Paul on Marriage and Singleness: Reading 1 Corinthians with the Augustan Marriage Laws

by

David Alan Reed

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Abstract

This thesis examines what happens if Paul’s directives to married and single persons in 1 Corinthians 7 are read in light of Corinth’s Roman cultural context. It seeks to make analogical comparisons between Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 and the Augustan Marriage Laws known as the Lex Iulia and Lex Papipa Poppaea. When Paul’s directives are read with the Augustan marriage laws, a very complex picture of Paul develops. First of all, against “empire-critical” readers of Paul, the apostle is not entirely against all aspects of the Roman empire. Instead, this thesis demonstrates that as a colonized individual himself, Paul was a “hybrid” figure, who simultaneously borrowed from and fought against many of the ideas of Roman imperialism. Second, this work shows that when Paul disagreed with the Augustan marriage legislation, he did so mainly with respect to what it had to say about widows. In fact, Paul’s directives to widows are very similar to the thoughts of many other Roman moralists in the first-century CE. Thus, when Paul addresses widows he is standing on the side of the Roman people over and against Augustus’ legislation.

As this work comes to a close it explores how Augustus and Paul clothed their moral ideas in apocalyptic discourse. Additionally, it suggests that what Paul and Augustus have most in common is that many of their moral ideas failed to produce any results. For Paul his voice was updated and changed by the writers of the Deutero-Pauline epistles and the Pastoral epistles; for Augustus his voice was muted and refined by later Roman jurists. These types of insights are
meant to provide a “redescription” of Paul and the Corinthians to further develop future readings of Paul and 1 Corinthians 7.
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Notes on Abbreviations

The format of this thesis conforms to that specified in the Instructions for Contributors to the Catholic Biblical Quarterly. See: http://catholicbiblical.org/publications/cbq/cbq-instructions for details. The abbreviations of biblical books, journals, etc. also conform to the format of the CBQ. For classical journals see the abbreviations list in L’Année Philologique. The abbreviations of classical authors used in this thesis comes from the 2009 edition of The Oxford Classical Dictionary. Abbreviations for inscriptions can be found in Bradley H. McLean’s An Introduction to the Study of Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great down to the Reign of Constantine (323 BCE - 337 CE). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002. Abbreviations for coins can be found at: http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk. Abbreviations for papyri conforms to the abbreviations used by the Duke Papyrus Archive. Finally, all quotes from classical authors are from the Loeb Classical Library unless otherwise noted.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The interpretation of Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians is greatly affected by whether Corinth is understood as a Roman city or a Greek city. As Robert Nash observes, “[I]nterpreters have often failed to distinguish between the ancient Greek city-state of Corinth and the Roman colony of Corinth known to Paul.” For example, Gordon Fee notes the tradition that Corinth had gained a reputation for sexual vice to such an extent that Aristophanes (ca. 450-385 BCE) coined the verb Κορινθιάζομαι. He also notes that the Asclepius room in the Corinthian museum contains a large number of clay votives fashioned as human genitals that were “offered to the god for healing of that part of the body, apparently ravaged by venereal disease.”

However, even though Fee argues that the sexual promiscuity of the Corinthians has been blown

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2 Robert Scott Nash, *1 Corinthians*, ed. R. Alan Culpepper, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2009) 3. Moreover, Nash notes, “Information about the Greek city found in some ancient writings and archaeological reports has been read as if it applied to Corinth in Paul’s time.” The Romanization of ancient Corinth post 146 BCE is described in great detail by David Gilman Romano, "Post 146 B.C. Land Use in Corinth, and Planning of the Roman Colony of 44 B.C.," in *The Corinthia in the Roman Period*, ed. T. E. Gregory (Ann Arbor: JRA, 1993) 9-30. On pp. 26-27 he describes Roman Corinth as a “Hippodamian type city” with the usual division into strips of land. Thus, Roman Corinth measured 1 actus wide, per strigas. In Romano’s opinion, “Corinth was designed by an experienced Roman city planner working fully within the tradition of Roman city and colonial planning.” No one disputes that Corinth became a Roman colony under Julius Caesar in 44 BCE when the Romans consciously renamed the colony Colonia Laus Julia. See, for instance, Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) 10. In *Roman Corinth* Engels adds that “[the Romans] avoided the more common -ius or -us ethnic, which implies that the Italian colonists wished to distinguish themselves from the original Greek inhabitants. See, Engels, *Roman Corinth*, 69, citing CIG 1, no. 106. There is no reason to think, then, that Corinth was anything else than a Roman city.


4 Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2
out of proportion by most NT scholars because of their over-reliance on Strabo’s description of a thousand temple prostitutes on the Acrocorinth, he fails to note that in Roman times votive offerings to Asclepius were indicative not of sexual promiscuity but of reproductive issues.  

Jerome Murphy-O’Connor makes a similar mistake in his book *St. Paul’s Corinth: Texts and Archaeology*. He maintains that the terra cotta ex-votives from the Asclepion contributed in some way to the formation of Paul’s concept of the Corinthian community as the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.  

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5 Nash, *1 Corinthians*, 3. Fee is referring to Strabo’s description of Corinth in *Geography* 8.20c. It reads, “And the temple of Aphrodite was so rich that it owned more than a thousand temple-slaves, prostitutes, whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess. And therefore it was also on account of these women that the city was crowded with people and grew rich. For instance, the ship-captains freely squandered their money, and hence the proverb, ‘Not for every man is the voyage to Corinth.’ Moreover, it is said that a certain prostitute said to the woman who reproached her with the charge that she did not like to work or touch wool, ‘Yet such as I am, in this short time I have taken down three webs’.” See, Strabo, *Geography Books* 8-9, trans., H. L. Jones, LCL, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927). For a critical assessment of Strabo’s statement, see, Hans Conzelmann, “Korinth und die Mädchen der Aphrodite,” *NAWG* 8 (1967) 247-61; and, H. D. Saffrey, “Aphrodite à Corinthe: réflexions sur une idée reçue,” *RB* 92 (1985) 359-74. Regarding votives, James Rives notes that votive offerings were connected with vows (Latin *votum*, Greek *euchê*). As he relates, “A vow was a prayer in which a person asked a deity for some blessing and promised a specific offering in return; if the deity granted the request, the person then ‘discharged the vow’ by making the specified offering. These offerings are conventionally described as ‘votive’.” See, James Rives, *Religion in the Roman Empire*, Kindle ed., Blackwell Ancient Religions (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007) Loc. 192-3. An example of a votive offering is found in a Latin inscription on a marble plinth from the vicinity of Rome (*JLS* 3526), which reads, “To holy Silvanus; a votive offering in accordance with a vision, on account of his freedom [from slavery]; Sextus Attius Dionysius erected a statue with its base as a gift.” *RIB* 1.1778 is a Latin inscription on a small altar from a fort near Hadrian’s Wall in Britain, which records the “discharging of a vow.” It reads, “To Fortuna Augusta, on behalf of the well being of Lucius Aelius Caesar [adopted son of the emperor Antoninus Pius], in accordance with a vision; Titus Flavius Secundus, prefect of the First Cohort of Hamian Archers, discharged his vow willing and deservedly.”

6 Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth: Texts and Archaeology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1983) 190. Moreover, he relates, “[I]t is only in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 that [Paul] mentions hands, feet, eyes, genitals, etc., as part of his effort to clarify the relation of believers to one another and to Christ... Against this background Paul would have seen the dismembered limbs displayed in the Asclepion as symbols of everything that Christians should not be: ‘dead’, divided, unloving, and unloved.” Previous scholarship, represented by Schmithals, interpreted the σῶμα Χριστοῦ as part of the Jewish Christ myth to which Paul owed his mystical language. See, Walter Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Connection: An Investigation of the Letters to the Corinthians* (Nashville and New York: Abingdon, 1971) 79-80. Richard DeMaris notes a similar mistake made by Andrew Hill. Hill argues that Paul’s body illustration in 1 Cor 12:12-26 took its inspiration from the terra cotta representations of human body parts that grateful visitors dedicated at the Temple of Asclepios in Corinth in recognition of the cure the healing god had brought them. According to Hill, when Paul saw the collection of votive body parts on a supposed visit to the Asclepios Temple, it triggered his reflection on the church as the body of Christ and on individual members as parts of that body. See, Andrew E. Hill, “The Temple of Asclepius. An Alternative Source for Paul’s Body Theology,” *JBL* 99 (1980) 437-9. As DeMaris relates, “This correlation of material and textual record stumbles, however, on the fact that the votives were recovered from deposits that can be firmly dated to a time well before Paul’s stay in Corinth.” See, Richard E. DeMaris, “Cults and the Imperial Cult in Early Roman Corinth: Literary Versus Material Record,” in *Zwischen den Reichen: Neues Testament und Römische Herrschaft*, ed. Michael
offerings is that they were unknown in Paul’s day when Corinth was a Roman city. In fact, the votive offerings were buried in the ground and thus unobservable to Paul and the Corinthians.

Additionally, numerous scholars fail to appreciate that most of the comments pertaining to Corinth’s elaborate sexual appetite stem from anti-Corinthian sentiments espoused by Athenian writers of the classical period. The Athenians were angry at the Corinthians for their role in the conflict with the city of Athens in the so-called “First” Peloponnesian War (461-446 BCE). They were also angry with Corinth’s perceived instigation of the “Second” Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE), which eventually led to Athens’ fall to Sparta. According to J. B. Salmon, the Athenian critique of Corinth’s prostitution was actually about Corinth’s opulence and not its moral degradation. Thus, Nash rightly concludes, “[T]he scope and nature of prostitution in Greek Corinth is irrelevant for Roman Corinth.”

Another major problem with treating first-century Corinth as a Greek rather than a Roman colony is that archaeological research shows that the new city of Corinth was intended to be something of a “little Rome” in Greece. According to C. K. Williams, the Roman grid

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7 Richard E. Oster, "Use, Misuse and Neglect of Archaeological Evidence in Some Modern Works on 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 7,1-5; 8,10; 11,2-16; 12,14-26)," *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 83 (1992) 52-73.


system dictates the orientation of streets and buildings in Corinth, with only a few minor exceptions. In fact, when Corinth was rebuilt as a Roman colony, the forum of Roman Corinth, unusually large at 180m x 117m, was purposely designed with a distinctively Roman flavour, despite the earlier influences of Greek structures on Corinthian architecture. Ray Pickett points out that urban elites, who were involved in funding the development of Roman Corinth, went so far as to redesign their city squares to focus attention on Roman temples devoted to the worship of the emperor. As he relates, “[T]he organization of the colony was thoroughly Roman--including its architecture, political structures, and social institutions.” The extent of Corinth’s “Romanization” is evident in its temples from the Greek period, which were modernized with a distinctively Roman flair. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that altars in Corinth were often designed to imitate altars in Rome.

Additionally, the imperial cult held a prominent place in Corinth. As Karl Galinsky and Barbette Stanley Spaeth inform us, it was “embedded” in the city of Corinth. The cult began

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13 Williams, “Roman Corinth as a Commercial Center,” 31-46.
14 Williams, “Roman Corinth as a Commercial Center,” 31-46. Based on comparisons with Carthage, James Walters argues that Corinth was settled as a Roman colony with around 12,000 to 16,000 colonists. See, James C. Walters, "Civic Identity in Roman Corinth and Its Impact on Early Christians," in Urban Religion in Roman Corinth: Interdisciplinary Approaches, ed. Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Friesen (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005) 402.
16 Pickett, “Conflicts at Corinth,” 117.
with the worship of Julius Caesar. His cult is attested in the city by a single fragmentary inscription which reads, “DIVO IUL[io] CAESARI [sacrum]” (Corinth VIII.3, no. 50).\(^{19}\) In the mythology of Corinth many of the Corinthians regarded Julius Caesar as the founder of their colony. This is clearly seen by a foundation coin issued around 44-43 BCE. This coin has the laureate head of Caesar and the full ethnic: LAVS IULI CORINT -- *Colonia Laus Iulia Corinthiensis* -- on the obverse (*RPC* 1116 = *Corinth* VI 16).\(^{20}\)

Augustus issued his first coin in Corinth between 27 and 26 BCE. This particular coin issue is of great value because it combines the heads of Julius Caesar and Augustus. As M. E. H. Walbank reminds us, “The reference to the founder of the colony is obvious, but so too is the emphasis placed by the Corinthians on the link between Divus Iulius and the present ruler.”\(^{21}\) This makes Corinth a unique city within the empire, since it was uncommon to combine the heads of Julius Caesar and Augustus except in the city of Rome. Accordingly, Walbank adds, “This combination is common at Rome, but occurs much less frequently in colonies, Julian or otherwise.”\(^{22}\) In fact, Julius Caesar does not appear with Augustus at all on the coins of Carthage, a city planned at the same time as Corinth. In addition, the head of Augustus is not combined with the head of Julius Caesar at places such as Parium, Lampsacus or Alexandria in Troas, places where one would expect the heads to be combined.

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\(^{19}\) Suetonius writes, “In particular, for the adornment and convenience of the city, also for the protection and extension of the Empire, he formed more projects and more extensive ones every day... to cut a canal through the Isthmus... All these enterprises and plans were cut short by his death” (*Iul.* 44). As Murphy-O’Connor relates, “The fact that Julius Caesar thought of digging the Corinthian Canal underlines that he had founded the colony at Corinth for economic reasons.” See, Murphy-O’Connor, *St. Paul’s Corinth*, 117.

\(^{20}\) Access to Roman Provincial Coins can be found at Oxford’s Roman Provincial Coinage Online website. See: [http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/](http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/)


\(^{22}\) Walbank, “Evidence for the imperial cult in Julio-Claudian Corinth,” 202 n. 6.
The cult of Divus Iulius is also attested in Corinth by an inscription that honours the first high-priest of the provincial imperial cult of Achaia, which is dated to early in the reign of Nero. This inscription informs us of honours concerning the *flamen divi Iulii* (*CIL* III 386 = *ILS* 2718). This type of priesthood was uncommon in the Roman empire. As Walbank remarks, “This was not a common priesthood in provincial cities, even in colonies founded by Julius Caesar, since the cult of Julius Caesar was usually incorporated fairly rapidly into the worship of the *Domus Augusta.*” In addition, it is worth noting that the cult of Divus Iulius had a separate existence from the cult of Augustus in Corinth for about 100 years.

A Roman population guaranteed the Roman character of a city like Corinth. On this matter James Walters writes, “Colonists would have felt at home in Corinth because their fellow citizens shared values and tastes reflected in everything from architecture to crockery to ideas regarding education and civic responsibility.” It should come as no surprise that Walters concludes that these “shared values” were Roman values.

Anthony Spawforth goes even further in his analysis of the prosopographical data from Corinth. He deems Corinth’s aggressive program of *romanitas* one of the colony’s most striking features during the period of the early Principate. His data shows that a number of Greeks in Roman Corinth possessed Roman citizenship. Moreover, his analysis of *duoviral* coinage from Corinth helps to explain the extent of the dialogue between the Hellenistic and Roman worlds which merged at Corinth. Of the forty-two extant names, he is able to identify nine as probably

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26 I use the term “dialogue” instead of “Romanization” because the term “Romanization” is too one-sided in its characterization of what was likely a much more complex phenomenon in antiquity. Thus, as Greg Woolf has shown, many contemporary studies refer to the complex interaction of the Hellenistic and Roman worlds as a
from freedman stock (19%), three probably from veteran families (6%), fourteen from the milieu of negotiatores (29%), four provincial Greek notables (8%), one elite Roman (2%), and nine, which he is unable to determine (19%). When added together, Spawforth’s evidence paints the following picture of first-century CE Corinth:

1. The political functions and civic buildings of the old city were destroyed.
2. There is no evidence that previous inhabitants had any connection with the new colony.
3. There is no evidence that the new colonists were connected to the city’s Greek past.
4. There was little incentive for the new colonists to seek connections with the native population of Achaia.

What this means is that in the first-century CE, the Roman side of the dialogue was more dominant in Corinth than was the Greek side of the dialogue. Unfortunately, this is something that modern scholarship has often neglected in its analyses of Paul and his first letter to the Corinthians, which means that there is a need for a redescription.

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27 Spawforth, “Roman Corinth,” 169.
29 Redescription is defined by Cameron and Miller as, “[A] form of explanation that privileges difference and involves comparison and translation, category formation and rectification, definition and theory.” See, Ron Cameron and Merrill P. Miller, "Introducing Paul and the Corinthians," in Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians, ed. Ron Cameron and Merrill P. Miller (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011) 1.
Research on 1 Corinthians 7 and the Augustan marriage laws is meagre at best, but the
impetus for what follows stems from a brief comment by Justin Meggitt. In his book *Paul,
Poverty and Survival*, he points out that in analyses of Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians,
Pauline scholars often dismiss the works of classicists to their own detriment, especially those
works which deal with Roman cultural customs in the first-century CE.\(^{30}\) For example, he
maintains that if Pauline scholars would take the social makeup of Roman Corinth seriously,
then they would end up analyzing Paul’s remarks on marriage and celibacy in 1 Corinthians 7 in
light of the Augustan legislation on marriage instead of turning to the philosophical schools or
Hellenistic customs as is usually done.\(^{31}\) Though Meggitt does not attempt to prove his point, he
does suggest that if Paul’s directives on marriage and celibacy in 1 Corinthians 7 were analyzed
in light of Augustus’s marriage reforms, then Paul’s preference for celibacy would likely be seen
as some sort of first-century political remark instead of an endorsement of asceticism. As he
relates, “[Paul’s] espousal of celibacy, politically innocuous to us, was in direct conflict with


Augustus’ marriage legislation which encouraged fecundity and matrimony within the Empire.”32

The problem with Meggitt’s suggestion is twofold. First, he assumes without any qualification that Paul is talking about celibacy in 1 Cor 7, and, second, he posits a very uncomplicated binary relationship between Paul and the Roman empire.33 His argument assumes an us-versus-them mentality, or, perhaps, a Paul-versus-Rome mentality in which everything Paul says is revolutionary and everything Rome says is wrong.34 This approach, which Davina Lopez calls an “empire-critical” approach to Paul, has also been adopted by Richard Horsley, Neil Elliott, Dieter Georgi, Rollin Ramasaran, and Efrain Agosto.35 Such an
approach fails to take account of the fact that the theology and practice of the early Jesus movements nurtured what Bruce Longenecker calls a “malleable hybridity” with regard to the Roman imperial order.36

What Meggitt fails to note is the fact that anti-Roman statements within the New Testament arose to dominate in some contexts, remain ambiguous in others, and were at times entirely non-existent.37 As Longenecker suggests, “What has been neglected in studies of Paul and the Roman imperial order is the fact that one could be critical of aspects of Roman rule without necessarily being anti-Roman.”38

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38 Longenecker, Remember the Poor, 270 n. 28. Cf. Christopher Bryan, Render to Caesar: Jesus, the Early Church, and the Roman Superpower (New York: Oxford University Press USA, 2005). Meggitt follows Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins, 10th anniversary ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1994) 225. Schüssler Fiorenza contends, “Paul’s advice to remain free from the marriage bond was a frontal assault on the institutions of existing law and cultural ethos, especially since it was given to people who lived in the urban centers of the Roman Empire.” Unfortunately she makes this point without ever offering any sort of analysis of the contents of Augustus’ marriage laws. Schüssler Fiorenza’s use of the Augustan laws in interpreting Paul’s comments in 1 Corinthians 7 seems to fit with a modified version of what Kathleen Corley has called, “The Classic Christian Feminist Reconstruction” of Christian origins. This feminist theory of Christian origins maintains that early Christianity was more egalitarian than later forms of Christianity. In the case of Paul, this would mean that in the undisputed letters of Paul one finds a Paul who is more in line with modern feminist notions such as the equality of the sexes. However, this position is changed by later followers of Paul in the Deutero-Pauline letters and in the Pastoral epistles. For a critique of feminist reconstructions of Christian origins, see, Kathleen E. Corley, "Feminist Myths of Christian Origins," in Reimagining Christian Origins: A Colloquium Honoring Burton L. Mack, ed. Elizabeth A. Castelli and Hal Taussig (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International,
Margaret MacDonald takes a position similar to Meggitt’s. She notes that many women who were influenced by Pauline Christianity chose celibacy over marriage.  

