Archaic World*

9 (Fri.) Homer Odyssey bks. 1-6; \*Finley ch. 4; \*Lacey  
ch. 2

Week 6

14 (Wed.) Homer Odyssey bks. 19-24, |Homer Hymn to  
Demeter; |Semonides "On Women"; \*Foley pp.  
103-12, 118-37; \*Olson pp. 161-83; **First**  
**paper due (five pages)**

*Unit 6: The Family in Court*

16 (Fri.) |Demosthenes 27, 43; |Plutarch Life of  
Demosthenes; \*Pomeroy pp. 161-182; \*Cox pp.  
78-94

Week 7

19 (Mon.) |Lysias 1, |Isaeus 2, 7

21 (Wed.) |Demosthenes 44, 59; \*Pomeroy pp. 183-192

23 (Fri.) **No Class**

Week 8

- 26 (Mon.) |Plutarch "Precepts on Marriage," |"On  
Brotherly Love," |"On Raising Children";  
\*Pomeroy ch. 6

## II. The Roman Family

### *Unit 7: Roman Comedy*

- 28 (Wed.) Plautus The Pot of Gold, The Brothers  
Menaechmus, The Haunted House; Dixon ch. 1;  
\*Rawson Family ch. 1; \*Saller ch. 4  
30 (Fri.) Terence Brothers, Phormio, Self-Tormentor;  
Dixon ch. 2; \*Rawson Family ch. 5; \*Saller  
chh. 5-6

### *Unit 9: Republic and Early Empire*

Week 9

- Nov.** 2 (Mon.) |Elegy (Propertius 4.7, 11); Dixon ch. 3  
4 (Wed.) |Cicero Select Letters; \*Bradley ch. 8; Dixon  
ch. 4  
6 (Fri.) Cicero; Dixon ch. 5; Rawson Family ch. 4

Week 10

9 - 13 **No Classes this Week**

Week 11

- 16 (Mon.) Gardner and Wiedemann chh. 1-2; **Second paper  
due (ten pages)**  
18 (Wed.) Gardner and Wiedemann chh. 3-4  
20 (Fri.) Gardner and Wiedemann chh. 5-6

Week 12

- 23 (Mon.) Virgil Aeneid Books 1-2, 4-5, 8

### *Unit 10: The High Empire and Christianity*

Week 13

- 30 (Mon.) |Pliny the Younger, |Suetonius Life of

Augustus; Apuleius Golden Ass 9-10; |Stattius  
Silvae 2.2, 5.5; |Justinian's Institutes (cf.  
\*The Digest of Justinian Book 23, pp. 658-87;  
Book 24, pp. 696-702, 714-19; Book 25, pp.  
736-44; Book 26, pp. 745-51)

Dec. 2 (Wed.) Xenophon Ephesian Tale; \*Veyne pp. 9-18, 25-  
49  
4 (Fri.) Chariton Chaereas and Callirhoe; \*Cooper ch.  
2

### III. Christianity and the Family

Week 14

7 (Mon.) |Apocryphal Acts of Andrew, Paul; \*Cooper ch.  
3  
9 (Wed.) |Apocryphal Acts of John; \*Veyne pp. 297-311  
15 (Tue.) **Final paper due (fifteen pages)**

### Books

#### I. To Purchase

##### A. Primary Sources.

Aeschylus, Oresteia. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. Chicago:  
University of Chicago Press, 19\*

Aristophanes, Lysistrata and other plays. Hammondsworth: Penguin  
Books, 19\*.

Euripides, Alcestis and Other Plays. Trans. John Davie.  
Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1996.

Homer, Odyssey. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. Chicago: University  
of Chicago Press, 1956.

Menander, Plays and Fragments. Trans. Norma Miller.  
Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987.

Plautus, Four Comedies. Trans. Erich Segal. Oxford: Oxford  
University Press, 1996.

Reardon, B.P., ed., Collected Ancient Greek Novels. University

of California Press, 1989.

Sophocles, Three Tragedies. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 19\*.

Terence, The Comedies. Trans. Betty Radice. Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1965.

Virgil, Aeneid. Trans. Alan Mandelbaum. New York: Bantam Books.

