

Formal education and socialization in virtue

As soon as women turn fourteen, they are called “ladies” (κυρίαί) by men. Therefore, when they see that there is nothing else for them but sharing a bed with men, they start to adorn themselves and in this they place all their hopes. It is right then to be intent on making them perceive that they are valued for nothing other than decorous appearance and modesty.¹

With confident precision, Epictetus invokes a moment that marks the transition between childhood and adolescence for girls. In choosing fourteen, the philosopher concurs with medical and popular opinion that associated this age with the physical maturation for both sexes,² but he is more interested in the social or behavioral changes that accompany puberty. Suddenly, girls are on the brink of womanhood, and they begin to understand the inevitability of their future role as wives.

As Epictetus suggests, girls needed to be instructed in norms of feminine behavior. But what were these norms? Setting the virtue of modesty against the dubious virtue of sexual desirability, Epictetus hints at the necessity of teaching girls that protecting their virginity was their most important task at an age when sexual activity was possible but not permitted. Taking Epictetus’ commentary as starting point, this chapter investigates means of training in modesty, both through explicit instruction and through less

¹ Epict. *Ench.* 40: αἱ γυναῖκες εὐθύς ἀπὸ τεσσαρεσκαίδεκα ἐτῶν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνδρῶν κυρίαί καλοῦνται. τοιγαροῦν ὀρώσασαι, ὅτι ἄλλο μὲν οὐδὲν αὐταῖς πρόσεστι, μόνον δὲ συγκοιμῶνται τοῖς ἀνδράσι, ἀρχονται καλλωπιζέσθαι καὶ ἐν τούτῳ πάσας ἔχειν τὰς ἐλπίδας. προσέχειν οὖν ἄξιον, ἵνα αἰσθῶνται, διότι ἐπ’ οὐδενὶ ἄλλῳ τιμῶνται ἢ τῷ κόσμῳ φαίνεσθαι καὶ αἰδήμονες.

² Sor. *Gyn.* 1.20 (CMG 4, 13–14 Ilberg) expects menarche around the fourteenth year; to these statements can be compared Macrobius. *In somn.* 1.6.71, *post annos autem bis septem ipsa aetatis necessitate pubescit. tunc enim moveri incipit vis generationis in masculis et purgatio feminarum* (“After fourteen years, the [child] becomes pubescent owing to the very requirement of the age. Then the ability to procreate begins to appear in males and menstruation in females”). Hadrian cited fourteen as the age of female puberty, according to Ulp. *D.* 34.1.14.1. For a collection of sources reflecting ancient views of puberty, see Eyben (1972) as well as Armisen-Marchetti (2001) 155 n.165. The medical perspective on female adolescence will be addressed in Chapter 3.

formal influences on behavior encountered in the course of upbringing. The first part of the chapter focuses on the nature of scholastic instruction for girls of marriageable age and asks how education at this age served the purpose of shaping girls into modest proto-wives. As we will see, Roman writers generally agree that too much scholarly accomplishment for girls, or the wrong kind, could disrupt the transition to marriage.

Given the ambivalence about the compatibility of education and female virtue, it was important that other, less formal features of a girl's upbringing offered guidance about acceptable behavior. The second part of the chapter focuses on these less formal socializing influences in the household and community, including female role models and traditional moralizing stories about virtuous girlhood. Analyzing sources on formal education together with these sources on informal socialization contributes to an understanding of what was particularly Roman about the way that girls were trained in modesty and decorous behavior. Both scholastic and non-scholastic evidence, for example, present an image of the ideal unmarried girl as displaying both the feminine virtue of chastity and the masculine virtue of courage. Courage is invoked in a specialized way, to advance the message recommended by Epictetus: girls must know the value of their modesty and be prepared to defend it.

The examination of girls' socialization in this chapter brings together two related areas of scholarship, each of which has received much attention in recent years: the Roman educational system and the Roman moral landscape. In taking an interest in virtues such as chastity and courage, I am guided by recent studies of Roman morality, which have illuminated the ways in which authors took an interest in promoting or questioning norms of behavior for both men and women. Several recent studies have focused on single words describing a moral concept, such as sexual virtue (*pudicitia*) or shame (*pudor*) or courage (*andreia*), and their treatment across genres; these are helpful for considering the promotion of virtue for girls.³ My analysis has also benefited from recent studies that have treated the central role in Roman culture of exemplary stories, which transmitted messages about behavior worthy of imitation.⁴ The success of these previous lines of inquiry attests to the advantage of considering a variety of sources in a study of girls' socialization. It is by combining sources that we see an emphasis on girls' inculcation in courage, for example, that seems

³ *Pudicitia* is the subject of Langlands (2006); *pudor* of Kaster (2005) 28–65; and *andreia* of Rosen and Sluiter (2003).

⁴ Roller (2004).

influenced by the model of socialization for boys, which encouraged sons to emulate fathers. Courageous and talented daughters, like sons, could be praised for following their fathers' virtuous example. Through the cultural promotion of feminine chastity tinged with courage, and simultaneous criticism of overly bold incursion into the male domain of education, Roman girls were informed about their opportunities and limitations.

READING AND WRITING

Epictetus' directive that when girls reach fourteen they must be made to perceive that their worth lies in proper appearance and modesty omits mention of the method by which girls are to be instructed in virtue. One Roman way of making children into virtuous adults was scholastic, as the curriculum in language, literature, and philosophy also taught moral precepts. The educational system, particularly rhetorical training, was preoccupied with the development of masculine virtue; as male teenagers performed school exercises in public speaking, they were receiving strong messages about Roman values, from which they might learn how to realize ambitions in adult professional and private life.⁵ In Quintilian's well-known formulation, rhetorical education produced *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, "a good man skilled in speaking," whose persuasive speech enabled capable leadership.⁶ One goal of the most popular exercise in the rhetorical schools, the *controversia*, or mock-forensic speech, was to instill in the mind of the young male a set of virtues associated with masculinity, including reason and self-control, that would serve him well not only in his future commercial and political endeavors but also in his future role in the household as *paterfamilias*.⁷

A grammatical and rhetorical education offered boys an opportunity, then, to learn about the norms and attitudes of the world in which they would be expected to operate as adults. Developing a familiarity with the social landscape was equally important for girls. Just as the ideal young Roman male cultivated not only eloquence, but also the reason and self-control to fortify it, the ideal young Roman female took care not only of her appearance, but also of her modesty and decorum, which ensured that her beauty remained uncorrupted. In the development of girls' social

⁵ See Morgan (2011) and (1998) 227–28 on virtue and speaking skills; Atherton (1998) 214–25 on virtue instilled in grammatical training; and Kaster (2001) on declamation and socialization of future *paterfamilias*.

⁶ Quint. *Inst.* 1 pr. 9–13 notes that the *vir bonus* is just, brave, self-controlled, and wise.

⁷ Kaster (2001) 328–35.

sensibility, however, education occupied an uncertain place. The traditional curriculum was designed to instill virtues that would be useful for public life, but the virtues most highly esteemed in girls and women were those exercised in the private sphere.⁸

The various ways that Roman authors attempt to resolve this contradiction, as they struggle to reconcile academic study with feminine virtue, reveal that there was no monolithic view of what education should do for girls.⁹ The fact that basic features of the educational process for girls remain frustratingly obscure, such as whether instruction took place at home or in a semi-public classroom setting, reflects their lack of standardization.¹⁰ What evidence there is suggests that girls' school attendance was limited to the elementary level.¹¹ *Paedagogi* (slave tutors) or *didaskaloi* (teachers) were sometimes assigned to girls of well-to-do families, and this education likely took place as individual tutoring in the home. Nonetheless, further conclusions about the arrangement – for example, that individual tutoring was motivated by concerns about threats to girls' modesty in a coeducational classroom – rapidly become speculative.¹²

There are some signs that the Romans attempted to align study with feminine virtue. Glimpses of schoolgirl culture, if it can be called that, in Rome provided by Latin poets suggest that what was expected for girls was a controlled environment in which the curriculum was limited to material that would not damage morals. Martial derides a fellow poet's compositions as so unobjectionable that "[they] ought to be read by boys and maidens" (*a pueris debent virginibusque legi*).¹³ Epic and tragic poetry, which Martial suggests for the "grown girl" (*grandis virgo*), were the genres deemed useful for cultivating a sense of proper conduct.¹⁴ Composed from the perspective of poet rather than parent, Martial's portrayal of respectable girls' reading as dull in comparison to erotic poetry may offer only a

⁸ On the tension between what formal education provided and the virtues that families valued in daughters, see Vössing (2004) 126–40.

⁹ Rawson (2003) 197: "But a broad liberal education was an integral part of upper-class Roman social and cultural life, in which women participated actively."

¹⁰ Hemelrijk (1999) 21–23, on girls' premarital education. She notes that girls "might attend school at the elementary, and, less frequently, at the grammar level, possibly continuing school until puberty."

¹¹ Vössing (2004) 126–40. Martial mentions the *ludi magister*, the teacher of reading and writing at the primary level of education, as *invisum pueris virginibusque* (9.68.2).

¹² Inscriptions from Rome mention *paedagogi* for girls: *CIL* 6.2210 (= *ILS* 4999), *CIL* 6.6327, *CIL* 6.6330, and *CIL* 6.33787 (= *ILS* 1828).

¹³ Mart. 3.69.8. By contrast, *nequam iuvenes facilesque puellae* ("idle youths and easy girls") can read Martial's racy epigrams (3.69.5).