She finds Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 striking in light of the urban world of Greco-Roman society which encouraged marriage and procreation. As she relates, “[T]he Roman state took direct measures, in the form of legislation, to discourage inclinations to remain unmarried, childless, or both. With respect to women, the laws promulgated by the Emperor Augustus and his successors made marriage mandatory between 20 and 50 years of age.”

It is in second and third century CE texts known collectively as the *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* that MacDonald sees Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 clashing with Roman society at large. For example, she points out that in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* there are several stories in which women are inspired by Paul’s advice to forego marriage or to dissolve existing marriages. As she relates, “Although they have a legendary quality, [these stories] are generally understood as reflecting elements of the societal clash that occurred when early Christian women challenged the arrangements of non-believing households.”

This leads MacDonald to conclude that unmarried women and men in the Corinthian community would have seemed strange enough to have elicited suspicion from friends, neighbours, and family members in the city of Corinth. In fact, she thinks that throughout 1 Corinthians 7 there are

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40 As she points out Augustus’ legislation addressed fears about falling birth rates and was therefore meant to address concerns about the disintegration of the family and traditional moral values. For more on this, see MacDonald, “Early Christian Women Married to Unbelievers,” *Studies in Religion* 19 (1990) 221-34.
41 MacDonald, “Reading Real Women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul,” 212.
42 MacDonald, “Reading Real Women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul,” 212. See, as well, Margaret Y. MacDonald, "Early Christian Women Married to Unbelievers," *Studies in Religion* 19 (1990) 221-34.
43 MacDonald, "Reading Real Women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul," 212. For more on sex and marriage in *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, see MacDonald, 236-53.
44 MacDonald, “Reading Real Women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul,” 212-3.
numerous indications that women in particular placed a special importance on their celibate state. For example, she contends that parallel statements directed at both women and men in 1 Corinthians 7 and 1 Cor 11:2-11 demonstrate that Paul was attempting to draw women into discussions about sex and marriage for the purpose of urging them to remain unmarried.\(^{45}\) She also notes that when Paul refers to celibate women, he typically calls them “virgins,” suggesting that this was a label which had become an important mark of distinction within the Corinthian community.\(^{46}\)

Though MacDonald is aware of the fact that the Augustan legislation required divorcees and widows to remarry anywhere from six months to two years, it is somewhat surprising that she says nothing about the connection between the Augustan laws and Paul’s advice to widows to remain as he is (7:7-9) or to remarry “in the Lord” (7:39-40).\(^{47}\) Instead, she views Paul’s remarks to widows as evidence that women within the Corinthian community were the ones encouraging others to remain unmarried.\(^{48}\)

Several problems exist with MacDonald’s reading of 1 Corinthians 7 in light of Augustus’ legislation. First of all, like Meggitt, she assumes without any qualifications that Paul is discussing celibacy. Additionally, though she never suggests that Paul’s advice is a direct attack on Augustus’ marriage laws, MacDonald seems to think that the Augustan laws affected women more than they did men in the Roman empire. The problem with this is that most of our data from the Roman world suggests that it was men and not women who actively resisted Augustus’ moral reforms, which means that Roman men may have been affected by the laws.

\(^{45}\) MacDonald, “Reading Real Women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul,” 213.
\(^{46}\) MacDonald, “Reading Real Women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul,” 213. She cites as examples 1 Cor 7:28, 34, 36, 37, 38.
\(^{47}\) MacDonald’s basic source for interpreting the Augustan legislation is Jane F. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law and Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991) 77-78.
\(^{48}\) MacDonald, “Reading Real Women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul,” 213.
more than Roman women were.\textsuperscript{49} Moreover, there is a tacit assumption in MacDonald’s work that Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 have more to do with women than with men.

Regarding Paul’s advice to widows to either “remain unmarried” as he is or to remarry “in the Lord,” MacDonald fails to notice that Paul contradicts himself. In 1 Cor 7:7-9 Paul’s wish is for widows to remain unmarried, while in vv. 39-40 he gives them the option of remarrying in the Lord or remaining bachelorettes.\textsuperscript{50} In light of Augustus’ legislation this is a significant oversight, since Paul’s advice to widows in vv. 7-9 adheres to the ancient Roman ideal of the univira, or wife of only one husband, an institution Augustus sought to replace.

Additionally, it is not clear whether or not the widows in the Corinthian community are women or men. By failing to see this, MacDonald misses the complexities involved in comparing Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 with Augustus’ legislation. The majority of Roman citizens were angry with Augustus for doing away with the traditional concept of the univira. As we shall see, this has significant implications for understanding 1 Corinthians 7 when compared to Augustus’ marriage legislation.

A few decades ago Clifford Geertz made the perceptive observation that the point of any academic discipline is to refine debates that are already in progress. Regarding his own profession of anthropology he wrote, “Anthropology…is a science whose progress is marked less by a perfection of consensus than by a refinement of debate. What gets better is the precision with which we vex each other.”\textsuperscript{51} In the spirit of Geertz, the point of this study is to refine an ongoing debate regarding Paul’s directives on singleness and celibacy in 1 Corinthians 7 and to

\textsuperscript{49} Suzanne Dixon, \textit{Reading Roman Women: Sources, Genres and Real Life} (London: Duckworth, 2001) 56.


provide a *redescription* of Paul and the Corinthians highlighting both similarities and differences between Paul on marriage and singleness and the Augustan legislation on marriage and singleness.\textsuperscript{52} The reason this study will compare the Augustan marriage laws with 1 Corinthians 7 is that studies which explore what can be learned if Paul’s directives to the Corinthian Christians are compared with the Augustan laws on marriage are meagre at best.\textsuperscript{53} Additionally, when comparisons have been made, they only take into account certain features of Augustus’ legislation, and they often fail to notice that Paul can be simultaneously critical and accommodating of Roman imperial rule. This means, then, that a more nuanced comparison between Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 and the Augustan legislation needs to be undertaken, so that we do not make the same errors as Meggitt and MacDonald.

The comparisons made in this study will be what Jonathan Z. Smith terms “analogical” comparisons instead of “genealogical” comparisons.\textsuperscript{54} In an analogical investigation one does

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\textsuperscript{52} I am attempting here a comparison based on analogy rather than genealogy as described by Jonathan Z. Smith in *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). Additionally, there seems to me a reluctance in the scholarly literature to consider any other models for Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 than Jewish, Hellenistic, and/or Greco-Roman philosophical discussions of marriage. This is similar to a point Richard Ascough makes on the reluctance of scholars to use any other models than that of synagogues for understanding the Pauline communities. See, Richard S. Ascough, *Paul’s Macedonian Associations* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) 2.

\textsuperscript{53} There are a few other works on 1 Corinthians 7 which have made passing reference to Paul and the Augustan marriage laws. For example, Robert Grant assumes that Paul and the Corinthians were well aware of the Augustan laws, given the romanization of Corinth. He asserts that the Augustan laws were of prime importance for Paul noting that “Roman imperial policy... agreed with Paul’s attempts to regulate sex among Christians at Corinth.” A major problem with Grant’s argument is that he never explains how Paul would have known about the laws, nor does he address the question of whether or not the laws were known in first-century Corinth. See, Robert M. Grant, *Paul in the Roman World: The Conflict at Corinth* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001) 118. Similarly, Bruce Winter suspects that there is some sort of connection between Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 and the Augustan legislation. However, after a review of the laws which leads him to conclude that they greatly shaped first-century society, he decides to jettison the legislation as a resource for understanding 1 Corinthians 7 with little to no comment. See, Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 29-30, 50-58, 125.

\textsuperscript{54} Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 42-47. Additionally, Smith maintains, “It is axiomatic that comparison is never a matter of identity. Comparison requires the acceptance as the grounds of its being interesting, and a methodical manipulation of that difference to achieve some stated cognitives end. The questions of comparison are questions of judgment with respect to difference: What differences are to be maintained in the interests of comparative inquiry? What differences can be defensibly relaxed and relativized in light of tasks at hand?” See, Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*, Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992) 13-14.
not undertake the investigation in order to find direct parallels and/or relationships. Rather, one view of marriage (i.e. Paul’s) will be compared to another (i.e. Augustus’) in order to highlight both similarities and differences. As Smith contends, it is not so much the similarities that matter but the differences. It is precisely in discovering these differences that we are invited into “negotiation, classification and comparison.” Thus, it is only in describing the peculiarities of Paul’s directives on marriage in relation to Augustus’ directives that we will be able to note what is distinctive about Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7.

This study will attempt such a comparison by analyzing Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7:7-8, 26-29, 32-35, and 39-40 in light of Corinth’s Roman cultural identity. A comparison between Paul’s directives on singleness to the Corinthians and Augustus’ legislation will demonstrate that when Corinth is treated as a Roman city, advocating singleness over marriage is not just about asceticism nor is it exclusively about politics. Instead, this study will show that Paul’s directives on singleness side with Augustus’ legislation and speak out against it, joining other voices from the Roman empire which also spoke out against the Augustan reforms. As Longenecker maintains, Paul is engaged in “malleable hybridity.”

In order to complete this task, this study will utilize both comparative work and historical analysis. The goal of this study is to elucidate what Paul and the Augustan legislation have in common and to identify the distinctive features which set them apart from one another, regardless of whether Paul and the Corinthians knew about the legislation or not. This will require an analysis of inscriptions, papyri, coins, and Roman literary material, since we are forced to reconstruct the Augustan marriage laws from various sources.

55 Smith, Drudgery Divine, 42, 47.
56 Smith, Drudgery Divine, 42.
57 Commentators typically view vv. 7-8 and 26-28 as the most important verses that engage the issue of celibacy in 1 Corinthians 7. See, for instance, David R. Cartlidge, "1 Corinthians 7 as a Foundation for a Christian Sex Ethic," The Journal of Religion 55 (1975) 220-34.
This study begins in chapter two with a summary of the Augustan legislation’s attitude toward singleness and demonstrates how Augustus’ moral reform program stretched throughout the empire to places as distant from Rome as Syria. This chapter’s focus is on legalities such as the *ius trium liberorum* or the “right of three children,” the penalties for being a *caelibis* (bachelor), the place of widows and the *univira*, and the rewards or *privilegiis in honoribus*, which were given to fathers of multiple children. It also examines the question of who was most affected by these laws and the mythology surrounding the legislation. Moreover, it demonstrates that the real concern of the Augustan marriage laws is not marriage and sex per se but the production of children.

In chapter three I turn to Paul. This chapter examines 1 Cor 7:7-8; 26-29, 32-35, and 39-40. Here I maintain that Paul was not talking about “celibacy” but “singleness,” which is similar to discussions among classical authors involving the Augustan legislation. Additionally, I maintain that the real issue in 1 Corinthians 7 is not what Paul says about sex but what he does not say about procreation and marriage. In fact, the most important thing Paul neglects in 1 Corinthians 7 is a discussion about marriage naturally leading to the production of children. Because of this, I argue, contrary to the norm in scholarship, that Paul has a negative view of marriage and children, which is more at home among the Cynics than it is among the Stoics and various Jewish authors.

Chapter Four compares Paul’s advice to the Augustan laws. This chapter includes a discussion of the widows in the Corinthian community in light of the Roman concept of the *univira*. Additionally, this chapter points out that both Paul and Augustus situate their directives on marriage and singleness in the language of apocalyptic discourse. Finally, this chapter contends that Paul’s advice to the Corinthians creates a complex relationship between himself,
the Corinthians, and the Roman empire, which is similar to what the postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha calls “hybridity.” On the one hand, the comparisons in this chapter demonstrate that Paul was against part of Augustus’ reform program, while, on the other hand, they demonstrate that Paul’s critique of the Augustan legislation was similar to the critiques of other Romans, who also found portions of Augustus’ reforms contemptible. More to the point, this chapter shows that Paul’s advice was not unique. Instead it reveals that Paul was a product of his own culture, who was caught up in various debates about women and men in the first-century CE. Contrary to Meggitt, the redescription presented here will show that Paul’s advice was not as “political” or “liberating” as one might hope.
Chapter 2

The Augustan Marriage Laws

Augustus enacted several laws that were designed to address concerns he had about Roman family life, including marriage and child-bearing. The legislation itself consisted of three laws: the lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus (Julian law on the marriages of the social orders) of 18 BCE; the lex Iulia de adulteriis (Julian law on adultery), probably also composed around 18 BCE; and the lex Papia-Poppaea (Papian-Poppaean law) of 9 CE. The modern historian is forced to reconstruct the laws from ancient references, which include but are not limited to: Res Gestae 6; Horace Carmen saeculare 4.5.21-4; Ovid Fasti 2.139; Dio Cassius 54.16; Suetonius Divus Augustus 34; Ulpian 11.20: Digest 23.2; 44-6 also known as the Law of Citations. With these laws Augustus attempted to “restore moral feeling and self-respect to men who had survived a historical catastrophe in which the best had probably been killed.” This means that the “official” reason for the enactment of these laws was to “stimulate the birthrate and secure the state’s military manpower.” With this in mind, Andrew Wallace-

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59 For more, see, Judith Evans Grubbs, Women and the Law in the Roman Empire: A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood (London: Routledge, 2002) 83-84. It should be noted that the last law, passed twenty-seven years after the first two, was formed in response to the unhappiness on the part of the elite. The lex Papia-Poppaea modified previous provisions of the lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus. One of the most recent treatments of the lex Iulia de adulteriis can be found in Catharine Edwards, The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 34-62.

60 These sources have been collected by P. Jörs, “Ueber das Verhaltnis der Lex Iulia de Maritandis Ordinibus zur Lex Papia Poppaea” (University of Bonn Dissertation, 1882). See, as well, Riccobono; and, Rotondi.


Hadrill argues that the legislation was only directed at the elites within the state. The other option is to follow Susan Treggiari, who sees a broader application of the laws and maintains that Augustus’ legislation arose out of a need to “encourage nuptiality and reproductivity in order to supply Rome with soldiers and administrators, making Augustus’ moral reform program a type of “eugenics program.” Both of these interpretations will be considered below.

This chapter begins by exploring the primary source material related to the Augustan legislation. It then summarizes the main features of the laws, paying particular attention to the *ius liberorum* and those Romans designated *caelibes* or *orbus*. It also explores the function of rewards and punishments for having or not having children, and it examines the position of widows within the empire. Additionally it points out that Augustus’ laws did not outlaw sex, since celibacy in the Greco-Roman world was almost always temporary. The overall thesis of this chapter is that the Augustan laws affected every level of Roman society, and that they had far reaching consequences throughout the cities in the various provinces of the empire.

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65 A *caelibes* is an unmarried person, while an *orbus* is a married person without children. These terms say nothing about whether the person or persons involved are sexually active or not. These two classes are discussed in some detail by Gaius. He writes, “Moreover, unmarried people (*caelibes*), who are forbidden by the *lex Iulia* to receive inheritances and legacies, and also the childless (*orbi*) whom the *lex Papia* forbids to receive more than half of an inheritance or of legacies...” (*Institutiones* 2.111). Cf. Ulpian *Regulae* 16.1, where it is implied that the unmarried and married but childless were only able to receive bequests from close relatives--up to the sixth generation. See as well, *Fragmenta Vaticana* 216-7. According to Ulpian the *lex Papia* later allowed *orbi* to take half from relatives up to the third degree, if made heirs in their wills (*Regulae* 18). For more on the *caelibes* see, R. Astolfi, *La Lex Iulia et Papia*, Fac. di Giur (Padua: dell'Univ. di Padova, 1970) 77.
67 Dio’s account of the law (55.25.5-6), which he dates to 5 CE, is incorrect in suggesting that taxes from the Augustan laws did not apply to the poor. Cf. Tactius, who writes, “There followed a proposal to relax the provisions of the *Lex Papia Poppaea*, which Augustus had sanctioned in his old age to reinforce the Julian Legislation (*Leges Iuliae*) with more severe penalties for celibacy, and as a means of increasing revenue to the Treasury. But it had failed to counter the current fashion for the childless state by encouraging marriage or the desire to raise a family. Meanwhile the numbers of those threatened by the law was steadily increasing, since every household was vulnerable to the contrived denunciations of informers. Hitherto their own misdemeanors had been their only source of danger; now it was the law itself” (*Annales* 3.25; emphasis mine).
1 Primary Sources

One must reconstruct the Augustan laws from scattered data ranging from Augustus’ own *Res Gestae*, to Ulpian’s *Regulae*, to the *Digest*. In the *Res Gestae*, Augustus argues that it is his job to oversee both the laws and customs of the Roman people, and that he is doing nothing but upholding ancestral law. As he relates:

In the consulship of Marcus Vinicius\(^{68}\) and Quintus Lucretius\(^{69}\) [19 BCE], and later of Publius Lentulus and Gnaeus Lentulus\(^{70}\) [18 BCE], and thirdly of Paullus Fabius Maximus\(^{71}\) and Quintus Tubero\(^{72}\) [11 BCE], even though the senate and people of Rome were in agreement that I should be appointed on my own as guardian of laws and customs with supreme power, I accepted no magistracy conferred upon me that contravened ancestral custom. The things which the senate wanted to be accomplished by me at that time, I executed by virtue of my tribunican power,\(^{73}\) for which power I myself, of my own accord, five times demanded and received a colleague from the senate.\(^{74}\)

\[^{68}\] M. Vinicius became suffect consul in 19 BCE. He was a *novus homo* or “new man” and also a close friend of Augustus. See, Dio 53.26.4-5; Vell. Pat. 2.104.2; Suet. *Aug.* 71.2; *PIR* V 444. See, as well, Ronald Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) 44, 332, 393, 426.

\[^{69}\] An elderly *novus homo*, who had commanded troops for Pompey in 49 BCE and survived being proscribed. See Val. Max 6.7.2; App. *B Civ.* 4.6.44; *PIR* 1 L412.


\[^{71}\] A close friend of Augustus. See, *PIR* 2.


\[^{73}\] As Cooley notes, “Augustus’ emphasis upon his tribunican power (4.4, 6.2, 15.1-2) could be a way of representing himself as concerned with protecting the interests of the common man at Rome.” See, Cooley, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, 40.

\[^{74}\] This translation is from Cooley, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, 64.
The pattern is clear. Augustus disassociated himself from anything that resembled an institutionalizing of his role. Institutionalizing would run the risk of giving offence, stirring resentment, and possibly provoking conspiracy, especially within the senatorial class."  