Xenophon, Conversations of Xenophon. Trans. Hugh Tredennick. Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1990.

#### B. *Secondary Literature*.

Dixon, Suzanne, The Roman Family. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Gardner, Jane G. and Thomas Wiedemann, edd., The Roman Household: A Sourcebook. London: Routledge, 1991

## II. On Reserve (mostly)

NB: starred items are assigned, and are available on two-hour loan; other items are on twenty-four hour loan

#### A. *The Greek Family*.

Albini, Francesca, "The Formation of Character in Plutarch," in Judith Mossman, ed., Plutarch and his Intellectual World: Essays on Plutarch (London: Duckworth, 1997) 59-71.

Buxton, Richard, Imaginary Greece: The Contexts of Mythology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

\*Cox, Cheryl Anne, Household Interests: Property, Marriage Strategies, and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

Demand, Nancy, Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

\*Finley, M.I., The World of Odysseus. New York: Viking Press, 1965.

\*Foley, Helene, ed., The Homeric Hymn to Demeter. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

\*Golden, Mark, Children and Childhood in Classical Athens. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

Humphreys, S.C., The Family, Women and Death: Comparative Studies. 2nd ed. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993.

\*Lacey, W.K., The Family in Classical Greece. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968.

Ogden, Daniel, Greek Bastardy in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

\*Olson, S. Douglas, Blood and Iron: Stories and Storytelling in Homer's Odyssey. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995.

Oakley, John H. and Rebecca H. Sinos, The Wedding in Ancient Athens. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993.

Patterson, Cynthia, The Family in Greek History. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998.

\*Pomeroy, Sarah B., Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece: Representations and Realities. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997

\*Pomeroy, Sarah B., ed., Xenophon Oeconomicus: A Social and Historical Commentary. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994

Rubinstein, Lene, Adoption in IV. Century Athens. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculum Press, 1993.

\*Slater, Philip E., The Glory of Hera: Greek Mythology and the Greek Family. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Strauss, Barry S., Fathers and Sons in Athens: Ideology and Society in the Era of the Peloponnesian War. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Strauss, Leo, Xenophon's Socratic Discourse: An Interpretation of the Oeconomicus (with transl. by Carnes Lord). Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970.

Xenophon, The Shorter Socratic Writings. Trans. Robert C. Bartlett. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996.

## B. *The Roman Family.*

Bannon, Cynthia Jordan, The Brothers of Romulus: Fraternal Pietas in Roman Law, Literature, and Society. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

\*Bradley, Keith R., Discovering the Roman Family: Studies in

Roman Social History. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Dixon, Suzanne, The Roman Mother. Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 1988.

Evans, John K., War, Women, and Children in Ancient Rome. London: Routledge, 1991.

Grubbs, Judith Evans, Law and Family in Late Antiquity: The Emperor Constantine's Marriage Legislation. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995.

Hallett, Judith P., Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society: Women and the Elite Family. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Martin, Dale, "The Construction of the Family," Journal of Roman Studies 86 (1996) 40-60.

\*Mommsen, Theodor, Paul Krueger, and Alan Watson, edd., The Digest of Justinian. Vol. 2. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985.

Plutarch, The Life of Cicero. Ed. J.L. Moles. Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1988.

\*Rawson, Beryl, ed., The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986.

Rawson, Beryl, ed., Marriage, Divorce, and Children in Ancient Rome. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

Rawson, Beryl and Paul Weaver, edd., The Roman Family in Italy: Status, Sentiment, Space. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997.

\*Saller, Richard P., Patriarchy, Property, and Death in the Roman Family. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Treggiari, Susan, Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.

Wiedemann, Thomas E.J., Adults and Children in the Roman Empire. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989

### C. *The Christian Family in Antiquity*

\*Cooper, Kate, The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Elliott, J.K., ed. and trans., The Apocryphal New Testament.

Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.

Evans Grubbs, Judith, "Pagan and Christian Marriage," Journal of Early Christian Studies 2 (1994) 361-412.

Osiek, Carolyn and David L. Balch, Families in the New Testament World: Households and House Churches (Family, Religion, and Culture). Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

Moxnes, Halvor, Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor. London: Routledge, 1997.