¹⁴ Mart. 8.3.13–16; for *grandis* describing a girl of marriageable age, see Schöffel (2002) 114.

partial view of attitudes held by families, who may have understood the reading of epic and tragic poetry as encouraging the refinement of taste and literary appreciation.¹⁵ Martial, nonetheless, suggests a more widely held belief that girls, like their male counterparts, could absorb values from reading material. Intellectually, girls were capable of understanding literature; socially, however, it was inadvisable to expose them to it in its lower registers.

One way of harmonizing literate education and virtue training was to defend the female intellect as well suited for the lofty pursuit of philosophy, as long as this training focused on developing virtues that could be put into practice in the proper way. One defender of the female intellect who was roughly contemporary with Martial, Musonius Rufus, promotes philosophical training for daughters partly out of an egalitarian idea that girls have the same capacity for intellectual and ethical development as boys, but partly out of a conservative interest in the ability of philosophy to make girls and women better able to perform in their roles as wives and mothers.¹⁶

Musonius ponders the links between formal education and socialization in *On Why Daughters Should Receive the Same Education as Sons*.¹⁷ Though not addressed to a specific audience, the treatise appears to be written for elite fathers, on whom he urges moral training for daughters that is the same as that for sons, “straight from infancy.”¹⁸ In confronting the mismatch between the active masculine virtue traditionally inspired by formal education and passive feminine virtue, Musonius argues that they are in fact compatible. Among the four Stoic virtues he lists as foundational for development of good moral character – reason (*phronesis*), self-control (*sophrosyne*), justice (*dikaiosyne*), and courage (*andreia*) – the most heavily promoted is the premier male virtue of *andreia*, which, unusually, Musonius argues is connected to the feminine virtue of chastity (*aidos*).¹⁹ A girl trained in *andreia* through the study of philosophy will be strengthened so

¹⁵ On Martial as sensitive to the “paradoxes and tensions of urban experience,” including the competitive and adversarial world of literary composition at Rome, see Fitzgerald (2007) 5.

¹⁶ Engel (2000).

¹⁷ Musonius lived roughly 30–100 CE. His student Lucius, who took notes from lectures, published this treatise and, it seems, the twenty others whose fragments are preserved by Stobaeus. See Lutz (1947) 6–8.

¹⁸ Muson. 4.17.22 καὶ ἀρξαμένους ἀπὸ νηπίων.

¹⁹ McInerney (2003) 327 observes that “if Musonius were interested in nothing more than a traditional conception of *aidos* it was hardly necessary to make the further claim that women could possess *andreia*.”

that she can remain chaste in the face of a sexual threat and defend her future children from danger:

Perhaps someone might say that *andreia* is a concern only for men. But this is not so. For a woman too, or at least the best woman, must act in a manly fashion and must be free from cowardice, so that she may not be bowed by affliction or fear. Otherwise, how could a woman still retain self-control, if someone by making threats or using force could compel her to put up with something shameful. Furthermore, women must be able to defend themselves, unless indeed, by Zeus, they should appear worse than hens and other female birds, which fight with creatures much larger than themselves on behalf of their chicks.²⁰

Here the educated female is envisioned as acting in a manly fashion but in a way that is conventionally feminine. With the image of the sexually desirable woman who remains uncorrupted despite the unwelcome advances of men, one is reminded of Epictetus' advice on socializing teenagers who are beginning to attend to their looks and modesty. The best woman employs her training in philosophy not in an intellectual context, nor in pursuit of personal pleasure, but in her social roles, where she protects her identity as virginal daughter, chaste wife, or protective mother.²¹ In contrast to intensive solitary study, the study Musonius advocates serves to strengthen a girl's commitment to people beyond herself. The benefits of this education will radiate out from the individual to family and society through a woman's protection of her marriage and offspring. In a separate treatise on marriage, Musonius presents a strong marriage not simply as private relationship benefiting the couple, but as a public good, with spousal partnership supporting the wider community.²² *On Why Daughters* prescribes the virtue training for girls that will support such a partnership. That Musonius takes a view of marriage as the cornerstone of society is no surprise, but he also offers a message that aimed to be useful in the small, introverted world of elite matchmaking. Through a modicum of philosophical education, daughters could be shaped into ideal marriage prospects.

²⁰ Muson. 4.15.4–11: τὴν ἀνδρείαν φαίη τις ἂν ἴσως μόνοις προσήκειν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν. ἔχει δὲ οὐδὲ τοῦτο ταύτη. δεῖ γὰρ ἀνδρίζεσθαι καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα (καὶ) καθαρεύειν δειλίας τὴν γε ἀρίστην, ὡς μήθ' ὑπὸ πόνου μήθ' ὑπὸ φόβου κάμπτεσθαι· εἰ δὲ μή, πῶς ἔτι σωφρονήσει, ἔάν τις ἢ φοβῶν ἢ προσάγων πόνους βιάσασθαι δύνηται αὐτὴν ὑπομῆναι (τι) τῶν αἰσχυρῶν. δεῖ δὲ δὴ καὶ ἀμυντικῶς ἔχειν τὰς γυναῖκας, εἰ μὴ νῆ Δία φαίνεσθαι μέλλουσι κακίους ἀλεκτορίδων καὶ ἄλλων ὀρνίθων θηλειῶν, αἱ πολὺ μείζοσι ζῴοις ἑαυτῶν ὑπὲρ τῶν νεοττῶν διαμάχονται.

²¹ Whitmarsh (2001) 112–13.

²² For discussion of this treatise, *Is Marriage an Impediment to Philosophy?*, see Milnor (2005) 246–53.

Within these sentences, then, Musonius seems to resolve the contradiction between academic study and feminine virtue, with *andreia* emerging as a highly marketable virtue for brides-to-be. Putting a twist on this idea, however, he goes on to cite those quintessentially masculine women, the Amazons, and the capacity of women to display courage in armed combat: “The race of Amazons,” he notes, “because they subdued many peoples with their arms, proved that women too have a share in martial valor. If then something is lacking for other women in this regard, it comes from lack of practice, rather than a shortcoming of nature.”²³ This statement has puzzled modern scholars, who note, first, that this kind of aggressive *andreia* would seem poised to overturn the household and even the social order, and second, that Musonius declines to mention the wartime abilities of women in *That Women Too Should Do Philosophy*, a companion piece to *On Why Daughters* that appears to direct its message to husbands.²⁴ Musonius seems to direct the praise of warrior women particularly to fathers of daughters on the brink of marriage, but he presents the less than exemplary image of the never-married, violent Amazon. What would such an audience take away from this mixed message about courage?

This question may be easier to answer when we consider that Musonius’ text is not the only imperial source to draw a link between the Amazons and young daughters. Several funerary statues and reliefs created by affluent freedman families in the first and second centuries CE depict girls who died before marriage in the image of Amazonian Diana, with emphasis on chastity and courage. One example, a second-century monument from Rome, erected for Aelia Procula by her ex-slave parents,²⁵ shows a preadolescent girl, possibly eight to ten years old, in the pose of huntress, holding a bow as a dog sprints at her side. The dedicatory inscription says that the monument is “dedicated to Diana and to the memory of Aelia Procula,” confirming the deliberate link with Diana.²⁶ At the same time, her bared right breast links Aelia with the Amazons.

²³ Muson. 4.15.15–19: ὅτι δὲ καὶ ἀλκῆς τῆς δι’ ὅπλων μέτεστιν αὐταῖς, ἐδήλωσε τὸ Ἀμαζόνων γένος ἔθνη πολλὰ δι’ ὅπλων καταστρεψάμενον· ὥστ’ εἴ τι ἐνδεῖ πρὸς τοῦτο ταῖς ἄλλαις γυναιξίν. ἀνασκησία μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ μὴ πεφυκέναι.

²⁴ Nussbaum (2002) 296.

²⁵ D’Ambra (2008) 172 dates the piece to 140 CE, both for stylistic reasons and because Aelia Procula’s father, Asclepiacus, appears to have been a freedman of Hadrian. Aelia’s mother, Ulpia Priscilla, may have been descended from a freedman of Trajan.

²⁶ *CIL* 6.10958 (= *ILS* 8065): *sacrum Deanae et memoriae Aeliae Proculae*. See Feraudi-Gruénais (2003) no. 123 and Wrede (1981) 73 with image on 190 for other girls represented as Diana in imperial funerary monuments.

Another funerary altar, that of Aelia Tyche, also created by a freedmen family in second-century Rome, displays a girl in a very similar pose. Aelia's age is not given in the inscription that dedicates the monument from her parents and sister "to most the dutiful daughter and best sister," although she appears to be ten to fourteen years old.²⁷ The family depictions of Aelia Procula and Aelia Tyche in Amazonian mode show a striking resemblance to the figure carved in relief on a mid-second-century monument dedicated by Aebutia Amerina to *Diana victrix*.²⁸

Taken together, these monuments demonstrate that some freedmen in Italy were not afraid to associate their daughters with aggression along with innocence. The decision by commemorators to use the Amazons to represent girlhood, however, is dictated by the fact that a deceased girl is forever virginal. This focus on virginity means that these monuments express something different from what Musonius promotes. Although he clearly assumes that sexual innocence will define a daughter's life before marriage, the philosopher largely leaves aside the premarital stage of life to discuss marriage as the useful time for implementation of skills learned in virtue training. His paragon of Amazonian virtue is the married woman with children who loyally defends the household. Despite the attributes that mark these sources as distinctive from each, however, the way in which funerary commemoration and a Stoic treatise partake in common assumptions about feminine virtue should not be overlooked.