However, ancient historians have varying views on this matter. For example, Suetonius reports that Augustus did accept the post for life: recepit et morum legumque regimen aeque perpetuum (Aug. 27.5). Moreover, Dio Cassius records two occasions on which Augustus supposedly undertook the task of supervising the morals of the Roman people for a duration of five years (19 BCE and 12 BCE.; 54.10.5; 30.1). Aware of these inconsistencies, John Carter, John Rich, and J. A. Crook seek to make sense of the evidence by arguing that Suetonius and Dio are confused about the matter. They suggest that the discrepancy likely arose from the fact that although Augustus states that he rejected the office, he did end up accomplishing what was required of it. Similarly, R. Ridley concludes that some of the later Roman historians may have assumed that Augustus accepted the post since he exercised its power.

What Augustus promotes in the *Res Gestae* is supposedly a new philosophical stance on morality. Something that had previously been a public matter in Rome, would now become a matter of the state. Prior to Augustus, two censors would periodically assess the moral conduct of all citizens, especially during a census. If they found a Roman citizen guilty of an infraction against the laws of Rome, they would remove them from their voting tribe. If one was a senator or an equestrian, then they would demote them.

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The ideas Augustus promotes in the *Res Gestae* are nothing new and go back to the theories of Plato. This leads many to question whether or not anything Augustus says is even original. As Pál Čsillag notes, “[O]wing to Hellenistic influences, these guide-lines made lasting impressions on the Roman statesmen. Plutarch, perhaps under the effects of Augustan legislation, speaks in his parallel biographies of the struggle of the Spartan Lycurgus against luxury and of his attention to matrimony and the procreation of children.”

Additionally, we learn from Plutarch that Rome’s second king, Numa Pompilius, granted benefits to mothers of three children and to a son who married with his father’s consent. Augustus was not the first, then, to try and increase the population of Rome. The first attempt goes back to the Second Punic War, and it seems that Augustus knew he was building his reform program on ideas stretching back to the Gracchi, who also tried to address the problem of a declining population.

Suetonius recalls a story concerning a speech Augustus gave to the Roman senate in which he promotes marriage and child-rearing by quoting the censor Metellus Macedonicus (131-130 BCE) to justify his own policies. He writes:

> He even read entire volumes to the senate and called the attention of the people to them by proclamations; for example, the speeches of Quintus Metellus ‘On Increasing the Family’, and of Rutilius ‘On the Height of Buildings’; to convince them that he was not the first to give attention to such matters, but that they had aroused the interest even of their forefathers.

Etiam libros totos et senatui recitavit et populo notos per edictum saepe fecit, ut orationes Q. Metelli “de Prole Augenda” et Rutili “de Modo Aedificiorum,” quo magis persuaderet utramque rem non a se primo animadversam, sed antiquis iam tunc curae fuisse.

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79 Čsillag, 53.
Augustus’ use of Rome’s past in his moral reforms is significant because it played directly into the ideology of the return of the Golden Age.

In his *Epodi* Horace describes the time of the civil wars as dark days of tumult. He writes: *Altera iam teritur bellis civilibus aetas, suis et ipsa Roma viribus ruit* (16). In what can only be described as apocalyptic longing, he proclaims Jupiter’s election of the Roman people, who are a “righteous people” (*Iuppiter illa piae secrevit litora genti*). Ultimately, he praises the return of the *tempus aureum*, or, “Golden Age,” which is presumably ushered in by Augustus.  

As Andrew Wallace-Hadrill notes, Virgil follows this type of ideological thinking in his *Eclogues*. In these poems Virgil proclaims the coming of a blissful age in which sheep will grow purple wool—an reference to a time of great change (4.42-5).  

What drives Augustus’ reforms is the devastation of the civil wars, which had disastrous effects on the Roman family. After the battle of Actium in 31 BCE, the belief spread throughout Rome that the abandonment of morality precipitated the civil wars.  

We can trace this line of thought back to the days of Julius Caesar when Cicero argued that the censors should register the children of citizens, prevent celibacy, and control morals (*Leg. Man.* 3.7). In fact, Cicero links the origin of the family to the ideals of unity and justice. In *De finibus* he writes:

> In the whole area of what is morally right of which we are speaking, there is nothing so glorious or wide-ranging as the unity of human beings with each other and the partnership and sharing in advantages and love of the human race, which springs from our first begetting, since children are loved by their parents and the whole household is joined together by marriage and offspring. Then it gradually spreads outside the house, first to blood-relatives, then to relatives by marriage, then to friends, neighbours, fellow citizens, and the allies of the state, and eventually embraces the whole human race. This attitude of mind, which gives each his own

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84 “No more will wool be taught to put on varied hues, but of himself the ram in the meadows will change his fleece, now to sweetly blushing purple, now to a saffron yellow; and scarlet shall clothe the grazing lambs at will” (*Eclogues* 4).
and which generously and fairly protects that partnership of human unity, is called justice. To it are linked dutifulness, goodness, liberality, kindness, courtesy, and similar virtues.86

In omni autem honesto de quo loquimur nihil est tam illustre nec quod latius pateat quam coniunctio inter homines hominum et quasi quaedam societas et communicatio utilitatum et ipsa caritas generis humani, quae nata a primo satu, quod a procreatoribus nati diliguntur et tota domus coniugio et stirpe coniungit, serpit sensim foras, cognationibus primum, tum affinitatibus, deinde amicitii, post vicinitatibus, tum civibus et iis qui publice socii atque amici sunt, deinde totius complex gentis humanae; quae animi affectio suum cuique tribuens atque hanc quam dico societatem coniunctionis humanae munifice et aeque tuens iustitia dicitur, cuit sunt adiunctae pietas, bonitas, liberalitas, benignitas, comitas, quaeque sunt generis eiusdem (5.65)

The Romans envy the apparent morality of the distant past.87 For example, in the Bellum Catilinae 10, Sallust speaks of Rome’s past as a time when the country had grown great and the people practiced justice (Sed ubi labore atque iustitia res publica crevit, reges magni bello domiti). He then mourns the present era where fortune (fortuna) has grown cruel and the Romans have begun to lust after money and power (Igitur primo pecuniae, deinde imperi cupidus crevit). Demands for the good old days can be seen as early as 46 BCE. In that year Cicero called upon Gaius Caesar to remedy the ills of the present:

It is for you alone, Gaius Caesar, to reanimate all that you see lying shattered, as was inevitable, by the shock of war itself; courts of law must be set on foot, licentiousness must be checked, and growth of population fostered; all...must be knit together by stringent regulation (Marcell. 8.23).

Similar ideas can be found in Gellius’ Noctes Atticae. Here Gellius chides the people of Rome for their extravagance:

Finally there was the Julian law which was laid before the People while Augustus was emperor. Under this there were fixed limits to expenditure on feasts and banquets: two hundred sesterces on ordinary working days; three hundred on the Kalends, Nones, and Ides, and certain other festivals; but for weddings and their associated banquets, one thousand sesterces.

86 From the speech of M. Piso, explaining the position of Antiochus, the contemporary head of the academy.
87 Plato also held private morals to be a central concern of the state. See, Field Jr., “The Purpose of the lex Iulia et Papia Poppae,” 399-400.
Capito Ateius says that there was still another decree--I can’t remember for certain whether of the defied Augustus or of Tiberius Caesar--under which for a certain number of high days and holy days the permitted expenditure for banquets was raised from three hundred to two thousand sesterces, so that at least some limits should be imposed upon the flooding tide of extravagance (2.24.14-15)

One finds similar notions in Horace’s *Carmen saeculare* 4.5.21-4. Originally this hymn was recorded on marble and likely expressed what Augustus considered the ideal standard for Roman poetry. We also know of the hymn’s existence from an inscription which gives an account of the games known as the *ludi saeculares*. It reads: *carmen composuit Q. Horatius Flaccus* (*CIL VI.32323*). It is also the only extant contemporary reference to the poet Horace.

The poem itself is composed of three triads (A, I (1-12), II (13-24), III (25-36), and B, I (37-48),

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91 Jessee Benedict Carter, *The Religion of Numa and Other Essays on the Religion of Ancient Rome* (New York: MacMillan, 1905) 168. We also learn from this inscription that the hymn (*carmen*) was sung by boys and girls on June 3, when the final offerings had been completed, first on the Palatine and then on the Capitolinum (lines 147-48). Regarding the inscription Arthur Gordon relates, “Several fragments of white-marble blocks (the lower-right one reportedly 16-20 cm. thick) that formed one side, presumably the front, of a large monument (somewhat more than 3.02 x 1.12 m.), all the fragments of which except one in the Vatican are set up, in restored form, near the NW corner of the Chiostro of the Mus. Naz. Rom., Rome (inv. no. 1023), where they were seen in 1948 and 1973. The Vatican fragment was found in the 15th or 16th cent. in Rome, apparently near where the other fragments, plus many others belonging to a Serveran monument of the same character for the games of A.D. 204, were found in 1890—on the left bank of the Tiber near S. Giovanni dei Fiorentini. Letter heights: 1.0-1.35, mostly 1.1.-1.2, cm.; tall letters ca. 1.5 or 1.6 to 2 cm.” See, Arthur E. Gordon, *Illustrated Introduction to Latin Epigraphy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983) 100-01. A picture of *CIL 6.32323* can be found in the back of Gordon, plate 15. Lines 147-154, which contain the reference to Horace’s *Carmen Saeculare* read as follows: sacrificioque perfecto pueri [x]xvi quibus denuntiatum erat, patrimi et matrimi, et puellae totidem / carmen cecinerunt; eo[dem]que modo in Capitilio. / *Carmen composuit Q(uintus) Hor[at]ius Flaccus*. / XVvir(i) adfuerunt Imp(erat) Ca[e]sar, M(arco) Agrippa [plus 17 more names]. Ludis saeculicis dimissis, h(ora) [1-3 letters], iuxta eum locum ubi sacrificium erat factum superrioribus noctibus et / theatrum positum et sca[e]na, metae positae quadririgaeq[ue] sunt missae et desultores misit Potitus Messalla / (plus 14 more lines). The complete inscription can be found in Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome: Volume II - A Sourcebook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 5.7b.

II (49-60), III (61-72)) and was probably first sung in the Temple of Apollo. According to Michael Putnam, Horace unites the past and the future into the present, something Augustus was keen on doing throughout his reign.

Horace wrote this poem around 17 BCE, or six years after his first lyric collection. The year 17 BCE is significant because in this year Augustus decided to celebrate the *ludi saeculares* after an interval of a century and a third of another one. The date was also appropriate because it was now fourteen years since the battle of Actium, and Augustus’ moral legislation had finally been passed one year prior in 18 BCE.

In the hymn Horace comes close to hailing the return of the Golden Age, perhaps as a response to the contempt many held for *pudor* and *pudicitia*. He writes:

You whose gentle function it is to open the way for births in due season, protect our mothers, O Ilithyia, or Lucina if you prefer that name, or Genitalis. O goddess, be pleased to rear our young, and to grant success to the Fathers’ edicts on the yoking together of men and women and on the marriage law for raising a new crop of children, so that the unfailing cycle of ten times eleven years may bring round singing and games that are thronged with people three times by daylight and as often in the pleasant time of night.

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96 Fraenkel, *Horace*, 381 suggests that the hymn was fashioned after the writings of Livius Andronicus and other ancient poets.
97 For example, in *Bellum Catilinae* 12 Sallust writes: “As soon as riches came to be held in honour, when glory, dominion, and power followed in their train, virtue began to lose its lustre, poverty to be considered a disgrace, blamelessness to be termed malevolence. Therefore as the result of riches, luxury and greed, united with insolence, took possession of our young manhood. They pillaged, squandered; set little value on their own, coveted the goods of others; they disregarded modesty, chastity (pudorem, pudicitiam), everything human and divine; in short, they were utterly thoughtless and reckless.” Karl Galinsky questions whether or not Horace is promoting a true “Golden Age.” As he relates, “The hymn suggestively voices some of the grand Augustan themes, but like the oracles and the acts of the games, stops short of proclaiming a Golden Age, and especially a Golden Age of automatic bliss or felicity.” See, Karl Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) 102. *TLL* 1.1164-70 also demonstrates that *aevum*, typically translated “age,” can also mean a “lifetime” or a “generation.”
lenis, Ilithyia, tuere matres,  
sive tu Lucina probas vocari  
seu Genitalis:  
diva, producas subolem, patrumque  
prosperes decreta super iugandis  
feminis prolisque novae feraci  
lege marita,  
certus undenos decies per annos  
orbis ut cantus referatque ludos  
ter die claro totiensque grata  
nocte frequentis.

E. Fraenkel notes that the reference to the *lege marita* is an unambiguous allusion to the Augustan marriage legislation.\(^9^9\) He writes, “[T]he legislation which is the theme of these lines is not concerned with technicalities of private or public law but goes straight to the roots of the life of human society.”\(^1^0^0\) He imagines a situation where Rome’s handsome youth triumphantly sing this hymn as the people of Rome wish for a future *saeculum* in which there will again be many Roman children.\(^1^0^1\) This is also the opinion of Michèle Lowrie, who writes, “[T]he entire poem celebrates the Augustan peace and Horace refers conspicuously to the marriage legislation (17-20).”\(^1^0^2\)

The poem continues with mention of the Trojan and Julian ancestor, Aeneas. This may only seem like an innuendo in the poem, but it is actually a clear reference to Augustus: *clarus Anphisae Venerisque sanguis* ‘illustrious blood of Anchises and Venus’.\(^1^0^3\) Moreover, the hymn proceeds with a prayer for the upright *mores* of Rome’s youth. As Karl Galinsky notes, *mores*

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\(^9^9\) Cf. ChLA.IV.249, which contains “lege Iulia [quae de maritandis ordinibus(?)].”  
\(^1^0^0\) Fraenkel, *Horace*, 374.  
\(^1^0^1\) Cf. Beard, North, and Price, *Religions of Rome - Vol. I*, 203. They write, “[The hymn was] sung on the third day by a choir of twenty seven boys and twenty seven girls... [it] stressed the central importance of Augustus: ‘May the illustrious descendant of Anchises and Venus obtain the help of you gods whom he worships with white oxen, superior to the enemy, merciful to the prostrate foe’.”  
\(^1^0^2\) Lowrie, *Horace and Augustus*, 86. Lowrie also notes that though some scholars argue that the reference to the marriage legislation is “inartistic,” the reference along with the surrounding verses “participate in a debate running through Augustan poetry on the relation of poetry to the law, and reflect on the festival’s status as a singular and repeatable event that partakes in both writing and performance.”  
\(^1^0^3\) See, Lowrie, *Horace and Augustus*, 86; and, Putnam, *Horace’s Carmen Saeculare*, 5.
are important to Horace, for as he states in the hymn, “What good are empty laws (leges) if we lack mores?”  

Later in the poem Horace extols the virtues of the past and begs for their return. He bursts forth with the utterance:

Now Good Faith, Peace, and Honour, along with old-fashioned Modesty and Virtue, who has been so long neglected, venture to return, and blessed Plenty with her full horn is seen by all.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{iam Fides et Pax et Honos Pudorque} \\
\text{priscus et neglecta redire Virtus} \\
\text{audet, apparetque beata pleno} \\
\text{Copia cornu} \\
\text{augur et fulgente decorus arcu}
\end{align*}
\]

Like Livy, Horace contends that the Romans have fallen into moral degradation. He asks not just for the redemption of nature (lines 29-32) but also the “regeneration of humanity.” As Putnam notes, this means that “fertility” is a major theme of Horace’s hymn.

Later on Horace adds the following utopian note to his interpretation of Augustus’ reforms:

For then the ox ambles over the pastures in safety; Ceres and kindly Prosperity give increase to the crops, sailors wing their way across a sea clear of lawlessness, fidelity takes care not to incur blame, the home is pure, unstained by any lewdness, custom and law have gained control over the plague of vice, mothers are praised for having similar children, punishment follows hard on the heels of guilt.

\[
\begin{align*}
tutus bos etenim rura perambulat \\
nutrit rura Ceres almaque Faustitas, \\
pacatum volitant per mare navitae, \\
culpari metuit fides,
\end{align*}
\]

\[104\] Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 103.  
\[105\] Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 267.  
\[106\] Galinsky, *Augustan Culture*, 105, relates, “Moral decline had to be remedied before there could be any hope for better times.”  
\[109\] This is a reference to the Julian law against adultery (18 BCE).  
nullis polluitur casta domus stupris,
mos et lex maculosum edomuit nefas,
laudantur simili prole puerperae,
culpam poen premit comes.

In Horace’s *Epistulae* book II, he majestically honours Augustus with:

Seeing that you alone carry the weight of so many great charges, guarding our Italian state with arms, gracing her with morals, and reforming her with laws, I should sin against the public weal if with long talk, O Caesar, I were to delay your busy hours. (2.1.1-4).

Cum tot sustineas et tanta negotia solus,
res Italas armis tuteris, moribus
legibus emendes, in publica comoda peccem,
si longo sermone morer tua tempora, Caesar.

Sir Ronald Syme sums up Horace’s take on Augustan ideology by suggesting, “[T]he New State of Augustus glorified the strong and stubborn peasant of Italy, laboriously winning from the cultivation of cereals a meagre subsistence for himself and for a numerous virile offspring.”

Though Syme is certainly correct, we would be remiss if we did not notice the great irony that even though Horace praises the spirit of Augustus’ reforms with his poetry, he himself remained unmarried and had questionable morals.