#### D. *Hebrew*

Bendor, Shunya, The Social Structure of Ancient Israel: The Institution of the Family (Beit Ab) from the Settlement to the End of the Monarchy. Jerusalem: Simor, 1996.

Perdue, Leo G. et al., ed., Families in Ancient Israel. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

#### E. *Ancient and Mediaeval*

Burguière, André et alii, ed., A History of the Family. Vol. 1. Trans. Sarah Hanbury Tension et alii. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996.

Engels, Friedrich, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Edited by Eleanor B. Leacock. New York: International Publishers, 1942 (repr. 1972).

Engels, Friedrich, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Edited by Michèle Barrett. Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986.

Goody, Jack, The Oriental, the Ancient, and the Primitive: Systems of Marriage and the Family in the Pre-Industrial Societies of Eurasia. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Hawley, Richard and Barbara Levick, ed., Women in Antiquity: New Assessments. London: Routledge, 1995.

Itnyre, Cathy Jorgensen, ed., Medieval Family Roles: A Book of Essays. New York: Garland, 1996.

Kleijwegt, Marc, Ancient Youth: The Ambiguity of Youth and the Absence of Adolescence in Greco-Roman Society. Amsterdam: J.C. Greben, 1991.



Laiou, Angeliki E., ed., Consent and Coercion to Sex and Marriage in Ancient and Medieval Society. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.

\*Veyne, Paul, ed., A History of Private Life. Vol. 1: From Pagan Rome to Byzantium. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.

#### F. General

Casey, James, The History of the Family. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1989.

Hareven, Tamara and Andrejs Plakans, ed., Family History at the Crossroads: A Journal of Family History Reader. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.

Kertzer, David I. and Richard P. Saller, ed., The Family in Italy from Antiquity to the Present. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.

Mitterauer, Michael and Richard Sieder, The European Family: Patriarchy to Partnership from the Middle Ages to the Present. Trans. Karla Oosterveen and Manfred Hörziner. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Segalen, Martine, Historical Anthropology of the Family. Trans. J.C. Whitehouse and Sarah Matthews. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Tufte, Virginia and Barbara Myerhoff, ed., Changing Images of the Family. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.

#### Some Topics and Readings: A Preliminary View

1. The Primary Bonds: parents and children, husbands and wives, siblings.

Readings (Greek): Cox, chapter 3 ("Harmony and Conflict within the Household"), chapter 4 ("Sibling Relationships"); B. Strauss, chapter 3 ("Solidarity: Proud Fathers, Obedient Sons"), chapter 5 ("The Hour of the Son ca. 540-414 BC"); Slater, chapter 1 ("The Greek Mother-Son Relationship: Origins and Consequences"); Buxton, chapter \* ("Wives, Webs and Wiles") and chapter \* ("Fathers, Sons, Brothers"); Albinus; Kleijwegt, chapter 3 ("Adolescence and Ancient Society"), and chapter 4 ("Youth and Education in Ancient Society")

Readings (Roman) Evans, chapter 5 ("Parent and Child");

Wiedemann, chapter 1 ("The Child in the Classical City"), chapter 3 ("The Evidence of Pagan and Christian Letters"); Bannon, chapter 2 ("Between Brothers"); Mitterauer and Sieder, chapter 5 ("The Young in the Family"), Kertzer and Saller chapter 3 (Peter Garnsey, "Child Rearing in Ancient Italy")

2. The Household as a Unit: patriarchy; role of slaves; the extended family; the shape of the house.

Readings: Cox, chapter 5 ("What Was an Oikos"); Mitterauer and Sieder, chapter 2 ("The Myth of the Large Pre-Industrial Family"); Dixon

3. The Family and Society: relations among families; family and citizenship; private property and inheritance; law

Readings: Hawley and Levick, chapter 7 (Sarah B. Pomeroy, "Women's Identity and the Family in the Classical polis"); Kertzer and Saller, chapter 2 (Richard P. Saller, "Roman Heirship Strategies in Principle and in Practice"); Cox, chapter 2, "Town and Country, Marriage and Death"