References to the Amazons, moreover, could not entirely sidestep their troubling association with physical, and especially sexual, aggression.²⁹ Perhaps for this reason, Musonius declines to develop the comparison between girls and the Amazons and quickly asserts that females are physically weaker than males. As we will see in Chapter 3, this assertion echoes the descriptions of women's bodies found in Roman gynecological treatises, where fragility results from the depleting effects of menstruation, pregnancy, and childbearing. Musonius, for his part, understands the weaker bodies of women as the cause of their assignment to light domestic tasks rather than to the heavy labor of the outdoors.³⁰ Women are not intellectually weaker than men, and in the end, philosophy is a good thing

²⁷ *CIL* 6.6826: *filiae piissimae . . . sorori optimae*. ²⁸ D'Ambra (2008) 175.

²⁹ It is no coincidence that Ovid invokes, even celebrates, the Amazons as he begins to offer advice to women in *Ars am.* 3. See also Plut. *Thes.* 27 on Theseus' defeat of the Amazons; Isoc. *Paneg.* 68–70, on the Amazons as threat to Greece; Lys. 2.4–6. See the discussion of McInerney (2003) 324.

³⁰ Muson. 4.16.19–17.1 and 17.4–7: φημι δὲ ὅτι οὐσης ἐν τῷ γένει (τῷ) ἀνθρωπίνῳ τῆς μὲν ἰσχυροτέρας φύσεως τῆς τῶν ἀρρένων, τῆς δ' ἀσθενεστέρας τῆς τῶν θηλειῶν . . . διὰ τοῦτο τολασία μὲν ταῖς γυναιξὶ μᾶλλον πρέπει ἢ ἥτερ ἀνδράσιν, ὥσπερ (καὶ) οἰκουρία· γυμναστική δὲ ἀνδράσι μᾶλλον ἢ γυναιξίν, ὥσπερ καὶ θυραυλία.

for them to study because it will enable them to work diligently within the confines of the home.

Moreover, despite his conservative inclination to promote feminine virtue within the domestic sphere, it is important to recognize the extent to which Musonius is progressive when compared to contemporary Stoic philosophers who wrote about female education. The central place given to girls' intellectual ability in *On Why Daughters*, and its potential for shaping them into chaste and courageous figures, is different from its treatment by Epictetus, for instance. Epictetus, who was a student of Musonius, treats philosophy as a stage of education exclusive to young men. While girls appear once in his *Discourses* as part of description of the wrong sort of teacher whom parents ought to avoid, girls are omitted from the rest of the text, suggesting they are not seen as relevant to Epictetus' philosophical project.³¹ Seneca the Younger, a contemporary of Musonius, has more to say on the issue of female education, as women's studies are brought front and center by his writing to his own educated mother, Helvia. Seneca does express regret that Helvia was not allowed by his father to be instructed in philosophy; he admires her for teaching herself.³² Yet Seneca does not proceed from this statement about Helvia to advocate a curriculum in philosophy for girls or women. In fact, as we will see below, Seneca seems to endorse a system of instruction in which virtue is passed down to daughters primarily within the household by female role models.

Viewing the perspectives of Epictetus and Seneca alongside that of Musonius exposes the lack of consensus even among early imperial philosophers and their students on the topic of girls' education. The more sources that are taken together, in fact, the clearer it becomes that the figure of the educated adolescent girl perplexed Roman writers. Instances where a writer approves of a girl's ability to read and write literature, but also struggles to present the combination of feminine and masculine qualities she embodied, contribute to the impression that Roman thinkers threw up their hands when confronted with the task of praising daughters for more than silent chastity.

One way around this challenge, and one that is particularly illuminating for its correspondence for models of socialization for boys, was to praise a girl's resemblance to her father, as Pliny the Younger does in a letter describing the daughter of Fundanus, Minicia Marcella, who died on the brink of marriage when she "had not yet turned fourteen."³³ Minicia, he

³¹ Arr. *Epict.* 4.11.35.

³² Sen. *Helv.* 17.3–5; on this text see Hemelrijk (1999) 41, 77, and 241 n.92.

³³ Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.2: *nondum annos quattuordecim impleverat*. On Minicia's age, see the discussion below and Bodel (1995).

notes, faced her illness “with a strength of spirit” that recalls the courage promoted by Musonius Rufus.³⁴ With the mention of Minicia’s forbearance in illness and devotion to studies comes the opportunity for Pliny to expand on this theme and to accentuate that Minicia embodies aspects of virtuous masculinity as well as femininity. Minicia may or may not have progressed in her studies to the point of studying philosophy, but her father Fundanus, a student of Musonius Rufus, is praised as learned and wise. Fundanus is praised for having brought up a daughter who mirrored his best qualities. “He has lost a daughter,” Pliny laments, “who resembled him no less in habits than in appearance and who imitated her father in everything with a wondrous similarity.”³⁵

With a focus on conduct and physical features, Pliny finds a satisfyingly general way to praise the similarity between daughter and father. To go beyond this, to praise Minicia for being well-spoken like her father, might have made her sound too much like the young Hortensia, daughter of the late Republican senator Hortensius. Hortensia, it is true, is admired by the moralizing writer Valerius Maximus for successfully “having reproduced her father’s eloquence” in a public speech, but the primary reason Hortensia is admired is not because she speaks publicly but because the aim of her speech is to reassert the proper place of women in the private sphere.³⁶ Minicia, in turn, is admired for remaining in that sphere, and like the girls and women of Musonius’ prescriptions, her masculine qualities cause no conflict with her feminine behavior.

Pliny’s interest in describing Minicia largely through her relationship to her father comes out even in the way she is named. He refers to her only as “the daughter of our Fundanus,” and the name Minicia is known only from her epitaph, which survives separately.³⁷ Minicia is eulogized not as a girl for whom education played a vital role in shaping character but as a virtuous girl on the brink of womanhood tragically taken from her father. Even in the description of Minicia’s youthful femininity, Pliny keeps the focus on Fundanus and his friends, with the result that description and praise of Minicia become as much about her father as about her. In addition to reading devotedly and playing sparingly, Minicia is a vision

³⁴ Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.4: *vigore animi*.

³⁵ Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.9: *amisit enim filiam, quae non minus mores eius quam os vultumque referebat, totumque patrem mira similitudine exscriperat*.

³⁶ Val. Max. 8.3.3: *repraesentata patris facundia*. The story of Hortensia is repeated in Quint. *Inst.* 1.1.6 and App. *B. Civ.* 32–33.

³⁷ Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.1: *Fundani nostri filia*. Text of the inscription is given below.

of chastity as she clings to the neck of her father and his friends “both affectionately and modestly.”³⁸

Nowhere is this clearer than in Pliny’s invocation of the traditional literary motif of the wedding-turned-funeral. Having invited guests to the wedding, the grieving Fundanus is forced to replace the pearls and garments prepared for Minicia’s ceremony with unguents for the funeral.³⁹ While the description of Minicia movingly conveys a father’s grief, it also has the effect of placing a daughter within a marital process that is controlled by her father. Her refinement and education may have been a point of pride for Fundanus, but his sights were set on her wedding day. It is possible that even the age of Minicia given by Pliny, almost fourteen, is a rough figure meant to highlight her status as maturing and marriageable, which conforms to the Greco-Roman tradition of marking life-stages by hebdomads.⁴⁰ Minicia’s inscribed epitaph, meanwhile, lists her age as nearly thirteen.⁴¹ The letter attempts to impress upon the reader Minicia’s age and life-stage with a broad stroke, rather than with fine detail or even accuracy.

For all of his interest in accentuating Minicia’s resemblance to her father, then, Pliny is just as interested in communicating a message about Minicia as the wife and mother she would never become. Mention of the wedding, the essential rite of passage for the chaste *virgo*, is prefaced with Pliny’s succinct yet sweeping statement about the virtues of femininity that Minicia displayed. He declares that “she had the wisdom of an old woman, the seriousness of a matron, and nevertheless the sweetness of a girl along with the modesty of a maiden” (*et iam illi anilis prudentia, matronalis gravitas erat et tamen suavitas puellaris cum virginali verecundia*).⁴² Collapsing the female life course into a single sentence with its variety of age-based

³⁸ Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.3: *et amanter et modeste*. On the appeal to philosophy as part of a restrained letter of consolation here and in other letters of condolence, see Dixon (2007) 55 n.10.

³⁹ Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.7: *non possum exprimere verbis quantum animo vulnus acceperim, cum audivi Fundanum ipsum, ut multa luctuosa dolor invenit, praecipientem, quod in vestes margarita gemmas fuerat erogaturus, hoc in tus et unguenta et odores impenderetur* (“I am unable to put into words what a wound I received to my mind when I heard Fundanus himself [how one sorrowful grief leads to many others] giving orders that what he had planned to spend on clothing, pearls and gems should be paid out for incense, unguents and perfumes”). Other treatments of “marriage to death” are in Sil. *Pun.* 13.547–49, Sen. *Controv.* 6.6, Apul. *Met.* 4.33; Ach. *Tat.* 1.13.5–6. In Greek tragedy, S. *Ant.* 810–16 is an example, and in Hellenistic epigram, see *Anth. Pal.* 7.182, 186, 188, 711, 712.

⁴⁰ Bodel (1995).

⁴¹ The epitaph of Minicia is *CIL* 6.16631 (= *ILS* 1030): *D(is) M(anibus) Miniciae Marcellae Fundani filiae v(ixit) a(n)nos XII m(enses) XI d(ies) VII*. Pliny, *Ep.* 5.16.2, however, says she is almost fourteen (*nondum annos XIII impleverat*). For the inscription versus the letter, see also Sherwin-White (1966) 347.