In *Fasti* 2.139 Ovid briefly mentions the Augustan legislation: *florent sub Caesare leges* (“prosper under Caesar’s laws”). One must read this remark in light of Ovid’s other works, such as the *Ars amatoria*, which demonstrate that Ovid was out of step with the official Augustan program. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that Augustus banished Ovid

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113 Fraenkel, *Horace*, 20-21
from Rome in 8 CE because of his carmen et error (Tristia 2.207), along with an apparently “innocent” misdemeanour which remains mysterious even today despite the speculations of modern historians (cf. e.g., Tr. 3.5.49-52, 3.6.29-36, Epistulae ex Ponto. 1.6.21-6).116

Ovid’s critique of Augustus’ legislation demonstrates that love and sex were not private affairs during the early empire.117 Additionally, Ovid notes the double standard of the laws as the inconsistencies between Augustus’ behaviour and his written legislation.118 For example, Geraldine Herbert-Brown points out that Ovid’s calendar demonstrates how the Augustan laws only punished women caught in the act of adultery and not men.119 Moreover, though sexual laxity was a public crime, Augustus had no problem attending erotic theatre shows which flaunted adulterous acts.120 As Herbert-Brown contends, much of what Ovid wrote was meant to “undermine Augustus” and expose him as a fraud.121

Dio Cassius is nowhere near as negative as Ovid in his handling of the Augustan laws.122 In book 54.16 he presents a straightforward account concerning how Augustus imposed penalties

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117 As Alison Sharrock relates, “Our gut reaction that love and sex are ‘private’ must be a triumph of optimism over experience, since not only our national laws but also our popular culture deny that this is so. Yet the belief remains.” See, Alison Sharrock, “Ovid and the discourses of love: the amatory works,” in The Cambridge Companion to Ovid, ed. Philip Hardie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) 154. As well, see, Galinsky, 126.
119 Herbert-Brown, Fasti, 126-7.
120 For more on this, see, the epigraphical calendar known as the Praeneste calendar, dated 6-9 CE in A. Degrassi, Inscriptiones Italiae 13.2 (Rome: 1963) 141. For the connection with Ovid see, Herbert-Brown, Fasti, 124-7.
121 Herbert-Brown, Fasti, 127. Suzanne Dixon relates, “Ovid’s apparently respectful reference at the outset of the poem to the benefits of the much-vaunted Augustan peace is countered by the incongruous association of combat with abortion. Mockery of the state’s moral rearmament programme is likely in the parade (Ars lines 9-18) of mythic/historic characters who figure in the imperial promotion of Rome’s founding myths.” See, Dixon, 60.
122 For more on this see, Field, “The Purpose of the Lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea,” 406.
on unmarried men and women—a direct reference to the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*. He also notes that Augustus gave rewards to married couples, especially couples who produced at least three children for the Roman state.

Like Livy and others, Dio explains how the Senate condemned the loose morals of women and men in Rome. He relates, “[T]his conduct was cited as a reason for their unwillingness to accept the marriage bond” (my translation; 54.16.3). Interestingly, he also informs us that the Senate urged Augustus to stop his hypocritical behaviour. He writes:

> When the senators urged Augustus to correct this abuse too, and hinted mockingly at his own relations with a large number of women, he began by replying that the essential prohibitions had already been laid down, and that it was impossible to regulate people’s conduct further by bringing in more legislation of this kind.

καὶ ἐναγόμενον αὐτὸν καὶ ἐκείνην ἐπανορθώσαι χλευασμὸ ὅτι πολλαῖς

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123 Later on the punishments and rewards of Augustus’ legislation were amended by the *Lex Papia Poppaea* of 9 CE (see Dio 56.10). As Ian Scott-Kilvert relates, “[U]nmarried men and women were debarred from certain categories of inheritance and from full participation in civic life. On the positive side it [the *lex Iulia*] removed certain restrictions on marriage, modified the laws of inheritance and so as to favour parenthood, and offered both men in public life, and freedmen, privileges of different kinds, if they became fathers.” See, Cassius Dio, *The Roman History: The Reign of Augustus*, ed. Ian Scott-Kilvert, Penguin classics. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987) 286.

124 Dio is referring to the *ius liberorum* (or rewards for three or more children). J. P. V. D. Balsdon notes, “By Augustus’ stern legislation the ages at which men and women were penalized for not being married were twenty-five and twenty respectively.” See, J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Roman Women: Their History and Habits* (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1962) 173. Moreover, on p. 76 he relates, “Bachelors—caelibes—were debarred from receiving inheritances from outside a very narrow circle—third grade—of their own families; spinsters and childless women were similarly debarred.”

125 Suzanne Dixon writes, “Augustus’ reported speeches proceed from the assumption that people were deliberately avoiding marriage and parenthood to such an extent that the continuity of the ruling class was at risk.” See, Dixon, 22. Regarding Livy, see his *Periochae* 9. There he speaks of “our modern age, when we can neither endure our vices nor face the remedies needed to cure them.” For more on morality in the poetry of the Augustan age, see, G. W. Williams, “Poetry in the Moral Climate of Augustan Rome,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 52 (1962) 28-46. Percy Corbett is of the opinion that the *lex Iulia* were specifically designed to curb the moral corruption of the Roman empire. See, Percy E. Corbett, *The Roman Law of Marriage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969) 133.

126 The complete sentence from Dio reads: Κάν τούτῳ καταβοήσεω ὤν τῷ σωκράτῳ περὶ τῆς τῶν γυναικῶν καὶ περὶ τῆς τῶν νεανίσκων ἀκοσμίας, πρός ἀπολογίαν δὴ πινα τοῦ μὴ ραβίως δι αὐτὴν τὰς τῶν γάμων συναλλαγὰς ποιήσατα, γενομένης. See, Cassius Dio, *Dio’s Roman History*, trans., Earnest Cary, vol. VI (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1917) 322. As Jane Gardner notes Roman society viewed women as the weaker sex (*imbecillitas sexus*). She maintains that this belief is likely derived from Greek philosophy and is repeated in the works of Cicero. One of the reasons that Roman women needed tutors (*tutela*) was that society thought they lacked the ability to make serious judgments (*propter animi levitatem*). See, Gardner, 21. Cf. Juvenal’s *Satires* on the “evils of women” despite the marriage laws: What? Postumus, are you, who once had your wits, taking to yourself a wife? ... how much better to take some boy bedfellow! ... But Ursidius approves of the Julian law! ... what can you think impossible if Ursidius takes himself a wife? (6.28-42).
Forced to answer for his actions, Augustus told the Senate, “You yourselves should guide and command your wives as you see fit; that is what I do with mine!” (ἐπείτα δὲ ἐκβιασθεὶς εἶπεν ὅτι “αὐτοὶ ὄφειλε ταῖς γαμεταῖς καὶ παραινεῖν καὶ κελεύειν ὅσα βούλεσθε· ὅπερ που καὶ ἐγὼ ποιῶ”).

Eventually the interrogation of the Senate turned personal as they questioned Augustus about his wife Livia. As Dio relates, “When they heard this, they pressed Augustus still more eagerly, since they desired to learn what guidance he professed to give to Livia.” (ἀκούσαντες οὖν ταῦτα ἔκεινοι πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἐνέκειντο αὐτῷ, βουλόμενοι τὰς παραιώσεις ἃς τῇ Λιουίᾳ παραιωεῖν ἔφη μαθεῖν). After stalling for an answer, Dio records that Augustus murmured something about women’s clothing, ornaments, and modesty in general. The questions regarding Augustus’ behaviour end with Augustus remarking, “The feuds which have divided us have brought terrible consequences; let us forget these and turn our minds to the future, so that nothing of this kind may occur again!” (ἐφη, “καὶ δεινὰ αἱ στάσεις ἤγεγκαν, ὡστε ἐκεῖνων μὲν ἄμνημονώμεν, τοῦ δὲ δὴ λοιποῦ προνοῶμεν ὅπως μηδὲν τοιοῦτο γίγνηται”).

As book 54.16 comes to a close, Dio notes that some men had discovered a way around Augustus’ legislation by getting betrothed to infant girls yet never going through with the actual

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127 Cassius Dio, Dio’s Roman History 54.16.4.
128 For more on Livia see, Field, “The Purpose of the Lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea,” 406.
129 It is difficult to assess the historical validity of this encounter between Augustus and the Senate. However, multiple sources inform us that Augustus did not always practice his own laws; thus, it may not be all that surprising that Dio reports a confrontation between Augustus and the Senate over his behaviour. Though no one knows for sure if these things are true, Augustus was accused of homosexuality and adultery. Additionally, he had married the divorced Livia in a rather indecorous manner (Suet. Aug. 69, cf. his letter to Maecenas: Ep. fr. 32, Malcovati).” For more, see, Treggiari, “Social Status and Social Legislation,” 891.
The reason for this is that these men were able to enjoy the privileges of a married life (i.e. the rewards Dio mentions at the beginning of section 16) without actually getting married. Because of this Augustus ordered that no betrothal would be valid unless the man married within two years of giving his word.

In book 56.10 Dio further expands on the rewards Augustus gave to those who were married with children. According to him it was in 9 CE that Augustus introduced a stark distinction between married men and unmarried men by imposing different penalties upon them. Apparently Augustus gave a one year grace period to unmarried and childless men in which they could choose to obey him in order to rectify their situation. The results of these distinctions between married and unmarried men resulted in the Lex Papia Poppaea, which was ironically drawn up by two childless bachelors named Marcus Papius Mutilus and Quintus Poppaeus Secundus.

Writing in the early second century Suetonius also mentions Augustus’ legislation and the negative reaction it received. In section 34 he writes:

130 For more on this see, Field, “The Purpose of the Lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea,” 402-3. Many Roman women found a way around the Augustan laws by registering themselves as prostitutes. As Gardner, Women in Roman Law and Society, 248, relates, “From this it appears that some people had actually deliberately contrived to incur infamia, either from a criminal conviction or in some other way, so as to forfeit the status of their rank and be able to pursue their passion. (One is reminded of the women who registered as prostitutes in an attempt to evade the adultery law).”

131 According to Treggiari, the Augustan laws were attempting to reduce the age gap between married couples. See, Susan Treggiari, Roman Marriage: Justi Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 402.

132 Moreover, Dio relates, “In other words, the girl must be at least ten years old at the time of the betrothal, if the man were to profit in any way from the engagement.” (τοῦτ’ ἐστὶ δεκάτῃ πάντως ἐγγυόνται τὸν γῆς τι ἀπ’ ἀντὶς ἀπολαύσοντα). The reason for this is that girls are considered to have reached marriageable age after their twelfth year.

133 These penalties did not apply to women over 50 and men over 60. See, Corbett, The Roman Law of Marriage, 52.

134 Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 73. The reason for this is likely found in book 56.1. There Dio relates, “And since the equites (hippes), were there (at the games) asking very zealously that the law about those who were not marrying or having children be relaxed, he (Augustus) gathered together into the forum in separate groups those of them without wives on the one hand, and those who had married and had children on the other. And seeing that the latter were much fewer than the former, he grieved and lectured to them in the following way...” See, Grubbs, Women and the Law, 85. For more on the opposition to Augustus’ moral reforms, see, Treggiari, “Social Status and Social Legislation,” 88.
Augustus renewed laws and decreed some laws anew, as for instance a luxury-law, and a law about adulteries and chastity (pudicitia), a law about bribery, a law about the marriages of the orders. When he had amended this last one somewhat more severely than the others, he was not able to carry it through in the face of the uproar of those refusing (to accept it) except after part of the penalties had been removed or lightened and a three-year exemption had been given and the rewards had been increased. Thus also when the *equites* were obstinately demanding its (the law’s) abolition at a public show, he summoned the children of Germanicus and held them up as an example, receiving some in his own lap and some in their father’s lap, showing that they should not regard it as a burden to imitate the young man’s example. And also, when he perceived that the force of the law was being frustrated by the immaturity of the betrothed girls and the frequent change (of spouses), he shortened the time for having fiancées and imposed a limit on divorce.

Leges retractavit et quasdam ex integro sanxit, ut sumptuariam et de adulteriis et de pudicitia, de ambitu, de maritandis ordinibus. Hanc cum aliquanto severius quam ceteras emendasset, prae tumultu recusantium perferre non potuit nisi adempta demum lenitave parte poenarum et vacatione trienni data auctisque praemis. Sic quoque abolitionem eius publico spectaculo pertinacie postulante equite, accitos Germanici liberos receptosque partim ad se partim in patris gremium ostentavit, manu vultuque significans ne gravarentur imitari iuvenis exemplum. Cumque etiam immunitate sponsarum et matrimoniorm crebra mutatione vim legis eluti sentiret, tempus sponsas habendi coartavit, divortiis modum imposuit.

The last sentence refers to the fact that some men had found various ways of circumventing the intention of Augustus’ laws. Some men were marrying in order to receive a legacy and then divorcing soon afterwards, while others were getting betrothed to girls well under the legal age of twelve. This is why Suzanne Dixon argues that the laws affect Roman men more than

135 This comes from the requirement that widows must remarry soon after their husband’s have died. The *Rules of Ulpian* 14 state that the *lex Iulia* maintained that widows had to remarry within a year and the *lex Papia-Poppaea* extended this to two years. In section 34 Suetonius claims that the later law allowed three years.
136 Germanicus is the son of Livia’s son Drusus, and adopted son of Tiberius. Germanicus and his wife Agrippina had nine children, of whom six survived past infancy.
137 The translation is taken—with some modifications—from Grubbs, *Women and the Law*, 86
139 For more on this, see, Çsillag, *The Augustan Laws*, 109. Examples from epitaphs also inform us that many elite Romans broke the Augustan laws. As Çsillag notes, “Certain epitaphs too seem to corroborate that the *Lex Iulia* was a *lex minus quam perfecta*. These memorials preserve the memory of *patronae* of senatorial descent who notwithstanding the statutory prohibition entered into matrimony with *liberti*.“ Moreover, he relates, “And yet the epitaphs speak to posterity of wives living in matrimony with former slaves *uxor pietissima* and *coniux fidelissima*,

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Roman women.\textsuperscript{140} Be that as it may, the reference which Suetonius makes to Augustus’ “limit on divorce” is unclear.\textsuperscript{141} Susan Treggiari argues that it may be a reference to a requirement for additional evidence for a divorce proceeding when one partner unilaterally repudiated the other.\textsuperscript{142} However, this is only conjecture.

Much of what Suetonius has to say is also affirmed by his contemporary Tacitus. In \textit{Annales} 3.25 he relates:

Then (20 CE) there was a proposal (before the Senate) concerning mitigating the Papian-Poppaea (law), which the elder Augustus had decreed after the Julian proposals for increasing the penalties on the unmarried and increasing the treasury. But marriages and the bringing up of children did not increase for that reason, as childlessness was very prevalent. But the multitude of those who were at risk increased, since every home was turned upside down by the statements of informers (\textit{delatores}), so that just as before this (Rome) had been oppressed by disgraceful behaviour, so now it was oppressed by laws.

Informers became such a nuisance that Tiberius was forced to appoint an official commission to look into their abuses:

In his sixth consulship (28 BCE) Caesar Augustus, secure in power, abolished the measures which he had ordered during his triumvirate and gave the laws which we use under peace and \textit{princeps}. Harsher bonds (arose) from this, guards were imposed and induced by the rewards of the Papian-Poppaean law so that, if there was default from the privileges of parents, then the people (i.e. the state), as if the parent of all, would keep the ownerless properties epiteths which certainly would not have been bestowed on them, had their marriage been null and void.” For the epitaphs themselves, see, P. M. Meyer, \textit{Der Römische Konkubinat nach den Rechtsquellen und den Inschriften} (Leipzig: Teubner, 1895) 64-66.

\textsuperscript{140} Dixon, \textit{Reading Roman Women}, 56.
\textsuperscript{141} See, Grubbs, \textit{Women and the Law}, 86.
\textsuperscript{142} Treggiari, \textit{Roman Marriage}, 453-7.
(which had been bequeathed illegally). But they (the “guards” i.e. informers) penetrated deeper and seized hold of the city and Italy and wherever there were citizens, and the positions of many were destroyed. And terror would have spread over all had not Tiberius chosen by lot five men of consular rank, five of praetorian rank, and as many from the rest of the Senate for the purpose of establishing a remedy, at the hands of whom many fetters of the law were loosed, and they (the Commission) brought a slight relief from the immediate present (Ann. 3.28)

Sexto demum consulatu Caesar Augustus, potentiae securus, quae triumviratu iussurat abolevit deditque iura quis pace et principe uteremur. Acriora ex eo vincla, inditi custodes et lege Papia Poppaea praemiis induci ut, si a privilegiis parentum cessaretur, velut parens omnium populus vacantia tenet. Sed altius penetrabant urbe et Italian et quod usquam civium corripuerant, multorumque excisi status. Et terror omnibus intentabatur, nisi Tiberius statuendo remedio quinque consularium, quinque e praetoriis, totidem e cetero senatu sorte duxisset, apud quos exsoluti plerique legis nexus modicum in praesens levamentum fuere.  

It is impossible to summarize all of the legal material scattered throughout the writings of Ulpian and the Digest. Here I will only refer to two important texts related to the Augustan marriage legislation. The first text comes from Domitius Ulpianus (Ulpian), who was one of the original five jurists cited in the Law of Citations.

Ulpian, who drafted constitutions and replies to petitions for Septimus Severus from 202-209 CE, composed over two hundred books on Roman law. He is, of course, most famous for the Regulae or “Rules,” which is likely a later, falsely ascribed work based on the writings of other jurists. Regardless of who actually wrote the Regulae, 11.20 contains an important reference to the Augustan legislation: Ex lege Iulia de maritandis ordinibus tutor datum a

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144 Tactius, Histories & Annals 566-9.
145 A compilation of references in Latin to Augustus’ legislation can be found in Riccobono, Acta divi Augusti, 112-28; 166-96.
148 It is important to note that a number of works were falsely attributed to Ulpian. However, this should not distract us from the fact that his writings were the most widely used of any Roman lawyer’s, and his writings take up more than two-fifths of the contents of the Digest.
praetor urbis ei mulieri virginive, quam ex hac ipsa lege nubere oportet, ad dotem dandum, dicendam promittendamve, si legitimum tutorem pupillum haveat (By the lex Iulia relation to the regulation of marriage, a guardian [tutor] is appointed by the Praetor of the city for a woman or a virgin who is obligated to marry under the terms of this same law, for the purpose of giving, specifically stating, or promising a dowry when she has a minor as her legal guardian; my translation). Here Ulpian makes it clear that celibacy is not the main reason why Augustus sought to control marriage and procreation, for he distinguishes between “women” and “virgins.” The virgin may be celibate, but there is no discussion about the sexual status of the woman. Additionally, Ulpian notes that the only way for a woman to be free of her guardian was for her to have three children.

The Digest, one of three works commissioned by the emperor Justinian at his accession in 527 CE in order to restate the whole body of existing Roman law in a consistent and convenient form, was compiled from the works of the major jurists, especially the five great jurists: Papinian, Paul, Ulpian, Modestinus and Gaius. These jurists were declared authoritative by the Law of Citations of Theodosius and Valentinian in 426 CE. Dig. 23.2.44ff. contains a brief reference to the lex Iulia. The statement is attributed to the jurist Paul. It reads:

It is provided by the lex Iulia that: “A senator, or his son, or his grandson or great-grandson by his son shall not knowingly or in bad faith become betrothed to or marry a freedwoman, or a woman who is or has been an actress or whose father or mother practises, or has practised the profession of an actor. Nor shall the daughter of a senator, or a granddaughter by his son, or a great-granddaughter by this grandson marry a freedman, or a man whose father or mother practises, or has practised the profession of an actor, whether they do so knowingly, or in bad faith. Nor can any one of these parties knowingly, or in bad faith become betrothed to or marry a woman of this type.”