4. Institutions: marriage; adoption; cult and religion (ancestors); death (funeral inscriptions);

Readings: Hawley and Levick, chapter 6 (Lin Foxhall, "Women's Ritual and Men's Work in Ancient Athens"); Kertzer and Saller, chapter 4 (Brent Shaw, "The Cultural Meaning of Death: Age and Gender in the Roman Family"); Kertzer and Saller, chapter 5 (Susan Treggiari, "Ideals and Practicalities in Matchmaking in Ancient Rome"); Kertzer and Saller, chapter 7 (Mireille Corbier, "Constructing Kinship in Rome: Marriage and Divorce, Filiation and Adoption"); Rubinstein, chapter 4 ("Why Did Athenians Adopt?"); Cohn-Haft, Louis, "Divorce in Classical Athens," Journal of Hellenic Studies 115 (1995) 1-14 (nine attested cases of divorce; conclusion is that divorce is infrequent and the family stable); Ogden, introduction (pp. 1-28), chapter 3 ("the Surveillance of Women (2))

5. Tensions in the Family: incest; honor and shame; concubinage; adultery; violence

Readings: Kertzer and Saller, chapter 6 (David Cohen, "The Augustan Law on Adultery: The Social and Cultural Context");

6. Comparative history of family.

Readings: Kertzer and Saller, chapter 18 (Caroline B. Brettell, "Property, Kinship, and Gender: A Mediterranean Perspective")

## The Family in the Classical World

Classics 21 (Sec. 1)  
MWF 1:00 p.m.

Fall 1998  
D. Konstan

### First Paper

Length: Five pages (double spaced; approx. 1,250 words)  
Due: Wednesday 14 October

General Instructions: Choose and cite at least THREE SPECIFIC passages from different works by Greek authors, plus ONE from a modern scholar, to illustrate your argument. State your thesis clearly at the beginning of your paper: there must be an argument, not just a set of generalities -- be specific. Provide a TITLE for your paper, and NUMBER and STAPLE the pages. Remember that SPELLING counts!

Suggested topics.

1. FAMILY ROLES. What was it like to be a child, spouse, parent, or sibling in a Greek family (choose one category -- not all)? In discussing this topic, be careful to assess the nature of the sources you cite -- does a passage come from a tragedy, a philosophical work, a comedy? How does this affect the information provided? Does the ancient Greek family differ from the modern in regard to the roles of parents, children, or spouses? From all modern families, or just some?

Suggested readings (you needn't consult ALL of these): Cox, chapter 3 ("Harmony and Conflict within the Household), chapter 4 ("Sibling Relationships"); B. Strauss, chapter 3 ("Solidarity: Proud Fathers, Obedient Sons"), chapter 5 ("The Hour of the Son ca. 540-414 BC"); Slater, chapter 1 ("The Greek Mother-Son Relationship: Origins and Consequences"); Buxton ("Wives, Webs and Wiles") and ("Fathers, Sons, Brothers"); Albin.

2. THE FAMILY AND PROPERTY. What is the role of property in constituting the ancient Greek household? Is it similar to the function of property today, or different? Does the importance of landed or other forms of property (animals, slaves) affect the nature of family relations? Again, be clear about the nature of the sources you cite.

Suggested readings: Cox, chapter 5 ("What Was an Oikos"); Hawley and Levick, chapter 7 (Sarah B. Pomeroy, "Women's Identity and the Family in the Classical polis"); Cox, chapter 2, "Town and Country, Marriage and Death"; Hawley and Levick, chapter 6 (Lin Foxhall, "Women's Ritual and Men's Work in Ancient Athens"; Kertzer and Saller, chapter 18 (Caroline B. Brettell, "Property,

Kinship, and Gender: A Mediterranean Perspective").

3. THE EVOLUTION OF THE FAMILY. Did the Greek family change over time, or did it remain the same? Compare the representation of the family in the archaic period (Homer and Semonides), the fifth century (tragedy and Aristophanes), and the fourth century (Xenophon, Aristotle, and Menander), to determine whether and how it evolved as an institution. Does the authority of the father seem to change? Are wives accorded more or less responsibility and independence in the different periods? How are old people treated? Be sure to take into account the different nature of the sources we have (e.g., epic poetry, tragedy, comedy, philosophical essay, etc.).