⁴² Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.2. The passage is discussed by Wiedemann (1989) 92–93.

terms, this description captures the good character of Minicia but also highlights her unsettled position as a young female on whom many of the household's hopes depend. No longer a child but not yet a woman, she was poised to enhance her father's social standing through marriage, and her future success in the wifely role, though unrealized, is implied by Pliny's description of her as already embodying the virtues associated with mature womanhood. In contrast to the narrower portrayal of daughters on funeral monuments as Dianas, trapped in a state of youthfulness, strength, and virginity, the eulogy opts for a depiction of Minicia as possessing a wide array of virtues that would have served her well over a long life. Elsewhere in his letters, Pliny takes a similar approach in praising the combination of virtues embodied by Fuscus Salinator, chosen as husband for the daughter of Servianus. While Fuscus is living, not deceased, he is imagined, like Minicia, as a model of youthful innocence and mature *gravitas*. The list of his virtues, notably, includes adjectives describing his scholarly accomplishments, in contrast to the list describing Minicia.⁴³

While education is a more subtle theme in Pliny's work than in Musonius', for Pliny aims to describe individuals rather than to prescribe a curriculum, it nevertheless stands as a valued part of female as well as male upbringing. Formal education has a place in Minicia's feminine virtue-training, but her reading of literature emerges more as a demonstration of virtue than as its training ground. Amid exclamations of praise for her virtuous conduct ("How diligently and intelligently she read! How sparingly and moderately she played!"), the act of reading appears as one example of how Minicia was a virtuous girl.⁴⁴ Indeed, as Pliny praises Minicia's life, he also reveals what elite Roman males considered an advantage of education for girls in the lead-up to marriage: it kept them at home, dutifully attending to tasks. Pliny's commemoration of premarital death moves in a direction that highlights not only the natural response of grief but also the orchestrated effort of a family, particularly a father, to mold the character of a daughter during her lifetime to suit her roles as bride, wife, and mother.⁴⁵ Given the placement of Musonius' philosophy in the Greek tradition and the position of Pliny's letter-writing in the social world of a Rome-centered elite, the parallels between the perspectives of

⁴³ Plin. *Ep.* 6.26.1: *ipse studiosus litteratus etiam disertus, puer simplicitate comitate iuuenis senex gravitate* ("He himself is a scholar, well-read, even an orator, a boy in his innocence, a youth in his charm, and an old man in his seriousness").

⁴⁴ Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.3: *quam studiose, quam intelligenter lectitabat! ut parce custoditeque ludebat!*

⁴⁵ On Pliny's letter-writing and the conventions of the genre, especially how they influence his portrayals of women, see Carlon (2009) 1–17.

the two writers suggest a set of shared beliefs and assumptions about girlhood among the imperial elite.

Where Musonius and Pliny find the most common ground is in their recognition of education as valuable for enhancing desired behaviors in girls, rather than for sharpening their minds. Pliny hints at the idea that the investment made in Minicia's upbringing bore no return because of her death, bringing out a theme that remains an undercurrent in Musonius' treatise: that aspirations for girls were fulfilled not through graduation from their studies but by the transition from the role of daughter to that of wife.

PITFALLS OF EDUCATION

The imperfect design of Roman education as a socializing tool for girls is also apparent in less artistically refined texts, such as student-copied school exercises surviving on papyrus from imperial Egypt. These school texts, made up of gnomic sayings and literary passages copied by students, give a sense of the content of the standard curriculum that taught basic reading and writing skills, but they also provide a valuable counterpoint to texts that discuss girls' education in a higher literary register. Most strikingly, the negative images of women that were fed to students at the low levels of education bear little resemblance to the positive portrayal of feminine virtue found in texts that circulated among an elite and educated readership, such as the letters of Pliny and the treatises of Musonius.⁴⁶ Quotations taken from literature and philosophy do not celebrate examples, whether general or specific, of feminine virtue.⁴⁷ Two quotations of Diogenes the Cynic philosopher found in a fourth-century CE schoolbook provide a sense of the tone. One quotation frowns on female education as a dangerous weapon: "When he saw a woman learning letters, he said, 'what a sword is being sharpened;'" another is hostile about the nature of conversation between women: "When he saw a woman give another advice, he said, 'the asp is being given poison from the viper.'"⁴⁸ A second-century

⁴⁶ For a general introduction to the customary division of educational levels, see Bonner (1977) 165 and Harris (1989) 323.

⁴⁷ Morgan (1998) 142.

⁴⁸ *P. Bour.* 1: ἰδὼν γ[υ]ναικὰ διδασκ[ο]μένην γράμματα εἶπεν· οἷον ξίφος ἀκονᾶται. ἰδὼν γυν[α]ίκα γυ[ν]αϊκὴ συμβουλεύουσαν εἶπεν· ἄσπις παρ' ἐχίδνης φάρμακον πορίζεται. The text is from Hock and O'Neil (2002) 9. For more on *P. Bour.* 1, see the Leuven Database of Ancient Books (<http://www.trismegistos.org/ldab/>), no. 2744. See Hock and O'Neil (2002) II n.37 for additional attacks on women in school texts.

CE school text, paraphrasing a bit from New Comedy, says Euripides named the nature of woman as the greatest of all evils.⁴⁹ In comparison to school exercises on papyri, the Aesopean fable collection contains few misogynistic stories.⁵⁰

At one level, the explanation for the critical tone of school exercises is fairly obvious: exercises at the elementary stages of literate education were designed to lead to the school of rhetoric, and as such, they were directed largely at a male audience.⁵¹ Boys came to the grammarian's classes to master "a world of linguistic norms and rules," a grasp of correct Latin and Greek through instruction in the literary canon, before moving on to compose and perform eloquent speeches.⁵² Rhetorical performance that followed from this linguistic training was an area of education and public life off-limits to girls and women.⁵³ Yet because gnomic sayings were a popular method of basic instruction in reading and writing, it is plausible that some girls were exposed to sentiments that contradicted the wifely chastity, loyalty, and deference found in texts of a higher literary register. This suggests that if girls wished to build character through scholastic projects, such as the reading and memorizing of snippets of philosophy and poetry, they would confront negative examples in moralizing school exercises.

Friction between the value placed on girls' literate education and the value placed on particular behavioral norms for girls is also evident in texts that question more directly the potential for girls' intellectual accomplishments to disrupt the social order. These texts suggest that to the Romans, training in reading and writing literature did not convey to girls a clear and improving message about virtue. In fact, too much scholarly accomplishment, or the wrong kind, was regarded as a quality that could derail the transition to marriage. The harmful social possibilities raised by female education are a theme treated often by the Roman authorial elite: Juvenal's matrons who spout poetry and correct their husbands' grammar at dinner parties and Valerius Maximus' Republican lawcourt advocate Gaia Afrania are among the stylized examples of women who use their intellectual accomplishments to subvert proper gender roles.⁵⁴ Much of the criticism stems from the perceived immodesty of public performance, and Afrania became a byword for this problem. Almost two centuries later, the jurist

⁴⁹ Milne (1923) 41. ⁵⁰ Laes (2006) 912. ⁵¹ Morgan (1998) 134–38. ⁵² Atherton (1998) 217.

⁵³ See Hemelrijk (1999) 24–25 on women not being taught formal rhetoric, with Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi of the second century BCE, and Hortensia, mentioned above, being some of the few Roman women known for their ability to make speeches.

⁵⁴ Juv. 6. 434–56, on aggressive, educated wives; Val. Max. 8.3.2 on Afrania.

Ulpian cites the notorious behavior of the same figure, whom he calls Gaia Carfania, a “most immodest woman.”⁵⁵ While it may have been within a woman’s legal rights for her to pursue her own claims in court, it was an impropriety for her to do so very often and vociferously, as Afrania did. Her antics, Ulpian noted, prompted the urban praetor at Rome to prohibit women from representing others in court.⁵⁶

Most of the examples above concern adult or married women, but the figure of the overeducated, unmarried girl run amok is also treated in the imaginative context of early imperial epic and elegiac poetry. Indeed, the Augustan poets took more than a passing interest in this theme, particularly as it related to developing adolescent sexuality. Given the control of female sexual conduct that became a state interest with Augustus, it is of little surprise that the theme of unrestrained female sexuality was taken up by the poets; recent scholarship on elegy, in particular, has pointed to the ways in which this poetry had the power to question, accept, or reject contemporary attempts to reform the social order.⁵⁷ The poets’ treatment of the education of respectable girls is a part of their engagement with concerns about social order. In the poetry of Ovid and Sulpicia, in particular, the educated *virgo* becomes a figure who uses her skills in writing and speaking to take charge of her sexual choices, with disastrous and chaotic results.

It is Ovid who plays extensively with the theme of formal education as destroyer of marriageability if it is not channeled in the right way. The goal of literacy training, as we have seen throughout this chapter, was to enable girls to amplify the virtues for which they would be valued as prospective wives; achieving this goal required maintaining a delicate balance, and Ovid takes an interest in exploring moments in which this balance is tipped. The disruptive potential of education for a girl who hovers at the threshold of womanhood is brought out even within one of Ovid’s poems that seems to be a celebration of a girl’s learning and in which Ovid himself is cast as a father figure. In *Tristia* 3.7, the young poetess Perilla has devoted herself to her literary craft, rather than marriage, and her devotion places her into a category verging on the masculine. Ovid highlights this by

⁵⁵ Ulp. *D.* 3.1.1.5: *improbissima femina*.