149 The Latin text is from Riccobono, Acta divi Augusti, 176.
Lege Iulia ita cavetur: QUI SENATOR EST, QUIVE FILIUS, NEPOSVE EX FILIO PRONEPOSVE EX FILIO NATO CUIUS EORUM EST ERIT, NE QUIS EORUM SPONSAM UXOREMVE SCIENS DOLO MALO HABETO LIBERTINAM AUT EAM, QUAE IPSA CUIUSVE PATER MATERVE ARTEM LUDICRAM FACIT FECERIT. NEVE SENATORIS FILIA NEPTISVE EX FILIO PRONEPTISVE EX NEPOTE FILIO NATO NATA LIBERTINO EIVE, QUI IPSE CUIUSVE PATER MATERVE ARTEM LUDICRAM FACIT FECERIT, SPONSA NUPTAVE SCIENS DOLO MALO ESTO NEVE QUIS EORUM DOLO MALO SCIENS SPONSAM UXOREMVE EAM HABETO.\textsuperscript{151}

Surviving papyri from Egypt also mention the Augustan laws, which demonstrates their widespread influence throughout the empire. In particular, ChLA.IV.249 = P.Mich. VII.434 mention the laws: C(aius) Antistius Nomissianus filiam suam Zenarion uirginem e lege Iulia [quae de maritandis ordinibus(?)] lata est liberorum procrea(?)ndorum. (Gaius Antistius Nomissianus has given in matrimony his virgin daughter, Zenarion, in accordance with the Julian law concerning marriage which was passed for the purpose of procreating children; my translation).\textsuperscript{152}

This particular papyrus tells of a Roman father, C. Antistius Nomissianus, who gives his daughter, Zenarion, in marriage to a Roman citizen groom, M. Petronius Servillius.\textsuperscript{153} As Jane Rowlandson notes, “The document is of interest for its allusion to the \textit{Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus} of 18 BC and for its formulaic reference to procreation as the purpose of marriage.”\textsuperscript{154} One difficulty with this papyrus is that its provenance is unknown, however, it seems to date from the early part of the second century CE.

\textsuperscript{151} Riccobono, \textit{Acta divi Augusti}, 169.
\textsuperscript{152} For more information, see, F. Burkhalter, "Les statuettes de bronze d'Aphrodite en Egypte romaine d'après les documents papyrologiques," \textit{Revue Archéologique} 1 (1990) 51-60.
\textsuperscript{154} Rowlandson, \textit{Women & Society}, 181.
BGU 5.1210, the so-called *Gnomon of the Idios Logos*,\(^{155}\) contains two regulations--regulations 24 and 25--which are directly influenced by the Augustan legislation. Regulation 24, lines 73-75 read:

24. The dowry brought by a Roman woman over fifty years of age to a husband less than sixty years of age the treasury confiscates after her death.

κ̅δ̅ Τὴν διδομένην προίκα ὑπὸ γυναικὸς Ῥωμαίας ὑπὲρ πεν-τήκοντα ἐτη γεγονυ[ί]ας ἀνδρὶ Ῥωμαίῳ ἐντὸς ἐξήκοντα ἐτῶν γεγονότι μετὰ θάνατον ὁ φίσκος ἀναλαμβάνει.

Regulation 25, lines 76-77 read:

25. Likewise also that which is brought by a woman less than fifty years old to a husband over sixty years of age is confiscated by the treasury.

κ̅ε̅ Ὀμοίως καὶ τὴν διδομένην ὑπὸ γυναικὸς ἐντὸς ὑ ἐτῶν οὖσης ἀνδρὶ ὑπὲρ ἐξήκοντα ἐτη γεγονότι ἀναλαμβάνεται.

These two regulations are a consequence of the *lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea*, which made it the duty of Roman men aged 25-60 and women aged 20-50 to marry.\(^{156}\)

P.Oxy. 12.1467 is also influenced by the Augustan legislation. This papyrus from Oxyrhynchus (circa 263 CE) is a formal application for the *ius trium liberorum*. The papyrus reads:

\[\text{- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - vómoi]}
\[\text{[pά]λα[ι ἕ[ξ]φ[ο]ρτ[αί], ἰ[αση]-μότατε ἡγεμόνι, ὀἰτινες ἐξουσίαν διδόσαις ταῖς γυναι-}]
\[\text{έ}κ]]
\[\text{ι}]
\[\text{δικαίῳ κεκοσμημένα[ι] εἰς ἐκ}-
\[\text{τόν κυριεύειν καὶ χωρ[ις] κυ-}
\[\text{ρίου χρηστικ}]
\[\text{έ}]
\[\text{ποι-}
\[\text{οῦν[τ]αι οἰκονομίας, πο[λλ]ῇ}
\[\text{δὲ πλέουν ταῖς γρά[μ]ματα}]

\(^{155}\) Its provenance is Theadelphia, and it was likely composed after 149 CE.

This papyrus mentions a woman named Aurelia Thaïsous--also known as Lolliane--who applies for exemption from a guardian to the local prefect. According to the papyrus she claims the right to act without a guardian because she has the required number of children under Roman law.

Interestingly, she also reappears in a papyrus dated November 266 CE (P.Oxy. 12.1475). Here she purchases land, houses, an orchard, and a well. On this particular occasion she explicitly states that she is authorized to act without a guardian because of her *ius (trium) liberorum, χωρίς κυρίου χρηματίζουσα τέκνων δικαίω*. Collectively these texts explicate the basic premise of the *lex Iulia et Papia-Poppea*:

“[M]arriage was a duty incumbent on all Roman men between 25 and 60 years of age, and on all

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158 In this particular case, the words κατὰ τὰ Ρωμαίων ἔθη are omitted.
Roman women between 20 and 50."

Additionally, Augustus’ laws ordered widowed and divorced persons between 20 and 60 to remarry. The only exemptions were for free-born persons who had produced at least three children, and freed persons who had produced four. If one failed to procreate this was a punishable offence which affected one’s right to inherit from anyone except cognates to the sixth degree. *Caelibes* or bachelors could inherit nothing, while persons married but childless could inherit only one half. Once again, there is nothing here which suggests that these bachelors were celibate. The problem is that they were not producing children for the state.

The laws also established a link between marriage, rank, and status. Because of the legislation the state’s power could now be used to penalize marriage between citizens and non-citizens, as well as marriages between senators and freed persons and marriages between slaves and freed persons. The state designated these unions as *matrimonia iniusta*, making children from these marriages illegitimate, which means that they did not count towards earning inheritance rights. In fact, these children could not inherit at all.

2 *Ius Liberorum, Punishments, and Rewards*

One of the most important components of the Augustan marriage legislation is the *ius liberorum* or “right of three children.” There are over eighty-three occurrences of the *ius liberorum*.

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161 As H. Sanders points out, they could not even be issued an official birth certificate or be entered into a town’s list of inhabitants (*album*). See, H. Sanders, "A Brith Certificate of the Year 145 A.D.,” *AJA* 32 (1928) 309-29.
liberorum in the extant papyri. This section examines how the ius liberorum affected Roman women, and it explores a few of the papyri in which the ius liberorum is mentioned.

The Institutes of Gaius note that the tutela muleirum required females both below and above puberty to have guardians (tutores). Institutes 1.144 reads:

Therefore it has been permitted to parents to give guardians (tutores) to their children whom they have in their power: to male children below puberty, but to female children both below and above puberty, even when they have married. For the ancients wanted women, even if they are of full age, to be in guardianship (tutela) on account of their lightmindedness.

Permissum est itaque parentibus liberis quos in potestate sua habent testamento tutores dare masculini quidem sexus inpuberibus, <feminini autem sexus cuiuscumque aetatis sint, et tum quo> que, cum nuptae sint ueteres enim voluerunt feminas, etimi perfectae aetatis sint, propter animi leuitatem in tutela esse.

Here Gaius refers to Table 5 of the Twelve Tables written c. 450 BCE (traditional date). Table 5.1 reads, “Women, even though they are of full age, because of their levity of mind shall be under guardianship ... except Vestal Virgins, who ... shall be free from guardianship.”

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163 As Dixon relates, “[The] tutela mulierum perpetua (‘perpetual guardianship of women’) was instituted to safeguard masculine control of family property, but rationalised by later generations as a safeguard of ‘womanly weakness’.” See, Dixon, Reading Roman Women, 73.
164 The “weakness of women” (animi levitas in Gaius) is a major theme found in the papyri. For example, P.Oxy. 2.261 (circa 55 CE) tells of a woman named Demetria, who was not able to engage her dispute in court because of her “womanly weakness.” A portion of the papyrus reads: “Not being able to be in attendance in court on account of womanly weakness, (Demetria agrees) that she has appointed the afore-mentioned grandson Chaeremon as her legal representative, before every authority and every court, just as would be possible for Demetria herself, the one who has made the appointment, if she were present.” Moreover, P.Oxy. 24.2713 (circa 297 CE), which is a letter from the woman Aurelia Didyme to Aristios Optatus, the most eminent prefect of Egypt, comments on her gender with: You know quite well, my lord governor, that the race of women is easily despised on account of the weakness of our nature. Additionally, P.Oxy. 1.71, dated 303 CE, is a papyrus written by a woman to Clodius Culcianus, the prefect of Egypt. In this papyrus a certain Aurelia--her last name is missing--says, “I happen to be a weak woman, and a widow, with my children in the army and away in foreign parts...” In fairness to Gaius, in Inst. 1.190 he seems to revise his earlier views on the weakness of women. He writes, “However, almost no reason of value appears to recommend that women of full age be in tutela. For the reason which is commonly believed, that since they are very often deceived due to their lightmindedness, it was right for them to be ruled by the authority of tutors, seems to be specious rather than true...”
One way around *tutela* was for a woman to have at least three children (*ius liberorum* or “right of children”). Gaius relates:

And so if anyone has given a tutor to his son and daughter in his will and they have both arrived at puberty, the son of course stops having a tutor, but the daughter remains nevertheless in *tutela*: only according to the Julian and Papian-Poppaen law are women freed from *tutela* by means of the *ius liberorum*. We are speaking, however, of women other than the Vestal Virgins, whom indeed the ancients wished to be free out of honour for their priesthood: thus it was decreed even by a law of the Twelve Tables (*Inst.* 1.145).

Itaque si quis filio filaeque testamento tutorem dederit et ambo ad pube-


tatem peruenirent, filius quidem desinit habere tutorem, filia uero nihi-


lo liberorum minus in tutel permanent; tantum enim ex lege Iulia et Papi Poppa-

ae iure liberorum tutela liberantur feminae. loquimur autem exceptis uir-


iginibus Vestalibus quas etiam ueteres in honorem sacredotii liberas esse uoluerunt, itaque etiam lege XII tabularum cautum est.

Additionally *Inst.* 1.194 informs us that while freeborn women are freed from *tutela* by the right of three children (*ius trium liberorum*), freedwomen must have four children.

Evidence for the *ius liberorum* has recently been discovered at Dura Europos on the Euphrates river. Originally, the editors of the Dura documents thought that because there was no mention of a *kyrios* (or *epitropos*) in the legal documents from Dura Europos, this meant that women at Dura were free from male guardianship in Syria unlike women in other parts of the Roman East. With the discovery of the recently published parchment document P.Euphr. 15 from the Middle Euphrates, not far from Dura, we now know of a woman in Syria who claimed to have the *ius liberorum*. The papyrus (circa 235 CE) reads:

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ἐπὶ ὑπάτων Κλ(αύδιον) Σεουήρου καὶ Κουιντιανοῦ, ἐτους πρώτου τῆς τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος Γαίου Ιουλίου Οὐήρου Μαξιμείνου Εὐσεβ(οῦς) Ἐὐτυχ(οῦς) Ανεκήτου Σεβ(αστοῦ) ἤγε-μονίας κατὰ δὲ τὸν πρότερον ἄριθμον ζωμηνός Ἀπελλαίου δεξιότατον Βηθφουραιοὶ κόμη. Αὐρηλία Ἡμαρίου Αβεδσαύτου κόμης Βηθφουραιοὶ οὔσα χήρα δίκαιαν τέκνων

P.Euphr. 15 contains the technical expression δίκαιαν τέκνων. According to Anthony Spawforth and R. van Bremen, the phrase δίκαιαν τέκνων indicates that certain women among the local elites in Greece and Asia Minor possessed the ius liberorum. This means, then, that the Roman tutela mulierum was practiced in Syria in the first half of the third century.

By establishing the ius liberorum, Augustus created a system of rewards and punishments. Not only were some women freed from tutela by having three or four children, but certain privileges were granted to fathers, especially when running for public office. In fact, richer and more influential Romans could obtain a dispensation without having three children, which meant that lower-class Romans could not. However, this did not stop many women from achieving the “privilege of children,” as seen in the numerous papyri from Egypt.

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170 This would be an example of Roman law being followed (presumably after 212) rather than a native custom. For more on the Euphrates documents and for the publication of P.Euphr. 15, see, D. Feissel and J. Gascou, "Documents d'archives romains inédits du Moyen Euphrate (IIIe s. après J.-C.)," Journal des Savants 2 (2000) 157-208.


172 See, Plin. Ep. 10.94. Apparently Pliny petitioned Trajan successfully on behalf of his friend Suetonius for a special dispensation that granted him certain privileges without fulfilling the ius liberorum. Regarding poorer inhabitants of the Roman empire, Beryl Rawson remarks, “Poverty must also have been a disincentive sometimes
The establishment of the *ius liberorum* means that the production of children in the empire was a public event.\(^{174}\) As Beryl Rawson relates, “The birthing could be quite a public--perhaps social--occasion.”\(^{175}\) Romans did not value privacy in the way that many do in Western society.\(^{176}\) Additionally, the privileges offered by the *ius liberorum* were used as a means to control women.

Going back to Cicero, Roman women were often stereotyped in the literature.\(^{177}\) As Susan Dixon relates, “[C]lichés were applied particularly to women perceived as intruding illegitimately in masculine domains or when the author/speaker wished to attack a man for failing to prevent such intrusion by his female connections, whether wives or sisters.”\(^{178}\) In many Mediterranean cultures there was an overt “fear of the vagina,” which led to a belief that women were more sexually charged than men.\(^{179}\)
Natalie Boymel Kampen maintains that this fear produced a “difference in hierarchy” between Roman men and women. As she relates, “Although some women in the Roman world had more power than some men, there is no question that, structurally, Roman society evolved in such a way as to enable elite men to establish and maintain power over everyone else.”

Even though many Roman medical writers assumed that men and women were fundamentally the same at the biological and reproductive levels, this did not occlude the basic belief that women’s bodies, though basically the same as men’s, were less perfect.

The *ius liberorum* forced women to conform to the image of the ideal Roman wife and to the hierarchical structures imposed on them by Greco-Roman society. According to Diana E. E. Kleiner, “The ideal Roman woman was expected to possess such virtues as beauty, faithfulness to her husband, fertility, and an outstanding ability to run the household.” In Augustus’ own family womanly virtues were carefully encoded in his wife Livia. Livia was praised for weaving cloth (*lanificium*), an activity which was symbolically understood by the Romans to mean that Livia was a “good wife.” In fact, Augustus is said to have worn clothes

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182 As Gordon Williams relates, “The basic attitude that the Augustan moral legislation seems to display is that control of female sexuality is the key to guaranteeing the stability of marriages in Roman society: the sexual behavior of men was no threat to marriage, that of women was.” See, Gordon Williams, "Representations of Roman Women in Literature," in *I CLAVDIA: Women in Ancient Rome*, ed. D. E. E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) 30.


made by his sister, wife, daughter, and granddaughters.\textsuperscript{185} Moreover, because each woman that lived to 50 needed to produce 5.1 children in order to sustain the population of the Roman empire, the major priority for Roman women was marriage and the creation of children.\textsuperscript{186} Even peasant women were expected to live up to the ideals of the \textit{ius liberorum}. For example, the peasant soldier Lingustinus’ wife is portrayed as having six sons and two surviving daughters (cf. Livy 42.34.3-4; Plin. \textit{HN} 7.57).\textsuperscript{187}

Rewards and punishments became a significant part of the \textit{ius liberorum}. For example, producing three or four children released a woman from her guardian, while a celibate female could be taxed for her unwillingness or inability to produce children (\textit{incapaces}).\textsuperscript{188} Married men with children also did well under Augustus’ laws. In fact, they had a much easier time climbing the political ladder. As Karl Galinsky relates:

In the senatorial \textit{cursus}, candidates were allowed to stand for the various magistracies as many years before the usual minimum age as was the number of their children. Tie votes for candidates, including seniority in the senate, were resolved by the preference of the candidate with a large family. Or, parenthood and the number of children were taken into account in the appointment of governors in the senatorial provinces.\textsuperscript{189}

Rewards and penalties were meant to put an end to bachelorhood, reduce the number of divorced wives, and, force widows to contract a second marriage within a term defined by the

\textsuperscript{185} Suet. \textit{Aug.} 73. The ideal woman is also found in inscriptions. \textit{CIL} I\textsuperscript{2}, 1211 = 6.15346 = \textit{ILLRP} 973 = CE 52 reads: Stranger, I have little to say: stop and read. / This is the unbeautiful tomb of a beautiful woman. / Her parents called her Claudia by name. / She loved her husband with her heart. / She bore two children: one of these / she leaves on the earth, the other she buries under the earth. / Her speech was delightful, her gait graceful. / She kept house, she made wool. I have finished. Go!


\textsuperscript{187} Treggiari, \textit{Roman Marriage}, 403.

\textsuperscript{188} If a woman remained celibate and had at least 20,000 sesterces, she could be taxed for not producing children. In fact, this punishment reached fairly far down the social scale. See, McGinn, \textit{Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome}, 79-80.

\textsuperscript{189} Galinsky, “Augustus’ Legislation on Moral and Marriage,” 129. See, as well, Dio. 53.13.2, 54.16.1; Gell. \textit{NA} 2.15.4; and Ulp. 4.4.2.
laws. According to Pál Čsillag the “official” purpose of Augustus’ rewards and punishments system was to “help both men and women to remove the mainly financial obstacles in the way of their union, and also to relieve the head of the family, as far as possible, of his cares.”

Regardless of what Augustus was really trying to accomplish, the Romans deemed celibacy entirely unnatural. To them it was important that the government forbid those who remained unmarried from such things as attending the Secular Games.

3 Widows

The ideal woman in Roman society was chaste, unless she was married. Widowhood was quite common in the ancient world, and until remarried, it was assumed that widows upheld this ideal. As Suzanne Dixon relates, “It is notable that many of the mothers cited for their great qualities were widowed while their children were young. Given the age differential between Roman marriage partners, women who survived the dangers of reproduction were likely to outlive their husbands.”