Suggested readings: Kleijwegt, chapter 3 ("Adolescence and Ancient Society"), and chapter 4 ("Youth and Education in Ancient Society"); Mitterauer and Sieder, chapter 2 ("The Myth of the Large Pre-Industrial Family"); Finley ch. 4; Lacey ch. 2.

Note: The above topics and questions are suggestions only. It is up to you to define the subject of your paper and the kinds of questions you wish to pose and answer.

### **The Family in the Classical World**

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#### Second Paper

Length: Eight pages (**double spaced**; approx. 2000 words) maximum.  
Due: Monday 16 November

General Instructions: Choose and cite at least FOUR SPECIFIC passages from different works by Greek and Roman authors (at least two from readings since the last paper was due), plus TWO from modern scholars, to illustrate your argument. State your thesis clearly at the beginning of your paper: there must be an argument, not just a set of generalities -- be specific. Provide a TITLE for your paper, and NUMBER and STAPLE the pages. Remember that SPELLING counts! **Special hint:** re-read your first version, and edit for style.

Suggested topics.

1. THE FATHER IN GREECE AND ROME. The Roman father had exceptional power over his offspring, who did not achieve legal

independence until the father either died or liberated them. In the Greek family, male children became citizens with full rights upon turning eighteen. Using the Greek orators and Plutarch on the one side (and other writers you may choose), and Roman comedies and the letters of Cicero on the other (as well as other materials, which are optional), indicate whether you detect a difference in the way the father's authority is represented. Are daughters and sons treated in the same manner? Do sons fear, love, or respect their fathers more in one context than another?

Be sure to take genre into account: you may discover, for example, that in comedy generally (Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus and Terence) fathers are more loving (or are more harsh), while in forensic oratory (Demosthenes, Lysias, Isaeus) they seem the opposite; or it may be that in ethical treatises (Plutarch, Xenophon) an ideal rather than a real situation is imagined. Tragedy too may offer a point of contrast, or again, epic poetry; the letters of Cicero are among our very few truly private documents from antiquity; take that fact into account as well.

2. LOVE IN THE FAMILY. It has been claimed that the ancient family, unlike the modern, depended on ties of obligation more than on the sentimental bond of love. On the basis of your readings, and with particular reference to the Greek orators, Plutarch, Roman comedy, and the letters of Cicero (as well as any other writers you may choose), discuss whether this claim seems true or false. You may discuss the family in general, or pick a particular relationship, such as that between husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, etc. Once again, remember that genre counts, as does historical epoch. For example, does Plutarch differ from Xenophon in his view of marriage -- both of these are Greek writers, but are separated by five centuries. How do Roman comedies compare to Greek comedies -- recall that Plautus and Terence modelled their plays on the Menandrian type of comedy, though they wrote about a century later; but Aristophanes wrote a different type of comedy, a century before Menander (both were Athenians). Do the stories in comedy confirm or contradict the idealizing image of marriage or other familial relations we see in the ethical treatises? Do Cicero's letters give the same picture, or a different one, from that we find in the Greek orators?

3. ECONOMIC STRATEGIES IN THE FAMILY. Some scholars have emphasized the importance of economic considerations in marriage, numbers of children raised, relations between close kin such as brothers, etc. How are these strategies reflected in the Greek orators, Greek and Roman comedy (Menander, Plautus, Terence), Greek ethical treatises (Plutarch, Xenophon), Cicero's letters, and other documents we have read? Are there appreciable differences in the way material interests are reflected in Greek vs. Roman sources? Does family economics matter more (or less)

in comedy as compared to idealizing or philosophical texts, or again, as opposed to the forensic strategies in the Greek orators (Demosthenes, Lysias, Isaeus)? You may consider (for example) the role of widows or orphaned daughters, ways of marrying sisters and daughters, techniques for keeping property within the family, etc. You may also refer to Greek epic, tragedy, or other genres.

Suggested readings (you needn't consult ALL of these): relevant chapters in Cox, B. Strauss, Buxton, Evans, Wiedemann, Mitterauer and Sieder, Kertzer and Saller, Bradley, Hallett, Saller, Rawson, Dixon, Bradley; many other books on the reserve list may be helpful.