⁵⁶ Ulp. *D.* 3.1.1.5 goes on to enumerate the “male duties” (*virilia officia*) from which women are excluded.

⁵⁷ James (2003) 214 notes that when “elegy flourishes around the time of Augustus’s first and failed attempt to force the elites into marriage and to punish adultery as a state crime rather than a private matter, it does so as an implicit protest.”

repeatedly drawing on the model of the daughter who follows in the footsteps of her father, allying Perilla's literary compositions with his own.

That youthful femininity and the transition to marriage are central to the poem's theme is clear from the beginning when Ovid pairs Perilla's poetic talent with her good moral fiber by invoking the language of marriage. He says that "nature gave you, in accordance with your fate, a modest manner and a rare dowry, innate talent."⁵⁸ As Perilla is described sitting amid her books beside her mother, however, the reader detects that her virtues are not put to work as they should be, in the project of pairing with a suitor and planning a wedding day, but in the pursuit of solitary and technical study. A substantial portion of the poem is concerned with framing Perilla's life in traditional terms. She is described as having begun her study of poetry "in the years of her maidenhood" (*in virginis annis*) when, as Ovid says to her, "like a father to a daughter, I was your guide and companion."⁵⁹ This virgin girlhood and father-daughter relationship does not evolve, however, as Perilla never makes the transition to wife and mother.⁶⁰ Through the figure of Perilla, Ovid thereby stages the incompatibility of a poetic career – if not poetic study – with the traditionally prescribed path of virgin, bride, wife, and mother.

The stages of Perilla's life are laid out in a way that actively excludes, in fact, the role of wife or mother. At the beginning of the poem, the "very learned girl" (*doctissima*) is described, in the present, as a dutiful daughter sitting "either beside her sweet mother or amid her books and the muses."⁶¹ Later, she is drawn in the future, as an old woman:

So, very learned girl, do away with the causes of idleness, and return to the liberal arts and your poetry. That becoming face will be spoiled by long years, old age's wrinkles will be on your aged brow. Ruinous old age that comes with silent step will seize your beauty. When someone says, "she once was fair," you will grieve and complain that your mirror is a liar.⁶²

Ovid's urging of Perilla calls to mind a theme found elsewhere in Roman imperial poetry – the admonishment of a woman to marry, or a widow to

⁵⁸ Ov. Tr. 3.7.13–14: *nam tibi cum fatis mores natura pudicos/ et raras dotes ingeniumque dedit.*

⁵⁹ Ov. Tr. 3.7.18: *utque pater natae duxque comesque fui.*

⁶⁰ Because of this comment, some have speculated that Ovid was Perilla's stepfather; on this question, see Hemelrijk (1999) 149–51.

⁶¹ Ov. Tr. 3.7.3–4: *aut illam invenies dulci cum matre sedentem,/ aut inter libros Pieridasque suas.*

⁶² Ov. Tr. 3.7.31–38: *ergo desidiae remove, doctissima, causas,/ inque bonas artes et tua sacra redi./ ista decens facies longis vitabitur annis,/ rugaque in antiqua fronte senilis erit,/ inicietque manum formae damnosa senectus,/ quae strepitus passu non faciente venit./ cumque aliquis dicet "fuit haec formosa" dolebis,/ et speculum mendax esse querere tuum.*

remarry, while her beauty is still intact. Such a theme stands out, several generations later, in Statius' *Silvae* when Venus admonishes the widow Violentilla, noting that her devotion to the memory of her deceased husband means that she is growing old and her appeal as a bride is fading.⁶³ For Perilla in the *Tristia*, however, passing time and impending old age threaten not her marriageability but her academic work; literary craft, not a husband, is what she is urged to pursue while still young and beautiful. Likewise, as literature replaces a spouse so the immortality offered to Perilla herself by poetry substitutes for the continuation of a husband's family line that her childbearing in marriage would provide. Perilla is to take heart from Ovid, who concludes the poem with confidence in the endurance of his own work: "And as long as victorious warlike Rome surveys the entire conquered world from her hills," he asserts, "I shall be read."⁶⁴ Meanwhile, Ovid's statement that his fame will live on after his death takes on further significance given that he has cast himself throughout the poem as a *pater* to Perilla.⁶⁵ This is one *pater* who is represented as unconventional, in that he takes no interest in the marriage of his daughter as a potential tool for the enhancement of *fama*.

In portraying a young woman as a wealthy free agent, the effect of *Tristia* 3.7 is to communicate that literary education can preclude social maturation if it encourages a girl to pursue a kind of individualism associated with masculinity. The removal of Perilla's life from a traditional marital narrative and the casting of Ovid as a father show how the praise of female scholastic accomplishment could make use of poetic tropes about marriage and womanhood – including worries about fading beauty and what the future holds – and yet adapt them so that they become quite different from the praise of a young woman as bride in the genre of the epithalamium. As we will see in Chapter 5, the wedding celebration focuses on the traits of youthful femininity as they will translate into successful married womanhood – modesty, fertility, safe pregnancy, production of male offspring, and long-lasting beauty – and into the bride's successful socialization into her adult role. Even Minicia Marcella, who died before

⁶³ Stat. *Silv.* 1.2.162–66, Venus to Violentilla: "*quonam hic usque sopor vacuique modestia lecti, / o mihi Laurentis inter dilecta puellas? / quis morum fideique modus? numquamne virili / summittere iugo? veniet iam tristior aetas. / exerce formam et fugientibus utere donis*" ("How long this sloth, this modesty of an empty bed, O favorite of mine among Laurentian girls? What limit to propriety and loyalty? Will you never submit to a husband's yoke? Soon a sadder time of life will come. Cultivate beauty and use gifts that are fleeing").

⁶⁴ Ov. *Tr.* 3.7.51–52: *dumque suis victrix omnem de montibus orbem / prospiciet domitum Martia Roma, legar.*

⁶⁵ Ov. *Tr.* 3.7.50: *me tamen extincto fama superstes erit.*

she could move to adulthood, manages this transition, if only in the world of Pliny's letter. Much of what is moving about her commemoration comes from the suggestion that she was poised to become a virtuous wife, as her wedding, with all the trappings, had already been prepared.

In confronting the mismatch between the active masculine virtue inspired by formal education and the conventional passive virtue for which women were valued, Ovid's treatment of Perilla is reminiscent of the message conveyed by Musonius. Fathers should take the lead role in nurturing respectable masculinity in daughters by directing their studies; daughters are responsible for curbing any desire to push that masculinity beyond its proper boundaries. Ovid displays an interest in the theme of the precariousness of femininity for the educated girl and pushes further to explore the potential for disaster contained in this arrangement in the *Metamorphoses*, where more than one *virgo* uses literary training as a tool to manipulate males who are the objects of sexual desire. The story of Myrrha, for example, suggests the social problems resulting from educated girls who make their own choices. The story, in which Myrrha employs the techniques of rhetoric in a soliloquy to argue in support of an incestuous relationship with her father Cinyras, is an extreme example of the potential of schoolwork to upend a girl's transition from daughter to wife, from her natal home to the home of her husband.⁶⁶ The tale ends not only with Myrrha unmarried but with the ruin of her marriageability and, true to the theme of metamorphosis, the mutation of her physical form as she is removed from the human world altogether and turned into a tree.⁶⁷ Myrrha becomes an illustration of how the wrong sort of education could equip a *virgo* to justify illicit sexual activity.

Ovid, a master declaimer himself, crafts Myrrha's argument to display features of the *controversia*, the traditional public-speaking exercise performed by boys in the rhetorician's school.⁶⁸ In the simple act of delivering a genre of speech known for being tailored to the development of masculine virtue and the socialization of young men, Myrrha tramples the boundaries of virtuous girlhood. As we will see in the discussion of *controversiae* in Chapter 2, when *virgines* participate in the world of the *controversia* it is not as performers but as characters within speeches, where they are fashioned as victims of sexual assault who are empowered by law to choose the fate of an attacker but are often pressured by male relatives

⁶⁶ *Ov. Met.* 10.320–55. ⁶⁷ *Ov. Met.* 10.489–502.

⁶⁸ As Lightfoot (2009) 234 observes: "When Myrrha puts the arguments for and against incest, she is indulging in a full-scale *controversia*."

not to exercise that power. Myrrha, in Ovid's vision, is the dreaded overeducated female, an oratorical performer who quickly becomes a transgressive figure. Struggling to argue that *amor* between daughter and father is simply an elevated form of family affection, or *pietas*, Myrrha employs the masculine, controlling approach of the *controversia*, only to deploy it ineffectively against an irrational and uncontrollable emotion.⁶⁹ Myrrha's argument for incest, in which she justifies sexual relations between human parents and children as natural based on the behavior of animals, only reinforces the notion that educating a young female in the art of rhetoric is a mistake.⁷⁰

Most of this literary or rhetorical composition by girls is simulated, of course by male writers, as in the case of Myrrha. Rarely is there a hint of a girl's own voice in imperial poetry. The elegies ascribed to the authorship of Sulpicia are important not only because they purport to be written by a girl on the brink of marriage but also because they engage with the potential for overlap, linguistically and thematically, between the figures of the *docta virgo* and the *docta puella*, the adult courtesan of low social status who is esteemed by her lover for her knowledge of poetry, music, and dance.⁷¹ By invoking the *puella* of elegy and yet using the term to designate an unmarried respectable girl, Sulpicia's poetry indicates another downside of education for the upper-class girl or woman, who "shared some of her accomplishments with Greek freedwomen, actresses, courtesans, and the like."⁷² To blur the distinction between the sexually adventurous, liberated courtesan and the virginal, obedient daughter was another way of exploring how a girl who was able to create a literary composition might behave in a way that was at odds with Roman morality.