Inscriptions on epitaphs often praise a woman who had only one...
husband (*univira*) throughout her entire life. *CIL* 3.1537 = *CE* 597 uses the phrase *solo contenta marito* (content with her husband alone) *vel sim.* *CIL* 3.2667 = *CE* 643 employs the phrase *uno contenta marito* (content with her one husband). The language of these epitaphs is also found in the poems of Catullus, who borrows from them to point out the failure of his mistress to remain monogamous. In 68.131-35 he writes:

> Even so kind, or but little less, was she, my bright one, who came into my arms; and often around her flitting hither and thither Cupid shone fair in vest of saffron hue. And though she is not content with Catullus alone, I will bear the faults, for few they are, of my modest mistress, lest we become tiresome as jealous fools. Juno, too, greatest of the heavenly ones, has often beaten down her anger for her husband’s fault, as she learns the many loves of all amorous Jove. Yet it is not reasonable that men should be compared with gods...

> aut nihil aut paulo cui tum concedere digna
> lux mea se nostrum contulit in gremium,
> quam circumcursans hinc illinc saepe Cupido
> fulgebat crocina candidus in tunica.
> quae tamen etsi uno non est contenta Catullo,
> rare verecundae furta feremus erae,
> ne nimium simus stultorum more molesti.
> saepe etiam Iuno, maxima caelicolum,
> coniugis in culpa flagrantem contudit iram,
> noscens omnivoli plurima Iovis.
> atqui nec divis homines componier aequumst...  

Other poets also applaud the virtues of the *univira*. In *Elegies* 4.11.29-36 Propertius writes:

> If any has ever derived ennobling fame from ancestral trophies, then our house has bronze spoils that tell of ancestors who took Numantia: a second host claims equality for the Libones of my mother’s line, and my family is sustained on either side by achievements of its own. Thereafter, when maiden’s toga gave way to the nuptial torch, and a different headband caught up and bound my hair, I was wedded to your couch, Paullus, destined so to leave it that on this stone I shall be recorded as married to one man alone.

Reconsiderations," *JRS* 77 (1987) 30-46. Shaw argues that lower-class women in the Roman empire tended to marry relatively late. He suggests that such women marry in their late teens and sometimes even in their early twenties.

si cui fama fuit per avita tropaea decori,
aera Numantinos nostra loquuntur avos:
altera maternos exaequat turba Libones,
et domus est titulis utraque fulta suis.
mox, ubi iam facibus cessit praetexta maritis,
vinit et acceptas altera vitta comas,
iungor, Paulle, tuo sic discussera cubili,
ut lapide hoc uni nupta fuisse legar.196

The Roman ideal of the univira and lifelong monogamy was later endorsed in the early Church by Tertullian.197 Despite all the praise lavished on the univira, Augustus’ laws broke with this ancient tradition to the consternation of many Romans.

According to Augustus’ moral reforms, widows had to remarry within two (or three) years of their husband’s death.198 If they did not, they could not inherit from people who were not related to them in the sixth degree.199 Because Augustus did not respect the ancient tradition of the univira, he was forced to introduce other provisions which mitigated the rigorous demands of his earlier legislation.200 Ulpian’s Rules 14.1 notes: The lex Iulia granted exemption from its penalties to women for a year after the death of their husbands, and for six months after a divorce had taken place; the lex Papia granted them two more years from the death of their husbands, and a year and six months after a divorce... (feminis lex Iulia a morte viri anni tribuit vacationem, a divortio sex mensum, lex autem Papia a morte bienni, a repudio anni et sex

196 Propertius, Elegies, trans., G. P. Goold, LCL, vol. 18 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990) 384-5. For more on the connection between Augustus’ legislation and Propertius’ poetry, see, F. Cairns, "Propertius on Augustus’ marriage law (II.7)," Grazer Beiträge 8 (1979) 185-205. Additional poets who extol the virtues of a woman married to only one husband throughout her life include: Verg. Aen. 4.27; Livy, 10.23; Val. Max. 2.1.3; Tac. Ann. 2.86.
198 The original law of 18 BCE, the lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus, had allowed only a year’s delay in remarrying for widows, and six months for divorcées, but this was changed by the later lex Papia. For more, see Ulpian’s Rules 14 and Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 73-74.
199 Dixon, The Roman Mother, 59.
200 Csillag, The Augustan Laws on Family Relations, 89.
mensum). Be that as it may, the vast majority of Romans felt that Augustus’ reforms undermined the ancient ideal of the univira.

4 Who was Affected by These Laws?

There are two competing views regarding whom the Augustan laws affected most. On the one hand, Treggiari contends that Augustus’ legislation arose out of a need to “encourage nuptiality and reproductivity in order to supply Rome with soldiers and administrators, making Augustus’ moral reform program a type of ‘eugenics program’.” Treggiari assumes that the lex Iulia et Papia-Poppaea affected a large segment of Roman society because “Romans were obsessed from the second century B.C. onwards with the problem of a falling birth-rate, a problem all the more serious on account of the high rate of infant mortality and, indeed, of deaths in childbirth.” In other words, women were necessary for the survival of the state.

The other option is to follow Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, who argues that the legislation was only directed at the upper echelons of Roman society. As he relates, “The laws operated through a series of rewards and penalties. In their nature these would only affect either the substantial property owners, those who sought office locally and at Rome, or freedmen, particularly the better off.” He also adds that the only provision which might affect the “ordinary man” is that the caelibes were banned from certain shows, or were assigned separate seats. T. A. J. McGinn is likely correct, though, to suggest that the question of whether or not

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201 The end of the original manuscript is illegible.
203 Balsdon, Roman Women, 14.
these laws were essentially moral or demographic is a false dichotomy. He writes, “The very existence of the marriage prohibitions shows how demographic ends might be pursued within a framework determined by considerations of rank and gender.” Additionally, there is some evidence which does imply that the Augustan legislation affected more than just those who belonged to the senatorial or equestrian orders even though they may have been the original target of the reforms.

P. A. Brunt points out that although there were no systematic incentives for the poorer classes to reproduce, probably because of the limitations of the treasury, Augustus did want the entire Italian populace to replenish itself. In fact, there is evidence which shows that Augustus rewarded freed slaves for reproducing. For example, Augustus addresses fathers and then the childless and the unmarried (Dio 56). Additionally, he asks those gathered how families are to continue if men do not marry and reproduce: “How can the state be preserved if we neither marry nor beget children?” Though this could be aimed solely at the upperclass, Augustus queries: “Do we not free our slaves for this purpose above all, so as to create as many citizens as possible from their number? And do we not grant our allies a share in the government in order to increase the population?” These questions suggest that Augustus was asking more than just the members of the upperclass to conform to his legislation.

207 T. A. J. McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 78. Pace Field, who claims that the laws were “purely eugenic and demographic.” See, James A. Field Jr., “The Purpose of the Lex Julia et Papia Poppaea,” *Classical Journal* 40 (1944.45) 398-99. Field contends, “The Roman stock was Rome’s greatest natural resource, and there was need of a firm eugenic policy. Such a policy was naturally congenial to Augustus and in harmony with his other attempts at reconstruction, with his efforts to restore the glories of former times by concrete reforms in administration, by the rebuilding of Rome, by symbolic acts such as his supposed moving of the pomerium, and the holding of the ludi saeculares.”


210 Dio. 56.7
In 56.2 Augustus explains that the greatest god divided human beings into male and female and gave them the desire for intercourse so that they would procreate and sustain the Roman empire. In fact, he goes so far as to argue that the reason gods are “male” and “female” is because they too need to create children: “And so even among these beings, who have no need of such an arrangement, marriage and the procreation of children are reputed to be admired.” Here procreation seems to be part of the lex naturalis extending to all classes—even deities—throughout the empire. 211

In Aug. 41 Suetonius informs us of Augustus’ great generosity. He writes, “He often gave largess (Congiarium) 212 to the people, but usually of different sums... he did not even exclude young boys, though it had been usual for them to receive a share only after the age of eleven.” 213 Apparently his generosity was such that he gave a thousand sesterces per legitimate sons or daughters which the ordinary pleb could reproduce (Aug. 46). Of course, if this is true, it does not mean that members of the lower class were eager to produce children since they often felt they could not afford marriages. 214

Tacitus was also aware of the fact that the lex Iulia impacted all classes of Roman society. In Annales 3.25, where he mentions the delatores or the “informers,” he notes that they became such a problem that “every household” was vulnerable. This too suggests that the laws had a ubiquitous affect on the people of the Roman empire.

211 Some scholars have attempted to see a similar idea in Propertius’ Elegies 2.7 where Propertius writes, “How you must have rejoiced, Cynthia, at the repeal of that law, whose erstwhile issuance caused us to weep for many an hour in case it parted us!” (gavisa’s certe sublatam, Cynthia, legem, qua quondam edicta flēmus uterque diu, ni nos divideret). However, Badian has conclusively demonstrated that the law Propertius speaks of is a law proclaimed shortly before Actium to bring in money for Octavian. Bachelors were imposed upon with a substantial tax, which one such as Propertius was in no position to pay. Thus, what Propertius says in 2.7 should not be confused with the lex Iulia. See, Ernst Badian, ”A Phantom Marriage Law,” Philologus 129 (1985) 82-98. For an example of this connection, see, Dixon, The Roman Mother, 86.

212 Congiarium is strictly a distribution of oil (from congius, a liquid measure) which came to be used of largess.


214 Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 123, writes, “The sort of popular literature which might tell us what poor citizens thought has almost disappeared, though a stray line from a farce called Condiciones gives a hint that they sometimes felt they could not afford to marry.”
Additionally, P.Euphr. 15 demonstrates the geographical extent of the legislation. P.Euphr. 15 shows that by the third century CE the Augustan laws were known in Syria. Moreover, papyri from Egypt, such as BGU 5.1210 and P.Oxy. 41.3014, demonstrate that certain aspects of the *lex Iulia* were taken seriously in Egypt. As Livia Capponi relates, “The extant fragments (BGU 5.1210, P.Oxy 41.3014) show that the Augustan social and moral laws were applied in Egypt, where rigid social and fiscal barriers were introduced between Egyptians, Greeks, and the Alexandrian elite.”

Finally, Diana Kleiner has examined several funerary reliefs which show non-elite adults proudly displaying their children. Interestingly, children do not appear on funerary reliefs until after the imperial period and the enactment of the Augustan legislation. One example from the Villa Doria Pamphili in Rome shows a non-elite husband and wife flanking their young child (13 BCE - 5 CE) betraying the influence of Augustus’ laws. Another relief with an inscription (*CIL* 6.17204 - M. L. EPICTES / L. NVMENIVS / TRVPHERA / MELISSA / EVROPA / VIVIT) also shows a husband and wife flanking their young child. Commenting on these reliefs, Kleiner maintains that they were likely influenced by the denarii which were minted in Rome between 17 and 13 BCE with the profile portraits of Gaius and Lucius flanking their mother Julia (*RIC* I Augustus: 404 = *BMC Rep. II* 4648-9). As she relates, “It is interesting to note that all of the bust-length reliefs in which a father and mother flank a single child are of Augustan date.”

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217 Rawson, “Adult-Child Relationships in Roman Society,” 25
It seems, then, that the *lex Iulia et Papia-Poppaea* had a greater impact on the people of the Roman empire than some historians maintain. The laws declared that all male citizens between the ages of twenty-five and sixty and all female citizens between twenty and fifty were to be married. Widows were to marry within two (or perhaps three) years of their husband’s death, divorcées within eighteen months. Those who had not married by that time were penalized financially: they could not receive inheritances or legacies from those to whom they were not related within six degrees of relationship (which would include second cousins and great-uncles/aunts). Those married but childless could receive only half of any such legacies, and childless married couples could only inherit one-tenth of each other’s property. Those who were married and had children were rewarded with certain privileges, in particular the *ius trium liberorum*, the “right of three children.” Men had priority in receiving government appointments, and, if they had the *ius liberorum*, they were released from the duty of serving as legal guardian. Women who obtained the *ius liberorum* were freed from the need for a tutor for legal and business transactions. Spouses with the *ius liberorum* could leave more than one-tenth of their property to each other by will. By the second and third centuries CE these laws had made an impact on the people of Egypt and Syria. Thus, the laws had a widespread affect on all peoples under Roman rule.

It important to note that the real issue in the *lex Iulia et Papia-Poppaea* is whether or not a Roman had children—not whether they were celibate or married. Outside of the Vestal Virgins lifelong celibacy was unheard of in the Roman empire.²²⁰ The literature of the Greco-Roman world is clear that abstention was only temporary. For example, suppliants in search of healing at a temple to Asklepios might be required to abstain from sex and certain foods for a number of

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²²⁰ Treggiari, *Roman Marriage*, 83.
days. At Pergamon sick individuals, who longed for a vision of the healing god as they slept in the sacred precincts, first had to observe certain rules of purity which included abstaining from sex, goat meat, and cheese. In his *Histories* Livy explains that initiation into the Bacchic mysteries at Rome required an initiate to abstain from sex for ten days (29.9-10). In each of these examples celibacy is only engaged in for a brief period of time and usually for cultic purposes. For the majority of Romans, sex was commonplace. As Treggiari relates, “Women owed the state children, young men had the additional duty of maintaining the male line and family name, *nomen*.”

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221 Finn, *Asceticism in the Graeco-Roman World*, 16.
223 Treggiari, *Roman Marriage*, 84.
Chapter 3

1 Corinthians 7 - Marriage, Sex, and Singleness

In 1 Corinthians 7 vv. 7-8, 26-29, 32-35, and 39-40 Paul encourages what many scholars would term a “celibate lifestyle” for the unmarried and widows of the 1 Corinthians ekklēsia.\(^{224}\)

This is based in large part on translating ἄγαμος as “unmarried” and assuming that this means...

“one who is celibate” instead of “one who is single.”\textsuperscript{225} The problem with this is that ἄγαμος does not always refer to a celibate person.\textsuperscript{226} In fact, it could refer to a single person who is sexually active but does not procreate or to one who procreates but does not marry. As J. M. Rist relates, “Sexual intercourse could not by itself constitute a marriage... Marriage was an institution designed for childbearing, and as such it was a civic institution.”\textsuperscript{227} As noted in the previous chapter, being a caelebs or an orbus does not necessarily mean that one is celibate. Instead these words indicate groups of individuals who were either unmarried, unmarried with children, or who were married without children (Gai. Inst. 2.111). The sexual activity of such individuals is not as important as scholars often think.\textsuperscript{228} If one wanted to refer to a celibate individual in the Roman empire they would use virgo instead of caelibatus or orbus. For example, a case of isolated celibacy in the Greco-Roman world is described by Pliny the Elder when he refers to the artist Iaia of Cyzicus as a perpetua virgo (HN 35.147). Paul also seems aware of this distinction in 1 Corinthians 7 by referring to some in the ekklēsia as ἄγαμος and others as παρθένος. Thus, the only members of the Corinthian ekklēsia who may be celibate are the virgins briefly discussed in vv. 36-38.

\textsuperscript{225} Examining any major commentary on 1 Corinthians will show that interpreters assume that Paul is talking about celibacy when he uses the word ἄγαμος. Interestingly the ESV is one of the few English translations which assumes that Paul was talking about “singleness” and not “celibacy” when he wrote 1 Corinthians 7.


\textsuperscript{227} Rist, \textit{Stoic Philosophy}, 56. Susan Treggiari, relates, “Matrimonium is an institution involving a mother, mater. The idea implicit in the word is that a man takes a woman in marriage, \textit{in matrimonium ducere}, so that he may have children by her.” See, Treggiari, 5. On p. 8 she adds, “The Romans conventionally regarded marriage as an institution designed for the production of legitimate children. A wife was given to a man for the purpose of getting children, \textit{liberorum quaerundorum causa}.” This means, then, that marriage is not defined by the sexual act as much as it is defined by the production of children.

\textsuperscript{228} As May, “The Body for the Lord,” 165, relates, “Almost unanimously modern exegetes answer by contending that 1 Cor 7 is to be understood as Paul’s response to Corinthian ascetics.” In particular May points to J. M. Gundry-Volf, “Celibate Pneumatics and Social Power: On the Motivations for Sexual Asceticism in Corinth,” \textit{USQR} 1994) 105-26; and, J. M. Gundry-Volf, “Controlling the Bodies: A Theological Profile of the Corinthian Sexual Ascetics (1 Cor 7),” in \textit{The Corinthian Correspondence}, ed. R. Bieringer (Leuven: Leuven University Press / Peeters, 1996) 519-41. Similar attitudes regarding sex and marriage are also present in the Greek city-state. See, for example, W. K. Lacey, \textit{The Family in Classical Greece} (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968) 110-1; and, Cynthia B. Patterson, \textit{The Family in Greek History} (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998) 133.
Jean Héring maintains that 1 Corinthians 7 is by far the most important chapter in the New Testament for the question of marriage and related subjects.\textsuperscript{229} However, no matter how many categories one assigns to studies of 1 Corinthians 7, they can be classified as moving in one of two directions: (1) Paul’s affirmation of celibacy was used by early Christians to support the view that asceticism was a higher calling, or, more typically, (2) Paul was not only an advocate of sexual intimacy between couples, but a proponent of marriage as the norm over and against celibacy, which was somehow abnormal.\textsuperscript{230} Regardless of the direction taken by studies of 1 Corinthians 7, they usually ignore the subtle nuances of the word γάμος, put far too much emphasis on whether or not 1 Cor 7:1b is a quote from Paul or a slogan from the Corinthians, and tend to ignore the fact that Paul has little to no interest in children. Moreover, the majority of studies on 1 Corinthians 7 attempt to read Paul along with Stoics such as Musonius Rufus, because Musonius had a positive view of marriage. Such readings are done to save Paul from what is presumed to be a negative understanding of marriage from our modern vantage point.

Dale Martin asserts that the modern need to package Paul as a promoter of sex and marriage is largely a Protestant ideological response to medieval Catholicism and its emphasis on a celibate priesthood.\textsuperscript{231} As he notes, studies which try to rehabilitate Paul on sex and marriage are often driven by “contemporary sexual ideology derived mainly from modern

\textsuperscript{229} Jean Héring, \textit{The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians} (London: Epworth, 1961) 48. This point is also made by May, “The Body for the Lord,” 165, who writes, “Precisely because it concerns marriage, 1 Cor 7 is key to understanding the sexual and social implication of Christian identity.”

\textsuperscript{230} Nash, 184. For a sampling of studies which fall into either of these categories, see, J. Edward Ellis, "Controlled Burn: The Romantic Note in 1 Corinthians 7," \textit{Perspectives in Religious Studies} 29 (2002) 89-98; and, John C. Poirier and Joseph Frankovic, "Celibacy and Charism in 1 Cor 7:5-7," \textit{HTR} 89 (1996) 1-18. Cf. Moiser, “A Reassessment of Paul’s View of Marriage with Reference to 1 Cor 7,” 103-22; and, Phipps, “Is Paul’s Attitude toward Sexual Relations Contained in 1 Cor. 7:1?” 125-31.

psychology and psychotherapy (including acceptance of the modern category of ‘sexuality’).”