**Note:** The most important thing is to define your topic clearly. As you read, reflect on how patterns of authority, love, or economic considerations operate in the text. As similarities or differences occur to you, write them down. You need not argue an extreme case: the family in comedy may be generally similar to that represented in the orators or in Plutarch, but may differ in some particular way, or in degree. Write a draft of your paper, let it sit for a day or two and then rewrite it.

### **The Family in the Classical World**

Classics 21 (Sec. 1)  
MWF 1:00 p.m.

Fall 1998  
D. Konstan

#### Final Paper

Length: Ten pages (**double spaced**; approx. 2500 words) maximum.  
Due: Tuesday 15 December

General Instructions: Choose and cite at least FOUR SPECIFIC passages from different works by Greek and Roman authors (at least two from readings since the last paper was due), plus TWO from modern scholars, to illustrate your argument. State your thesis clearly at the beginning of your paper: there must be an argument, not just a set of generalities -- be specific. Provide a TITLE for your paper, and NUMBER and STAPLE the pages. Remember that SPELLING counts! **Special hint:** re-read your first version, and edit for style.

Suggested topics.

1. THE FAMILY ROMANCE. The ancient Greek novels, which date to the second century A.D., portray an intense, mutual bond between husband and wife that survives all blows of fortune and attempts by outsiders to disrupt it. Some scholars have argued that the conception of love and marriage in the novels is unique, and

represents a change from earlier ideals, whether Greek or Roman.

Is this so? Compare the family as represented in the Greek novels with evidence of traditional Greek and Roman views (e.g., in the works of Plutarch, or in Virgil's Aeneid and the sources collected by Gardner and Wiedemann). You may also wish to compare or contrast the novels with the vision of marriage in the apocryphal acts of the apostles.

2. CHRISTIANITY AND THE FAMILY. The apocryphal acts of the apostles place a high value on sexual continence. To this extent, at least, they may be seen as critical of the traditional ideal of the family, which emphasizes reproduction and the continuation of the family property. Is this true, or does the ideal of the Christian family, as represented in the acts, in fact preserve many of the virtues of the classical or pagan family system? Note that the Institutes compiled under the Christian emperor Justinian seem to reproduce, in general, the authority structure of the traditional Roman family (but do they?). Do the acts subvert the power of the father and the roles of family members, or do they rather maintain them in a Christian guise and setting?

3. AUTHORITY IN THE FAMILY. We know that the father held extraordinary power in the Roman family; the Institutes states this explicitly, and there is much other evidence for it. But in every authority structure, there are ways in which those who are subordinate preserve zones of their own autonomy -- think of how sons often get away with murder in Roman comedy, for example. To what extent are paternal control and power really total in the Roman family, and to what extent are they limited by convention, interpersonal affection, desire to oblige, economic realities, etc.? Are there notable differences between the Greek and Roman families in this regard?

4. SUBVERSION OF THE FAMILY. Not all our texts reveal the same degree of commitment to family values. One thinks at once of the defiant attitude concerning extra-marital or non-marital love represented by the elegiac poets, such as Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid; or else, the stories of adultery that are recorded by Apuleius in the Golden Ass. There are indications of such subversive behavior in other texts as well, whether in Suetonius' life of Augustus, in which the highly moral emperor stands accused of some extravagant behavior; in Juvenal's satire, in which two men are imagined as formally marrying one another; or in certain passages in Roman comedy, in which older men defend the pleasures of bachelorhood. You will think of other examples that cast doubt on the monolithic image of the stern, virtuous Greek and Roman family, and where the family serves as a foil more than as an ideal. How does the apparent counter-current in Roman values affect our conception of the Roman family? Can we

produce a more complex image of it -- more akin, perhaps, to the contested status of the family in modern US society?

The most important thing is to define your topic clearly. As you read, reflect on how the texts generate images of romantic love, Christian abstinence, paternal authority or counter-cultural eroticism. As points occur to you, write them down. You need not argue an extreme case: Christian love may not be diametrically opposed to pagan; Propertius' relations with his mistress may be compatible with the image of the ideal matron and wife that he evokes in the last of his elegies. Above all, write a draft of your paper, let it sit for a day or two and then **rewrite** it.