Sulpicia's elegies show a girl who is equipped with not only the ability to compose elegiac couplets but also the self-confidence to speak up about her own premarital sexuality. Her first poem broadcasts her affair with her boyfriend and, seemingly, the loss of virginity outside marriage that she knows will shock an audience concerned with *fama*.⁷³ Another poem

⁶⁹ Ov. *Met.* 10.315–55. Tarrant (1995) 71. ⁷⁰ *Met.* 10.323–28.

⁷¹ Adams (1983) 346 notes that elegiac *puellae* are "women past puberty, who . . . may be treated as of easy virtue." This *puella* is a girl in her relation to boyfriends, not in terms of youthful age or unmarried status. Hemelrijk (1999) 154–60 discusses Sulpicia's poetic self-portrait. On the courtesan-*puella* as ineligible for marriage, see James (2003) 271 n.89.

⁷² Hemelrijk (1999) 95.

⁷³ [Tib.] 3.13.1–2, 9–10: *tandem venit amor qualem texisse pudore/ quam nudasse alicui sit mihi fama magis . . . sed peccasse iuvat, vultus componere fama/ taedet* ("A love has come at last, the kind that is more disgraceful for me to hide out of shame than to reveal to someone . . . but I am pleased to do wrong and tired of wearing the studied look of good repute").

rebukes her lover, Cerinthus, for taking up with a prostitute, reminding him that he traded the high-born “daughter of Servius” (*filia Servii*) for a “harlot” (*scortum*).⁷⁴ It is, of course, almost as impossible to imagine Sulpicia as a real person as it is Perilla and Myrrha.⁷⁵ Yet the connotations of *puella* in Sulpicia’s elegies offer a startling counterpart to the representations of girlhood found in other texts. For Sulpicia to be *puella* means something different from the elegiac *puella*, as her reference to herself as *filia Servii* confirms: she is an aristocratic daughter, meant to follow the path to bride, wife, and mother, but in spoiling her virginity she has also destroyed her identity as a marriageable maiden.

These representations of educated girlhood contrast sharply with the idealizing of Musonius Rufus or Pliny. The girls depicted even serve as a generic counterpoint to that paragon of virginal decorum in imperial epic, Vergil’s Lavinia. Blushing, silent, and gazing downward in her brief appearances in the epic, Lavinia displays signs of maidenly modesty even when overcome by feelings for Turnus, her former fiancé.⁷⁶ Like modest gestures of affection toward relatives and friends, and like modest dress and conduct in public (a topic to be treated in more detail in Chapter 2), blushing is the *virgo*’s proper response to the attention of others, especially at a moment when her “‘core competence’ in the culture – as a chaste yet desirable potential mate – is being tested or put on display.”⁷⁷ Lavinia, who like Minicia Marcella has reached marriageable age, is a figure whose upcoming marriage is the most important facet of her identity.⁷⁸ In the midst of her desire and desirability, she is protective of her position as future bride, and the commentator Donatus cites her as an exemplar of *virginalis verecundia*, the same phrase Pliny used of Minicia Marcella.⁷⁹

In these sources, then, we have been able to track a tension between the ideal of a virtue-inspiring literate education and the perceived ineffectiveness of “schooling” to accomplish this aim. Or perhaps, it was imagined, girls would be instructed in the majority of what they needed to know

⁷⁴ [Tib.] 3.16.3–4: *sit tibi cura togae potior pressumque quasillo/ scortum quam Servi filia Sulpicia* (“May yours be the care of the toga and a harlot weighed down by a wicker basket rather than the daughter of Servius”).

⁷⁵ See Hubbard (2004) 177–80. Whether Sulpicia’s poetry was written by a teenage girl, or by an adult woman, or by a male author has generated considerable controversy. See also Keith (2006).

⁷⁶ *Aen.* 12.64–70. Though Vergil does not explain what provokes Lavinia’s blush, she seems to blush either because she feels *amor* for Turnus, or knows he feels *amor* for her, or both. Lyne (1983) 57 observes that Lavinia’s response is the proper one, for blushes “bespeak, to a greater or lesser extent, *pudor* (they are the reaction of a *pudibunda* to *eros*); and of course Lavinia will not voice her love or act on it.”

⁷⁷ Kaster (2005) 59. ⁷⁸ Lavinia is *plenis nubilis annis*: *Aen.* 7.53.

⁷⁹ Tib. Cl. Donat. ad Verg. *Aen.* 12.65; Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.2.

by less formal interactions with role models in the household and, occasionally, in the wider community.

MOTHERS AND OTHER MODELS FOR FEMININE BEHAVIOR

The poetic figures of Perilla, Myrrha, and Sulpicia imply a broader perception that girls needed proper feminine behavior modeled for them alongside their literary training. When Plutarch describes Cornelia, Pompey's fifth wife, he exposes the potential problems of an elite girl's upbringing even though Cornelia herself is beautiful, learned, and deferential:

Many charms apart from those belonging to her youthful beauty were present in the young woman. She really was well prepared in letters, in playing the lyre, and in geometry; she was accustomed to hearing philosophical discourses with advantage. A character free from unpleasantness and meddling, bad qualities which such learning rubs off on young women, accompanied such accomplishments.⁸⁰

Although considered one of her charms, Cornelia's scholastic achievement, to Plutarch, remains separate from her demonstration of the virtues of young womanhood. In her case, it is fortunate that along with being educated in literature and philosophy, she had a disposition that was pleasant and agreeable. Something in Cornelia's upbringing, it is suggested, helped to shape her character so that she kept an acceptable distance from the practical matters and affairs that were the domain of men.

Within the household, mothers and other female relatives served as a bridge between formal literate education and the informal aspects of socialization. They were able to train a girl in social graces, for example, or to provide her with support and reassurance before she entered the marriage market. A detailed picture of life in the Roman household is difficult to create from the surviving sources, but several texts discuss the importance of social interaction for shaping one's character, and another source, wall paintings from early imperial Italy and North Africa, appear to take an interest in interactions between older and younger generations of women. Both sets of evidence portray older women as figures who could

⁸⁰ Plut. *Pomp.* 55: ἐνήν δὲ τῇ κόρῃ πολλὰ φίλτρα δίχα τῶν ἀφ' ὧρας, καὶ γὰρ περὶ γράμματα καλῶς ἥσκητο καὶ περὶ λύραν καὶ γεωμετρίαν, καὶ λόγων φιλοσόφων εἶθιστο χρησίμως ἀκούειν. καὶ προσῆν τοῦτοις ἦθος ἀηδίας καὶ περιεργίας καθαρὸν, ἃ δὴ νέαις προστριβεται γυναιξὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα μαθήματα.

offer guidance in scholastic education and encourage girls to emulate their example of virtuous conduct.

In a revealing passage from his consolation to Helvia, Seneca urges his mother to cultivate her relationship with her grandchildren, not simply for the comfort it may provide, but also for its instrumental importance in training her young granddaughter Novatilla, who will benefit from exposure to Helvia's education and sound morals:

Now prepare her character, now shape it; lessons penetrate more deeply which are stamped upon the formative years. Let her get used to your conversations, let her be moulded as it pleases you; you will give her much even if you give her nothing beyond your example.⁸¹

Seneca's statement is not specific to girls, of course; a statement about the importance of character training while a child was still impressionable, and about the role of routine social interaction for reinforcing this training, could apply equally to boys. The language is similar to Quintilian's statement about childhood as the proper time for a teacher to instill a sense of right and wrong in an aspiring orator through his daily interaction with a nurse who speaks properly.⁸² As a living model of good conduct, Helvia can provide guidance that will be useful for the time when Novatilla is expected to become a woman. What is more, the mother-daughter, or in this case grandmother-granddaughter, relationship was not troubled by the anxieties sometimes provoked by the mother-son dynamic. As Seneca represents it, too much learning often led women, "with a female lack of self-restraint," to attempt to attain or wield power through their sons.⁸³ In this view, the transfer of skills and values across the generations of women served the useful corrective purpose of encouraging conventional behavior.

Seneca's message concerning the socializing power of the relationship between older and younger female relatives was conveyed in an essay directed to his mother, but a wider audience may have come into contact with a similar message through the medium of domestic wall painting.

⁸¹ Sen. *Helv.* 18.8: *nunc mores eius compone, nunc forma: altius praecepta descendunt quae teneris imprimuntur aetatibus. tuis adsuescat sermonibus, ad tuum fingatur arbitrium: multum illi dabis, etiam si nihil dederis praeter exemplum.*

⁸² Quint. *Inst.* 1.3.12, 2.19.1–3.

⁸³ Sen. *Helv.* 14.2: *viderint illae matres quae potentiam liberorum muliebri inpotentia exercent, quae, quia feminis honores non licet gerere, per illos ambitiosae sunt, quae patrimonia filiorum et exhauriunt et captant, quae eloquentiam commodando aliis fatigant* ("let those mothers consider those who put their sons' power to use with a female lack of self-restraint, who, because women are not allowed to hold office, are eager for advancement through their sons, who both hollow out and grasp at their sons' inheritances, who expend their sons' eloquence through lending it to others").