Moreover, many interpreters of 1 Corinthians 7 often use Judaism to interpret Paul because Judaism “insulates” Christianity from Hellenism. For example, many scholars have been so stultified by what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7 that they go so far as to assume that Paul must have had procreation in the back of his mind as he wrote because no Jew would ever have thought of marriage apart from procreation. This means that there is a need for a redescription of what Paul is saying about marriage and singleness in 1 Corinthians 7 which avoids the errors Martin alludes to.

This chapter begins its redescription of marriage and singleness in 1 Corinthians 7 by noting that it is irrelevant whether or not 1 Cor 7:1b is a quote from the Corinthians or a statement from Paul. The evidence in 1 Corinthians 7 suggests that slogan or not, Paul agrees with 1 Cor 7:1b and holds a negative view of marriage and procreation, which there is no need to

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232 Dale B. Martin, The Corinthian Body (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) 209. A similar point is made by Smith, Drudgery Divine, 42-46, in which he notes that many comparisons between early Christianity and the religions of late antiquity have become code-words for comparisons between Protestant Christianity and Roman Catholicism.


235 Redescription is defined by Cameron and Miller as, “[A] form of explanation that privileges difference and involves comparison and translation, category formation and rectification, definition and theory.” See, Cameron and Miller, 1.

rehabilitate. Next, this chapter explores the meaning of the term ἄγαμος in v. 8 suggesting that when read with other relevant Greco-Roman literature it should not be interpreted as referring to celibates but to people who are simply single and unmarried. Third, this chapter explores the contradictory advice which Paul offers widows in vv. 7-8 and vv. 39-40. For the most part, Paul seems to uphold the ancient Roman concept of the univira, which Augustus tried to eliminate. Fourth, this chapter points out that what is really important in 1 Corinthians 7 is not singleness but the fact that Paul never once mentions procreation. This becomes obvious when one notices that he does not spend any extensive amount of time discussing children in the Corinthian ekklēsia, which indicates that he has little to no interest in whether or not the Corinthians procreate. Finally, this chapter provides a redescription of Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 which will be compared to the Augustan laws in the final chapter. This redescription argues that Paul’s advice to the Corinthians fits best with Cynic views on marriage and childbearing, which also discouraged procreation. Throughout I assume that what we are basically dealing with in 1 Corinthians 7 are Paul’s views on sex and marriage and not those of the Corinthians.²³⁷

1 1 Corinthians 7:1b - Slogan or Not?

²³⁷This point has been made by most recently by Stanley K. Stowers, "Kinds of Myth, Meals, and Power: Paul and the Corinthians," in Redescribing Paul and the Corinthians, ed. Ron Cameron and Merrill P. Miller (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011) 110. Cf. May, “The Body for the Lord,” 166, who relates, “We do not do this for its own sake, but because we wish to read 1 Cor 7 as Paul’s own consideration of sex and marriage.” Additionally, I am reminded of the sage advice of Nock, who once wrote, “The message which Paul and others brought to the Gentile world contained much that was unfamiliar and could not easily be understood or assimilated.” See, Arthur Darby Nock, Early Gentile Christianity and its Hellenistic Background (New York: Harper & Row, 1964) 134.
though Paul may in principle have agreed with the Corinthian slogan he does not agree with how they are applying it within the Corinthian ekklēsia. As Joseph Fitzmyer relates, “Whether it is a Corinthian slogan or not, Paul enunciates it at the very beginning of his discussion in this chapter and gives the impression that he is per se in favor of the idea that it expresses, although some interpreters claim that he is rejecting the Corinthian slogan.”

Thus, it may be that Jerome’s logic still holds: “If it is good not to touch a woman, it is bad to touch one; for nothing is the opposite of good except bad.”

What modern commentators want to avoid is creating a Paul with a negative view of sex and marriage. For example, Eckhard Schnabel insists that Paul is not against marriage, per se, but against πορνεία. He also argues that when it comes to the question of abstinence, Paul’s position is one of neutrality. He relates, “An keiner Stelle wird sexuelle Abstinenz als grundsätzlich lobenswert oder gut bezeichnet.”

Like many interpreters of 1 Corinthians 7 Schnabel bases his statements on what Martin refers to as “contemporary sexual ideologies” and

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244 Cited in Kovacs, *1 Corinthians*, 111.


not on concrete evidence from the first century. Similarly, Raymond Collins maintains that Paul’s own exposition on marriage is focused on mutuality, going so far as to state, “Equality within the sexual relationship is the norm.” As Antoinette Clark Wire relates, “Apology on Paul’s behalf is unnecessary.” Be that as it may, Paul is convinced that there is something better than the married state. The question that must be asked, then, is what is better than the married state? Is it singleness for Paul or is it celibacy?

2 1 Corinthians 7:7-8, 39-40 Singleness or Celibacy?

Trying to understand what Paul wants from the Corinthians is difficult at best. The usual assumption is that he wants them to remain celibate for moral and ascetic reasons. In fact, most scholars claim that Paul himself was an ascetic, but this may be based more on interpretations of Paul throughout the history of Christendom than on what Paul actually says in 1 Corinthians 7. Paul’s desire in vv. 7-8 is that the Corinthians imitate his way of life, which

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247 See n. 9.
248 Collins, First Corinthians, 255.
250 J. Murphy-O’Connor, 1 Corinthians, 1st U.S. ed., Doubleday Bible Commentary (New York: Doubleday, 1998) 59. Additionally, Boyarin writes, “It is (hetero)sexuality, therefore, that produces gender, for Paul as for Philo and also, as we shall see, within crucially paradigmatic texts of the Christian cultural tradition. Marriage is a lower state than celibacy (He who marries a virgin does well and he who does not marry does better [1 Cor. 7:38]), but it is not by any means forbidden or despised.” See, Daniel Boyarin, “Gender,” in Critical Terms for Religious Studies, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) 123. Boyarin also contends that Paul’s theory of gender is found in 1 Cor 11:1-16.
251 See, for example, Elizabeth A. Castelli, “Paul on Women and Gender,” in Women & Christian Origins, ed. Ross Shepard Kraemer and Mary Rose D’Angelo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 221-35. On p. 227 Castelli writes, “[Paul] implies that not all have the gift of celibacy. The passage continues to elaborate on the theme that marriage is good, but celibacy is better, and rationalizes the argument by pointing out that marriage diverts the attention of the believer away from the things of God.” See, as well, Wire, The Corinthian Women Prophets, 36, who maintains that Paul “modeled celibacy.”
252 John Dominic Crossan, God and Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now (New York: HarperOne, 2008) 180-3. The most important studies which evaluate Paul in light of asceticism include: Daniel Boyarin, A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity, 1st paperback ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); and, Peter
he more than makes clear in v. 9. In particular he advises the unmarried and the widows to be like him, but he contradicts his own advice to widows in vv. 7-8 with what he writes in vv. 39-40.

In a redescription of 1 Corinthians 7 two questions are vitally important: One, how does Paul understand the term ἄγαμος? Does he assume that someone who is ἄγαμος is celibate or does he assume that they are merely single?254 Again, it is important to recall Rist’s point that ἄγαμος does not always refer to a celibate person, and it seems that the type of sex Paul had a problem with was sex which led to the production of children and not sex in general.255 Additionally, attention must be given to the fact that Paul says very little about children, even in places where he discusses sex among married Corinthians in the ekklēsia.

As an adjective ἄγαμος is only used throughout the NT in this chapter (vv. 8, 11, 32, 34), and to make matters worse, Paul supplies it with multiple meanings, creating an interpretive nightmare.256 In verse 11 he uses it to refer to a woman separated in divorce; in verse 32, he uses it to refer to a single man, and in verse 34 he uses it to refer to a single woman (BDAG 5). In

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253 For more on the Pauline theme of imitation in its Greco-Roman setting, see, Benjamin Fiore, "Paul, Exemplification, and Imitation," in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. J. Paul Sampley (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003) 228-57. What Paul says in v. 9 is that singleness requires ἐγκράτεια or "self-control.” This has nothing to do with spiritual gifts per se, but is a virtue praised by the philosophers. For more on this see *TDNT* 2.340. Cf. Philo, *Spec.* 2.195; Josephus, *BJ* 2.120. See, as well, the discussion in May, “The Body for the Lord,” 248-9.

254 For a recent argument which suggests that Paul is referring to singleness and not celibacy see, May, “The Body of the Lord,” 238-40.


256 Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 287, relates, “The question is, to whom does the word ἀγαμός (‘unmarried’) refer? Traditionally this has been seen as addressing all categories of the unmarried, especially the never-before married to whom Paul adds the special category of widows... On balance, ‘widower’ seems to be the best understanding of the word here.” It is important to note that Greek distinguishes between female and male widows. Though Greek has a word for a male widower, it was seldom used--perhaps never--in the Koine period. In fact, it was replaced by ἄγάμος in the Koine period.
verse 8a Paul juxtaposes ἄγαμος with χήρος, which leads many commentators to suggest that it connotes a specific group of unmarried men—namely, male widowers. 257 Finally, Paul relates ἄγαμος and χήρος to the phrase τοῖς ἰγάμοις in v. 8b, which refers to either unmarried women or men. 258

Lexical evidence suggests that the general meaning of ἄγαμος is “unmarried” and not “celibate.” The 1996 supplement to LSJ maintains that ἄγαμος means “the unwed” and gives no indication as to whether or not the “unwed” are male or female. 259 BDAG contends that ἄγαμος refers to any unmarried woman or man regardless of their sexual practices. 260

In Homeric literature ἄγαμος can mean “unwed” or “single” without any reference to whether or not one is engaged in any kind of sexual activity. For example, in the Iliad Hector shames Paris with the following: Evil Paris, most fair to look upon, thou that art mad after women, thou beguiler, would that thou hadst ne’er been born and hadst died unwed (τ’ ἰγαμός τ’ ἀπολέσθαι; ll. 39-40). Xenophon uses ἄγαμος in a similar way in Symposium 9.7, where he recalls the events of a banquet noting that the unwed “swore that they would take to themselves wives.” 261 What is missing in these two examples is any indication that ἄγαμος refers to celibacy.

Euripides uses ἄγαμος in a particularly interesting way in his play Helena. In line 690 Helen cries out in response to Menelaos’ comment, “Alas! Is our daughter Hermione still alive?” with, “Ah, my husband! Unmarried, without children, she mourns my fatal marriage”

257 Collins, First Corinthians, 268. See, LSJ, 5 and the entry ἰγαμετες. LSJ suggests that ἰγάμος refers to the “unmarried, single, prop. of the man, whether bachelor or widower (ἄνανδρος being used being used of the woman).” It also suggests that ἰγάμος could refer to a “marriage that is not marriage, fatal marriage,” but the supplemental section rejects this interpretation.

258 Thus, Schnabel, Erster Korintherbrief, 367, rightly notes, “Das mit Unverheiratete (οἱ ἰγαμος) übersetzte Wort bezieht sich auf die Männer und Frauen in der korinthischen Gemeinde, die nicht verheiratet sind (γαμος ist das Wort für „Hochzeit“ und für „Ehe").”

259 See, LSJ supplement, 2.

260 BDAG, 5.

261 Cf. Aesch. Supp. 143; Eur. Or. 205-6; Soph. OT 1214, 1479, 1502-6
(ἄγαμος ἀτεκνος, ὁ πόσι, καταστένει γάμον ἄγαμον ἐμόν). Here ἄγαμος means: (1) unwed; (2) unwed without children; and, (3) refers to a marriage that is doomed to failure. What is missing once again is any indication that ἄγαμος refers to celibate individuals.

The use of ἄγαμος in the Hellenistic and early imperial periods makes it even more unlikely that it should ever refer to a “celibate person.” For example, in his Antiquitates Romanae 2.30.6, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (circa 60 - 70 BCE) narrates a brief story about Romulus’ conciliatory offer to single Roman men who are alive after a war. His offer includes giving the soldiers virgins from the countries the Romans have conquered. As he relates, “Then counting them and finding their number to be six hundred and eighty-three, he chose an equal number of single men (τῶν ἄγαμων ἄνδρας) to whom he united them according to the customs of each woman’s country, basing the marriages on a communion of fire and water, in the same manner as marriages are performed even down to our times.” In this passage the soldiers are clearly single with no indication that they are celibate. Additionally Dionysius distinguishes between those who are single and those who are virgins.262 The virgins may qualify as celibate, but not the single soldiers.

In Antiquitates Romanae 9.22.2, Dionysius equates ἄγαμος with being “childless.” He relates, “For it is not possible that all the Fabii who went out to the fortress were childlessness and unmarried (οὔτε γὰρ ἀτέκνος τε καὶ ἄγαμος).” The context indicates that ἄγαμος has little to do with celibacy and more to do with a lack of children. Dionysius continues with, “For not only did the ancient law of the Romans oblige all of the proper age to marry, but they were forced also to rear all their children.” The concern here with one who is ἄγαμος is not whether they are celibate but whether they are ἀτεκνος, since being childless would violate the laws of Rome.263

Dio Chrysostom’s *Orationes* provides additional evidence that ἄγαμος does not mean celibacy in the early imperial period. In 11.55 Dio recalls the story of Paris and Helen. He alludes to a quote from Homer’s *Iliad* 3.39ff. in which Hector condemns Paris with, “Thou shouldst never have been born, or else at best have died unwedded (τ’ ἐμεναι ἄγαμός).” In this context ἄγαμος has nothing to do with Paris’ sexual activity. Instead, it indicates that Hector wants Paris to die single and without children.

In the Augustan age Dio Cassius connects ἄγαμος with bachelors who are unwilling to produce children for the state. He notes that Augustus enforced heavier penalties upon single men (τοῖς τε ἄγάμοις; 54.16) who did not marry and procreate. He also uses the female equivalent of ἄγαμος, referring to “single women” as ταῖς ἀνάνδροις, or “those without husbands.” As in the other examples there is nothing here which indicates that the unmarried are celibate. The reason Augustus punishes these single men is because of their failure to procreate.

Additionally, Dio relates how a group of “knights” (οἱ ἰππῆς) confronted Augustus about his marriage laws (56.1-2). Here Dio does not use ἄγαμος to refer to the “unwed,” but instead uses the expression τῶν μὴτε γαμούντων. Regardless of his word choice, he combines this expression with “being childless,” or μὴτε τεκνούντων, which indicates that there is a problem in the Roman empire if one is unwed (ἄγαμος) and childless (ἄτεκνος) but nothing is really said about one being unwed and celibate.

These examples from the Hellenistic and early imperial periods suggest that it is unlikely that ἄγαμος means anything other than being “single.” To see Paul, then, as first and foremost

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264 **“Singleness”** was not highly valued by Greco-Roman philosophers. In *Lecture* 14, Musonius asks, “Or can it be that the man who chooses the single life (ὁ μονήρη βίον) is more patriotic, more a friend and partner of his fellow-man, than the man who maintains a home and rears children and contributes to the growth of his city, which is exactly what a married man does?” His response is a resounding, “No.” For the text of Musonius see, Musonius Rufus, *Musonius Rufus 'the Roman Socrates’*, trans., Cora E. Lutz (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947). See as well the helpful insights in *TDNT* 1.651-3.
an advocate of celibacy is to read our own cultural values back into 1 Corinthians 7. Instead of addressing a Corinthian *ekklēsia* which is divided over issues of marriage and celibacy, it is more likely that Paul is addressing a mixed community of singles, married couples, and widows and widowers. Some of these individuals had children, as Paul indicates in v. 14, but these children appear to be a mere afterthought for Paul. As O. Larry Yarbrough notes, “In all of his letters, Paul explicitly identifies only two parents and their children--Rufus and his mother (Rom 16:13) and the man living with his ‘father’s wife’ (1 Cor 5:1-5).”

Debates in scholarship which fixate on Paul and celibacy miss the most important thing Paul dismisses throughout 1 Corinthians 7. Never once does Paul mention procreation as the purpose of marriage. If ἄγαμος refers to a member of the Corinthian *ekklēsia* who is single, then Paul’s failure to encourage them to marry and produce children is startling given his place in first century Greco-Roman culture. In fact, Paul’s real concern may not be marriage per se, but whether or not members of the Corinthian *ekklēsia*, produce children, which seems to be why he agrees with the slogan in 7:1b. Even when Paul refers directly to married members of the Corinthian *ekklēsia* (vv. 2-7), he does not mention procreation as an end result of marriage.

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265 MacDonald, “Reading 1 Corinthians 7 through the Eyes of Families,” 44, notes, “The limited possibility for birth control in the ancient world means that the presence of children where there are couples is inevitable, even allowing for some spiritual marriages and ascetic tendencies. Reading 1 Corinthians 7 through eyes of families reminds us that Paul could well be speaking to an audience that included slave women who brought their children to meetings and whose non-believing ‘husbands’ were the domestic slaves of nonbelievers.” However, on pp. 46 and 48-49, she points out that what Paul says about children in v. 14 is merely a “fleeting” and “obscure” reference. Additionally, MacDonald notes, “Children may not have been very important to Paul (though we cannot really be certain of this given his extensive metaphorical references to children), but they were almost certainly important to many members of the Corinthian congregation and Paul simply could not escape them in house churches even if he wanted to dissociate himself as much as possible from settled domestic life.” See, as well, Margaret Y. MacDonald and Leif E. Vaage, "Unclean but Holy Children: Paul's Everyday Quandary in 1 Corinthians 7:14e," *CBQ* 73 (2011) 526-46.

266 Yarbrough, “Parents and Children in the Letters of Paul,” 127. In my opinion *Wire, The Corinthian Women Prophets*, 91, reads far too much into v. 14 when she notes, “Paul’s reference to children shows that many women have children and must care for them.”

267 Yarbrough, “Parents and Children in the Letters of Paul,” 128, is so struck by Paul’s lack of attention to procreation among married couples that he writes, “Because Jewish men were obligated to ‘be fruitful and multiply’, it seems probably that Prisca and Aquila had children.” But, there is no evidence anywhere which suggests that they did have children. In fact, in *Not Like the Gentiles*, 20-22, Yarbrough lists a few examples of Jews who failed to fulfill the obligation “be fruitful and multiply.”
Instead, he views sex as a prophylactic which protects against πορνεία.\textsuperscript{268} The purpose of sex within marriage, then, is not the production of children. Moreover, Paul does not counsel a Corinthian who is ἄγαμος to change their state to γάμος, which would violate his advice in (vv. 17-24).\textsuperscript{269} In Paul’s mind the single person continues as an unmarried member of the ekklēsia just as those who were circumcised remain circumcised, while those uncircumcised remain uncircumcised. The major issue, then, revolves around why Paul never tells any of the Corinthians to procreate.