Around ten landscape paintings, dating from the first century CE and found in private dwellings at Rome, Pompeii, Herculaneum, Boscotrecase, and near Leptis Magna, appear to depict mother-daughter pairs.⁸⁴ Most often, these paintings show pairs of figures standing in front of a temple or in a sacred grove with the apparent mother-daughter pair making an offering.⁸⁵ Such stylized representations of daily life are not unproblematic as social-historical evidence, but the scenes are nonetheless valuable in that they portray activity of young females with older ones outside the confines of the home – an issue that generated worry for families and wider society, as we will see in Chapter 2. Moreover, if we follow the recent suggestion that domestic wall paintings were not static presences in the Roman house, but were designed to prompt response and conversation,⁸⁶ then we can imagine how art in the home might have prompted family members and visitors to discuss expectations for proper feminine behavior.

Storytelling, too, was a way to provide guidance informally, sometimes from the older generation to the younger. In the *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius offers an imaginative portrayal of such virtue training when the young bride Charite listens to an old slave woman recount the tale of Cupid and Psyche.⁸⁷ The woman introduces it as a simple “old wives’ tale” and a “pretty story,” but with its presentation of a beautiful, innocent girl who attempts to defend her virginity from a young man’s amorous advances, it wraps a moral message in an entertaining package.⁸⁸ Between its presentation of a young couple and its inclusion of many references to Roman marriage, the tale’s connection to real-life household concerns would not have been lost on Apuleius’ reader.⁸⁹ While Cupid and Psyche reside in the fairytale world, the Romans were also enthusiastic about the capacity of

⁸⁴ The paintings are Croisille (2005) Fig. 300 (Rome, House of Livia), Fig. 430 (Pompeii, *praedia* of Julia Felix), Fig. 308 (Pompeii, National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. 9414), Fig. 76 (Boscotrecase), Fig. 434 (Herculaneum, depicting an Isis ceremony), Fig. 323 (Zliten, east of Leptis Magna); Ling (1993) Figs. 3–5 (Rome, Doria Pamphili, three different scenes with older woman-younger woman pairs that appear to be mother and daughter). Another possible pairing of mother and daughter, as part of a trio of women, appears in a painting at Pompeii in the House of Fabius Rufus. For this image, see Cerulli Irelli et al., eds. (1993) 2.106–10, 283b.

⁸⁵ Fuchs (2010) outlines the ways in which landscape painting, with its “will to provide accurate renderings” not only of the natural environment but of the activities of humans within it, can reflect aspects of Roman family life.

⁸⁶ Extended studies of Roman wall painting in a domestic context include Elsner (2007), Leach (2004), and Clarke (1991).

⁸⁷ Ap. *Met.* 4.27–6.25.

⁸⁸ Ap. *Met.* 4.27: *sed ego te narrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis protinus avocabo* (“But I will distract you now with a pretty story and an old wives’ tale”).

⁸⁹ See Osgood (2006) on references to the Roman law of marriage in the tale, and Bradley (2000) on the value of the novel as a source for the history of the Roman family.

stories from their quasi-historical past to instill good character in those who internalized their messages. The virtuous deeds of Cloelia, a young virginal heroine, were brought out in Latin literature and in art in a way that may have played a role in socializing girls and instructing them in morality. For the remaining portion of this chapter, I wish to focus on Cloelia and the message conveyed by her story. That particular stories such as Cloelia's were widely known among the Romans has long been recognized, but the way in which they can be interpreted as representing a message to girls that was endorsed by the wider community has not yet been fully explored.

Examples of behavior to be imitated or avoided were considered by authors such as Seneca to be an important component of education and by Quintilian to be useful as a foundation for rhetorical training.⁹⁰ They probably did not circulate as widely as some other moralizing genres, such as proverbs, *gnomai*, and fables.⁹¹ On the other hand, they had a wider appeal than philosophy, in that they were less abstract. Through *exempla*, instruction in morality was accomplished in a relatively impersonal, detached, and yet entertaining way, with concrete references to the virtuous actions of historical characters. Exemplary stories also were part of public life: they were commemorated in artwork and monuments and referred to in other communal activities, and this too is worth considering for its role in socializing young people.⁹²

While there is no way of establishing how many individual girls came into contact with such stories and their associated media, or what they took away from their exposure to such stories, we may begin at least to ascertain from the content of such stories how the sensibilities of Roman girls might have been shaped by such messages. The vivid and compelling vision of exemplary girlhood that appears in the legend of Cloelia is particularly promising for this effort. The story treats a girl's protection of her own virginity as an essential virtue, not just for ensuring her marriageability but for ensuring community stability. The story was a favorite among the Romans; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, and Livy all take up the subject of Cloelia's accomplishment in the second or

⁹⁰ See Sen. *Ep.* 33.7 and Quint. *Inst.* 1.9.1. Litchfield (1914) remains important but tends to restrict *exempla* to rhetoric and not to see a more general ethical applicability; see Morgan (2007) 125–26.

⁹¹ Morgan (2007) 129.

⁹² Langlands (2006) 28: "All the public areas of Rome were crammed with visual and oral representations of exemplary figures and their deeds: statues, monuments, funerary processions, speeches in the forum all commemorate the traditional Roman morality and alert passers-by to the texture of the past."

third year of the Republic, when she showed herself to be a defender of Rome – and Roman girlhood – during the siege on the city by Lars Porsenna.⁹³ I wish to focus on the fullest version of the story, that of Livy, both on its overall message and on its mention of a physical monument erected in honor of Cloelia in Roman public space.

For Livy, the preservation of Cloelia's chastity, and that of other children, generates as much interest as Cloelia's courage in outwitting the enemy. Assuming the role of "leader of a band of virgins," she successfully "swam across the Tiber among the enemy's javelins," and restored the girls to their families.⁹⁴ After being returned temporarily by the Romans to Porsenna as a guarantee for a truce, Cloelia is praised by him for her bravery and allowed to choose a portion of the hostages to take back with her to Rome. As he notes, her conduct always remained true to her status as a *virgo*:

After everyone had been brought forward, she is said to have chosen those who had yet to reach puberty; an act which was worthy of her virginity and by the agreement of the hostages themselves it was praiseworthy that that age especially, which was most susceptible to violation, be freed from the enemy. With good relations restored, the Romans honored this new *virtus* in a woman with a new kind of honor, an equestrian statue; a *virgo* sitting on a horse was put on the top of the Sacred Way.⁹⁵

Livy tells Cloelia's story as an example of female patriotism and courage. In this way, it serves as another corroboration of the assertion that girls could possess courage (*virtus* or *andreaia*). The story also provides a comment on girlhood and on gendered behavior in youth. Much of the tension in the tale stems from Cloelia's vulnerability to sexual violation at the hands of the enemy and the willingness, or resistance, with which she will respond to the threat. The language with which she is described reinforces the image of Cloelia as primarily virginal. She is not simply grouped as one of the *impubes* but is praised by Livy for exhibiting behavior that befits virginity (*quod et virginitati decorum*) when she elects to take the other children home with her. Moreover, while *impubes*, literally "under the age

⁹³ Dion. Hal. 5.33.1–4, Flor. 1.4.3, Serv. A. 8.646; Val. Max. 3.2.2, Plut. *Publ.* 19.2–8, 250C–F. Sources for Cloelia's story are collected and discussed in Roller (2004) 28–50.

⁹⁴ Livy 2.13.6: *dux agminis virginum inter tela hostium Tiberim tranavit sospitesque omnes Romam ad propinquos restituit.*

⁹⁵ Livy 2.13.10–11: *productis omnibus elegisse impubes dicitur; quod et virginitati decorum et consensu obsidum ipsorum probabile erat eam aetatem potissimum liberari ab hoste quae maxime opportuna iniuriae esset. pace redintegrata Romani novam in femina virtutem novo genere honoris, statua equestri, donavere; in summa Sacra via fuit posita virgo insidens equo.*

of puberty,” at first seems to place Cloelia outside the world of sexuality, *virginitas* reminds the reader that she is in fact approaching the danger-point of sexual maturity. In the narrative, her desirability is a quality that already defines her and the other *impubes* and is highlighted by Livy’s remark that the hostages agreed it was advisable that the virgins should be freed first. Cloelia has in common with the children she rescues both their position at the pivot-point between childhood and adulthood, then, and the threat to sexual purity that goes along with it.

The story of Cloelia provides an intriguing glimpse into how the moralizing anecdote, a type of narrative of which the Romans were fond, constructed girlhood. Virginity, and its safeguard from possible ruin, are prominent themes in the tale of a girl’s display of courage. Girlhood in the Cloelia story is also marked by qualities that defy gender- and age-based expectations. Livy and other authors who recount the tale are captivated by the notion that a girl is capable of displaying *virtus*, or *andreia*, the traditionally masculine virtue. The telling of Cloelia’s story is always marked by a comment about the extraordinariness of her manly show of courage. Livy describes Cloelia as a *virgo* who shows *virtus*, making a play on the visual affinity of the two words, if not their etymological connection. Manilius calls her “a *virgo* greater than men (*viris*).”⁹⁶ Florus describes Cloelia’s accomplishment as one in which “even virgins possessed *virtus*.”⁹⁷ Valerius Maximus says that she is famous “for carrying the torch of *virtus* for men, as a girl (*puella*).”⁹⁸ Matthew Roller has interpreted the blend of consternation toward and admiration of Cloelia expressed by Roman authors as stemming from the “paradox of the manly maiden,” in that she is constructed by imperial authors as “providing a canon of manliness surpassing anything today’s men can muster.”⁹⁹ The extent to which Cloelia’s story was repeated by Roman authors does suggest that this episode of manly display by a girl was considered appealing and relevant in some way to contemporary life.

Yet an additional paradox may be identified that speaks to what the episode might have been expected to teach girls. To be sure, Cloelia is as brave as a man and does not correspond in some ways to notions of what a *virgo* is. In Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ version of the tale, Lars Porsenna admires her specifically for being outside the category of *virgo* in “having a spirit surpassing her nature and age.”¹⁰⁰ In spite of the talk of manliness,

⁹⁶ Man. 1.780: *maiorque viris et Cloelia virgo*. ⁹⁷ Flor. 1.4.3.

⁹⁸ Val. Max 3.2.2: *viris puella lumen virtutis praeferendo*. ⁹⁹ Roller (2004) 31, 36.

¹⁰⁰ Dion. Hal. 5.34.3. ἔχουσαν φρόνημα τῆς τε φύσεως καὶ ηλικίας.

however, the larger thrust of Cloelia's actions is to reinforce traditional gender roles and relations. She does not overturn a stereotype about girlhood but rather drums hard the idea that a girlhood involving an inculcation in courage is admirable. Ideally, it lays the groundwork for a virtuous womanhood. For Cloelia's girlhood, despite displaying "manly" qualities, is also portrayed as a transitional stage, on its way to womanhood, in which her virginity is being protected. The reason that Romans want their girls to display *virtus* or *andreia* is quite conventional: it emboldens them to preserve their modesty. Cloelia is deemed a *dux agminis*, but the battle line she leads is one of *virgines* and the purpose of leading the *impubes* back home is to preserve their sexual purity. The value of her patriotic action lies primarily in this preservation.

The ways in which Cloelia's story could be used to illustrate different points reveal not only the usefulness of exemplarity as a tool to contribute to girls' education; they also shed light on Roman views of girlhood and its relationship to being Roman. When Cloelia's actions serve a military and political purpose, they move beyond the exercise of *andreia* in the domestic sphere. It is not difficult to see why Livy found it easy to combine courage and sexual purity as exemplary qualities in the figure of Cloelia: the stability and success of the state was ensured by the bravery of men, women, and children, and a girl's bravery was displayed most appropriately in protection of her body until marriage.¹⁰¹ To take the defense of virginity too far could threaten the state, of course: one need only read Plutarch's narrative of the virgin suicides of Miletus, one of the many examples of female virtue he puts forth in *On the Virtues of Women*, to see a case in which girls' overzealous protection of their bodies and rejection of marriage leads to civic unrest.¹⁰²

As Livy's account relates, Cloelia was celebrated in art as well as in literature. An equestrian statue of Cloelia erected in Rome and on public view offers the opportunity to consider how the community as a whole might have taken on responsibility for fostering virtue in girls and boys through use of visual *exempla*. Seneca remarks that the statue of Cloelia on horseback was conspicuously placed on the Sacred Way, likely as part of

¹⁰¹ Roller (2004) 42 notes that Livy implies that "it is particularly appropriate for a freeborn *impubis* to seek to protect other freeborn *impubes* from what most threatens their status."

¹⁰² In Plut. *De mul. vir.* 249B-D, a group of suicides of young women is dealt with by the city's decree ordering that any future suicides are to be carried naked through the agora. The suicides stop immediately after the decree, and as McInerney (2003) 331 notes, "the episode explicitly praises the virtue of the virgins who are most strongly motivated by a desire to avoid ill repute."

Augustus' larger project of displaying state heroes in his Forum.¹⁰³ Visual displays of *exempla* differed from storytelling, in that they could present a single motif, in this case the girl on horseback, "detached from their narrative context and allowed to stand in isolation."¹⁰⁴ All other aspects of the story are passed over in favor of depiction of its ending, the Romans' reward to Cloelia of the statue that was "a new kind of honor." What such a display lacked in narrative detail, it made up for in its exposure to a wide audience, and a recent discussion of cultural memory and ancient childhood articulates the importance of considering young people's movement in public space for their socialization:

When we think of the impact of such a "landscape of memory" on a city's population we should think particularly of the children of the city, whose earliest impressions of their physical environment shape their understanding of history, the development of ideas, and the concept of what it is to be an Athenian, or a Roman. What socialising forces led them to become the adults they were? It reminds us that education and socialisation are not confined to the classroom, or to the home, that these processes take place even when a child might never enter a classroom, as was true for the majority of the young population.¹⁰⁵

Cicero famously referred to the painters and sculptors whose images of the gods had impressed on him their appearance and attributes.¹⁰⁶ Imperial authors picked up on the potential for narrative images like the statue representing the Cloelia legend to be interpreted in a way that resonated with a contemporary audience of young people. Having memorized scenes and stories from literature and myth as part of their education in grammar and rhetoric, young men would have been especially well placed to identify the subject matter of such artwork and interpret it. In fact, while supporting his claim that men and women are equally capable of attaining virtue, Seneca also uses the story of Cloelia to suggest that the visibility of her statue, in particular, would cue a viewer to recall the mythical episode and to recognize the social message that lay behind its imagery:

¹⁰³ Sen. *Dial.* 6.16.2. Dion. Hal. 5.35.2, Plin. *HN* 34.29, Plut. *Publ.* 19.8 and Serv. *A.* 8.646 mention the statue being on view. Roller (2004) 44–50.

¹⁰⁴ Koortbojian (1995) 35.

¹⁰⁵ Rawson (2005) 4. See also Rousselle (2001) on images as sources of education in the Roman Empire.

¹⁰⁶ Cic. *Nat. D.* 1.29: *a parvis enim Iovem Iunonem Minervam Neptunum Vulcanum Apollinem reliquos deos ea facie novimus qua pictores fictoresque voluerunt, neque solum facie sed etiam ornatu aetate vestitu* ("From childhood we know Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, Neptune, Vulcan and Apollo by that appearance with which painters and sculptors have wished to depict them, and not only with that appearance, but with attributes, age and dress").

Cloelia, with both enemy and river held in scorn, because of her outstanding courage, we have almost enrolled in the ranks of men; sitting on an equestrian statue on the Sacred Way, in a most crowded location, Cloelia reproaches our young men as they mount to their cushioned litter seats that they are going about in this way in that city where we have granted even women a horse.¹⁰⁷

Perched on horseback, Cloelia speaks not with her own voice but through the interpretation of Seneca as he has her “reproach” the behavior of soft young men. Certainly one result of granting Cloelia a voice, as Seneca does, is to bring the past into the present and to emphasize continuity between past and current ideas about how people should behave.¹⁰⁸ But an equally important effect of this type of representation is to control how and what Cloelia says to an audience. Although she is imagined to be alive and speaking, she is a statue and not a living girl. Real girls who spoke out faced potential threats to their modesty, whereas the location of Cloelia’s narrative in the past sets her up as safe and constructs her as an unthreatening, and hence exemplary, representation of girlhood. For this reason Romans, such as Seneca, were content to imagine the equestrian figure of Cloelia admonishing wayward youth. Having been projected into the past, she could be represented in a controlled manner, and her story could convey an authorized moral message to an audience.

CONCLUSION

The ideal socializing function of formal education was to encourage a girl to expect that she would follow the prescribed path toward becoming a good wife. The extent to which that education – in literacy, in literature, or in philosophy – played a part in virtue training varied, but all of our sources, even Musonius Rufus, are in agreement that educating girls was about instilling virtue. Just as the training of boys in grammar and rhetoric was directed toward their practical experience in careers, so for girls of the aristocratic classes training in virtue was the best preparation for the life they would have as wives. Moreover, the range of sources pertaining to girls’ education, from prescriptive treatises to funerary inscriptions to moralizing stories, reveals a cultural belief that girls were not intellectually

¹⁰⁷ Sen. *Dial.* 6.16.2: *Cloeliam contempto et hoste et flumine ob insignem audaciam tantum non in viros transcripsimus: equestri insidens statuae in sacra via, celeberrimo loco, Cloelia exprobrat iuvenibus nostris pulvinum escendentibus in ea illos urbe sic ingredi in qua etiam feminas equo donavimus.*

¹⁰⁸ Roller (2004) 37.

limited by their gender but were capable of receiving training in virtue, and demonstrating that virtue, just as boys were.

Lying behind the sources, however, was anxiety about the mismatch between the formal curriculum designed for boys and the social needs of girls. This meant that informal influences, from the company of other women to the public display of exemplary behavior, played an important role in the socializing process. In this chapter, I have attempted to draw attention to some of the less-examined ways in which girls were socialized in virtue. One benefit of this approach has been to shed light on how very different sources might have been mutually reinforcing in guiding the moral training for girls. This is especially true in those sources that show an interest in girls' adoption and display of masculine courage for the purpose of preserving feminine chastity. Livy's Cloelia suggests how a message about *virtus* and virginity found its way to girls through the conduit of traditional Roman storytelling while Musonius Rufus' *On Why Daughters* promotes much the same idea but presents it in the more sophisticated packaging of philosophy. So whether a daughter was a student engaged in serious study or found herself encountering the statue of Cloelia, she received the message that her most important task was guarding her purity. Statements about the female capacity to be courageous like males show a pattern of looping back to a highly traditional version of feminine virtue, whether in girlhood or later life.

All of the sources we have examined emphasize that however girls absorbed their social behavior and attitudes, their focus was to remain on femininity and domesticity. The time before marriage is presented as a period in which daughters, with the guidance of family and community, learned about their place in the world. Interactions in more public areas, beyond the household, brought their own advantages and drawbacks as part of this socialization. The next chapter examines this aspect of girlhood in more depth, with attention to another family and state effort: the protection of girls' premarital virginity.