Many of the same questions about those designated ἄγαμος in the Corinthian ekklēsia pertain equally to those designated χήρος. Verses 7-8 and 39-40 address widows in the ekklēsia.\textsuperscript{270} These verses are consistent with the basic thought patterns of both Jewish and Greco-Roman cultures concerning widows.\textsuperscript{271} The major problem between vv. 7-8 and 39-40 is that Paul contradicts himself.\textsuperscript{272} In verses 7-8 he suggests that widows should not marry, but in vv. 39-40 he asserts a widow’s freedom to remarry.\textsuperscript{273} Perhaps this should not come as a

\textsuperscript{268} Martin, The Corinthian Body, 212-8.
\textsuperscript{269} This is significant because a single man’s social role changed from caelebs to maritus upon marriage. For a woman the change was even more significant, considering that she went from virgo to mulier. Additionally, she became a materfamilias to her husband and a matrona to the outside world. Cf. Hor. Carm. 3.14.10-11.
\textsuperscript{271} Collins, First Corinthians, 303. See, as well, Merklein, Der erste Brief an die Korinther, 156-7.
\textsuperscript{272} Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 355, starts out by suggesting that v. 39 contradicts v. 8. He relates, “This final word to the women comes as something of a surprise. It assumes that the woman is married, which is not the perspective of vv. 25-38, but of vv. 1-24, where they were trying to dissolve their marriages.” Unfortunately, he says nothing more about why v. 39 is so surprising. Schrage, Der erste Brief an die Korinther, 204, also notices this problem. He therefore tries to argue that vv. 39-40 are not a needless repetition of v. 8, but instead are connected with v. 25 and the previous discussion about virgins.
\textsuperscript{273} Some, such as Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 329, note this problem, but instead of calling it a contradiction, suggest that what Paul is doing makes sense from the standpoint of Jewish tradition. Fitzmyer’s basis for this claim is the story of the woman in Deut 21:14.
surprise, since, “[T]he fuller context of 1 Corinthians 7 ends up implicating Paul in inherent contradictions in his teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage.”

Paul qualifies what he says to widows by noting that they can only remarry “in the Lord.” This elliptical phrase lacks a verb: Μὴν οὖν ἐν κυρίῳ. The phrase itself is often used by Paul in paraenetic contexts to invoke the authority of the risen Lord (e.g., 1 Thess 3:8; Rom 16:2). Paul’s qualification makes sense in a culture with endogamic marriages based on race, clan, or creed, which was common among both Jews, Greeks, and Romans.

Even though Paul does contradict himself between vv. 7-8 and 39-40, what is most striking is his lack of interest in widows remarrying and producing children for the Corinthian ekklēsia. Male widowers in their twenties or thirties were likely to remarry. As Susan Treggiari states, “The norm was remarriage for women who could bear children, or men who had not reached the age when more children were not needed and the desire for affection could be solaced by a concubine.” In fact, if a widower did not remarry it was assumed that they were not celibate. When it comes to female widows in the Corinthian ekklēsia Paul’s preference for singleness is even more shocking because it upholds the ancient Roman ideal of the univira.

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274 Martin, Sex and the Single Savior, 138. A similar point is made by Gordon who relates, “A lack of clarity exists as to how Paul’s words on marriage and celibacy are to be understood.” See, Gordon, 11, 18.
275 Allo maintains that v. 39 is written in response to a Corinthian ascetic party that was forbidding second marriages after the death of a spouse. See, E.-B. Allo, Première Épître aux Corinthiens, 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1934) 188. Pace Conzelmann, who queries, “Is it a subtle thrust at the pneumatics in Corinth?” He goes on to suggest, “An adequate explanation is to assume that Paul is appealing to the idea of office (v 25) and Spirit. It is not necessary to adopt the special assumption (derived from 2 Corinthians that his possession of the Spirit had been denied in Corinth already at the time of the composition of 1 Corinthians.” Why Paul wants the Corinthian community to only remarry “in the Lord” is similar to a point made by Epictetus in his discourse entitled “About Cynicism.” See, Hans Conzelmann, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, trans., J. W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) 136. A similar point is made by Schrage, Der erste Brief an die Korinther, 205 n. 882.
276 For more on endogamy in the Roman world, see, Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 89-100, 107-19.
278 Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 499.
279 This point is also made by Zeller, Der erste Brief an die Korinther, 276. A Latin inscription known as the so-called “Laudatio Turiae” c. 8-12 BCE, tells of a Roman wife who did not submit to the pressures of the Augustan
This is significant because one of the criticisms of Augustus’ marriage reforms was that they attempted to abolish the ancestral idea of the virtuous woman, who did not remarry after her husband’s death. Thus, it may be that Paul’s advice to widows is a political remark against Augustus’ reforms.

As with the term ἄγαμος, it seems that many scholars continue to ask the wrong questions about widows. In particular, any interpreter of 1 Corinthians 7 should be puzzled by Paul’s lack of interest in widows remarrying and producing children. Though Paul does permit widows to remarry “in the Lord,” he never suggests that the purpose of these marriages is procreation. This raises the question of why Paul would want the single members and widows of the ekklēsia to remain childless? As Margaret Y. MacDonald notes, “[F]amily life served a variety of ideological purposes ranging from the celebration of the aspiration of particular family units in the case of funerary commemorations to political hopes for the stability of the Empire.”

Additionally, Paul’s preference for single women to remain unmarried means that these members of the Corinthian ekklēsia will be stuck in perpetual childhood. As MacDonald notes, “[M]arriage was the main transition point from childhood to adulthood for women in the Roman world and to remain unmarried--for better or worse--would leave females in a liminal/transitional

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280 For Latin inscriptions on epitaphs extolling the virtues of marriage and devoted wives, see, Lattimore, 276-80; 290-1.
state, essentially as perpetual children.” The obvious question, then, is, “Why would Paul encourage widows not to have children?”

### 3 1 Corinthians 7:26-29 - The Present Crisis

In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul provides two major reasons why he wants the single members of the ekklēsia to remain single and why he dismisses the production of children as necessary within the community. In verses 26-29 Paul provides a context which helps to explain why he never counsels the single or widows to marry and produce children. The context is clearly apocalyptic, but the question is, what does that mean to Paul? Additionally, in vv. 32-35 Paul maintains that the married life brings anxieties, a remark which has also been seen as part of Paul’s apocalyptic worldview.

In verse 26 Paul claims that there is a “present crisis” (ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην) in Corinth. Typically scholars use this phrase to explain all of Paul’s positions in 1 Corinthians 7, since the

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282 MacDonald, “Reading 1 Corinthians 7 through the Eyes of Families,” 42.


284 Cf. the Latin Letters of Atticus 9.4.1, which reads, “Though now I rest only so long as I am writing to you or reading your letters, still I am in want of subject matter, and feel sure that you are in the same position, for the present crisis debar us from the free and easy topics of friendly correspondence, and the topics connected with the present crisis we have already exhausted” (Ego etsi tam diu requiesco, quam diu aut ad te scribo au suas litteras lego, tamen et ipse ego argumento epistularum et tibi idem accidere certo scio. Quae enim soluto animo familiariter scribit solent, ea temporibus his excluduntur, quae autem sunt horum temporum, ea iam contrivimus).
“present crisis” is interpreted eschatologically.\textsuperscript{285} Thus, if Paul says something that is odd or strange, or which does not fit with modern conceptions of sexuality, it can be explained away in light of his belief that the end of the world is imminent.\textsuperscript{286}

Those who take this position connect the ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην with Paul’s assertion in v. 29 that the “time has grown short” (ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος). But, there are two major problems with this reading of the ἐνεστῶσαν ἀνάγκην: (1) It does not take into consideration historical factors in Corinth, which Paul likely had in mind when he wrote this letter; and, (2) In the Corpus Paulinum ἐνίστημι always refers to present circumstances and not to ones in the immediate future (e.g., 1 Cor 3:22; Rom 8:38; Gal 1:4).

In the inscriptions collected by J. H. Kent, inscription 267 reads: “The city council (Ἡ βουλή) and the citizens of Corinth (ὁ δῆμος) (set up this monument) [to ----] because of the monthly grain supply (µηωίων σίτων) and in return for [every (display of) good will [----] he supplied [----].”\textsuperscript{287} As Kent observes, “There is ample evidence that regular supplies of food were a constant concern in ancient communities, and it is easy to suppose that some individual or group of individuals could have been thought worthy of public recognition for insuring a steady supply of grain to Corinth.”\textsuperscript{288} Donald Engels relates, “So critical was the need to import food,

\textsuperscript{285} Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 328, notes that v. 26 is the “first expression of the reason for [Paul’s] advice.” Conzelmann, I Corinthians, 132, suggests translating “present crisis” as “impending crisis” in order to signify the imminent apocalyptic woes.

\textsuperscript{286} Lietzmann, An die Korinther 1-2, speaks for many when he suggests that the reason Paul is advocating celibacy is because he thinks the end is imminent. As he relates, “Es ist der auch in der Form (ἀνθρώπῳ) allgemein ausgesprochene Grundsatz des Paulus, dass sich um der Nähe der Parusie willen die Ehelosigkeit empfiehlt, ἡ ἐνεστῶσα ἀνάγκη = 28b θλίψις.” Cf. Conzelmann, I Corinthians, 132, relates, “This statement at last explicitly affords the long-awaited eschatological grounding.” Cf. Allo, Première Épitre aux Corinthiens, 177-8. A slightly different position is taken by Barrett, Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, 175, who writes, “The necessity is probably to be interpreted in terms of verse 29 rather than verse 37; that is, Paul is thinking not of the inward urge that drives men into marriage (this operates in the opposite direction), nor of the troubles of a married woman (Gen. iii. 16), nor even of persecution as such, but of the eschatological woes that are impending over the world, and are already anticipated in the sufferings of Christians.”

\textsuperscript{287} Kent, 107-08.

\textsuperscript{288} Kent, The Inscriptions, 108. For more on famines in the ancient world, see, Peter Garnsey, Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World: Responses to Risk and Crisis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
especially grain, the city had its own official, the *curator annonae*, who was in charge of the acquisition [sic.] of adequate supplies.\(^{289}\) Ancient writers, such as Thucydides, confirm Kent and Engels’ observations.\(^{290}\) In 3.82.2, 85.2 Thucydides notes a situation in which cities were forced to face conditions of dire necessity (διὰ τὸ μὴ ἀκουσίους ἀναγκᾶς πίεσιν), which included things like “severe famines” (λιμὸς ἰσχυρός). A similar expression occurs in Dionysius of Halicarnassus’ *Ant. Rom*. 9.3.2: ὁ δὲ τελευτῶντες ἐξειργάσαντο κίνδυνον οὐ μικρὸν ἦνεγκε καὶ πολλὴν αἰσχόνην ἀμφοῖν. There is also evidence of a widespread famine in Asia in 162 CE, the results of which were felt even on the other side of the Aegean.\(^{291}\) This could mean, then, that Paul has something concrete, historical, and immediate in mind when he speaks of the “present crisis” in Corinth.\(^{292}\) In fact, he could easily be referring to grain shortages in the Roman empire, which led to severe famines several times in the middle of the first century CE. As Collins relates, “Paul may simply be giving the unmarried Christians of Corinth a bit of practical advice in the midst of life’s difficulties.”\(^{293}\)

Bruce Winter points to the significant evidence in Roman writings of grain shortages and famines in the first century.\(^{294}\) For example, Corinth was likely affected by the severe famine in 51 CE during the reign of Claudius. Regarding this famine Tacitus relates, “Scanty crops too, and consequent famine were regarded as a token of calamity. Nor were there merely whispered complaints; while Claudius was administering justice, the populace crowded round him...and

\(^{289}\) Engels, 58. Engels refers to a number of the inscriptions in Kent: nos. 158-64, 170, 177, 188, 234-36, 238.


\(^{292}\) In *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides also speaks of a “present affliction” brought on by overcrowding of the city due to excessive heat in the countryside (3.52).

\(^{293}\) Collins, *First Corinthians*, 293.

drove him to a corner of the forum” (Ann. 12.43.1). Suetonius also reports on the famine in 51 CE. He writes, “During a scarcity of provisions, occasioned by bad crops for several successive years, Claudius was stopped in the middle of the forum by the mob, who so abused him, at the same time pelting him with fragments of bread... He therefore used all possible means to bring provisions to the city, even in winter” (Claud. 59). Because of mob violence, maintaining food supplies became a major priority of Claudius’ administration.

The building projects of Claudius (circa 41-53 CE) also betray the effects of grain shortages on the city of Corinth. For example, the shipping facilities at Lechaion, Corinth’s port to the west, were improved by dredging out the inner harbour. Additionally, large warehouses (horrea) were constructed in the western part of the city. C. K. Williams contends that the inhabitants of Corinth might have engaged in these building projects because they were anticipating a large growth in population, which would mean more mouths to feed.

Taking these historical circumstances into account, the “present crisis” is likely a grain shortage which Paul interprets eschatologically. As seen above, Paul uses the word ἀνάγκη to indicate a variety of pressing situations in the present, which means that ἀνάγκη is not limited to the imminent end of the world (e.g., 7:36; 9:16; cf. Rom 13:5; 2 Cor 6:4; 9:7; 12:10; 1 Thess

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297 Engels, Roman Corinth, 75, points out that famines were “more devastating for large urban areas than for smaller towns in the preindustrial world.” See, as well, E. A. Wrigley, Population and History (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 64-68. Additionally, one should consult, Williams, 44-6.

298 For more on these grain facilities, see, Geoffrey Rickman, Roman Granaries and Store Buildings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

299 Williams, “Roman Corinth as a Commercial Center,” 37. The Corinthians—whether Greek or Roman—were always industrious. In The History of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides notes that Corinth had always been a “centre of commerce.” Moreover, he informs us that they were the first to build naval warships (I.13).

300 Many scholars have linked the “present crisis” with the “parousia.” See, the comments by Allo, who writes, “Les sens du mot ἀνάγκη, et du participe ἐνεστῶσα n’ont rien en eux-mêmes quit nous porte à croire qu’il ait voulu parler ici de la Parousie dont l’imminence rendrait vain tout espoir humain fondé dur un chagament d’état. Pourtant presque tous les auteurs modernes, surtout a catholiques, veulent qu’ce passage fasse allusion à la fin du monde.” See, Allo, Première Épitre aux Corinthiens, 178.
3:7). Instead, Paul points to a historical crisis in the present--grain shortages, which precipitated widespread famine throughout the Roman empire.

In my opinion, Nash is correct in following Winter’s interpretation of “the present crisis” up to a point. As he notes, Winter is right to maintain that “the present crisis” is a grain shortage. Where Winter errs, however, is in his assumption that Paul does not interpret the grain shortage eschatologically. The problem with Winter’s interpretation is v. 29, where Paul notes that “the appointed time has grown short” (ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος ἐστίν). As Nash relates, “Most likely, Paul viewed the present hardships as evidence that the current world order had already entered into its demise (cf. v. 31b). So, even though he may have had present difficulties in mind, those circumstances signal the unraveling of the power structures which held sway.

Paul’s use of the verb συνεσταλμένος, which is used only here in v. 29, usually means “shrinking” or “compression.” Plato uses it in a similar way in Leg. 691e, where he writes about the restriction of royal power: τῶν βασιλέων γένεσιν ἐκ μονογενοῦς, εἰς τὸ μέτρον μᾶλλον συνέστειλε. In De corona 18.246, Demosthenes uses it in the sense of “reducing delays and hesitations” (ἀ πολιτικὰ ταὶς πόλεσιν πρόσεστιν ἀπάσαις καὶ ἀναγκαῖ ἀμαρτήματα, ταῦθ’ ὡς εἰς ἑλάχιστα συστεῖλαι). Nash is correct, then, to suggest that what Paul is doing here is interpreting the present crisis of v. 26 in an eschatological manner.

If Paul does view “the present crisis” as a grain shortage interpreted eschatologically, this may go a long way toward answering why Paul views marriage as a burden and says nothing

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301 Bradley E. Blue, “The House Church at Corint and the Lord's Supper: Famine, Food Supply, and the Present Distress,” CTR 5 (1991) 221-39. A similar point is made by Yarbrough, Not Like the Gentiles, 103, but he interprets the “distress” as having to do with an inability to control sexual desires.
302 Nash, 1 Corinthians, 214-16.
303 As I will discuss in the next chapter this was a common theme in Greco-Roman literature corresponding to the concept of the Golden Age.
304 Nash, 1 Corinthians, 215.
305 EDNT 3:313. Outside of Paul’s letters συστέλλω is only used in Acts 5:6.
about the production of children.\textsuperscript{306} If single members of the Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia} started having children, this would mean more mouths to feed, something the Corinthians already anticipated given their extensive building projects because of a growing population.\textsuperscript{307} This is especially significant in light of the fact that the more diversified economies of cities “provided more opportunity for working children to ‘make good’ than did the countryside and may help to explain the apparently greater value placed on children in urban populations.”\textsuperscript{308} Additionally, food was already a major issue in Corinth whether it was its distribution at the Lord’s Supper or questions about meat sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8:1-13; 11:17-22).\textsuperscript{309}

In vv. 32-35 Paul further elaborates why the single members of the Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia} should remain single. Simply stated, Paul wants the Corinthians to be free from any worldly affairs (ἀµερµανος).\textsuperscript{310} In verse 32 he contends that the single man (ὁ ἅγαµος) is concerned about

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\item[307] Garnsey points out that not all residents of the Roman empire were entitled to grain doles. For example, Augustus excluded recently manumitted freedmen. However, during the time of Nero the age of eligibility to receive the grain dole was lowered to 10, which means that as more people produced children there was need for more food. In fact, Pliny notes that Trajan introduced 5000 new infant grain recipients. For more on this, see, Garnsey, \textit{Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World}, 236. On pp. 28 and 251, Garnsey also notes that famines could result in children being exposed—especially girls—or sold into slavery. See, as well, Rickman, \textit{Roman Granaries and Store Buildings}, 182-97.


\item[310] The adj. ἀµερµανος, which is a hapax in the Pauline corpus, is echoed in the verb μεριμνα in v. 32. Μεριμνα is a Stoic concept meaning “anxiety, worry, care.” For more on this, see BDAG 632. Additionally, one should consult, Hierocles, \textit{Peri gamou} 22.24, excerpted in Stobaeus, \textit{Anthologium}. Collins, \textit{First Corinthians}, 296, maintains that
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the affairs of the Lord, while the married man (ὁ γαμὴσας) is anxious about worldly affairs and how to please his wife (πῶς ἀρέση τῇ γυναικί). Interestingly, Paul seems to assume in v. 32 that the married man either does not have children, which would be odd in a Roman city such as Corinth, or, more likely, he is not concerned with children nor with traditional Roman family structures. Be that as it may, Paul gives the same counsel to single and married women. For Paul the married life is filled with anxieties and distractions. Given Paul’s lack of interest in children throughout 1 Corinthians 7, this leads one to wonder if the ultimate distraction Paul has in mind is procreation and not marriage per se?

When verses 26-29 and 32-35 are taken together, Paul gives plausible, concrete reasons as to why the single in the Corinthian ekklēsia should remain as they are. Since what guides Paul’s views about marriage and singleness in 1 Corinthians 7 is a famine, which he interprets eschatologically, it makes perfect sense for Paul to view marriage as a burden and to say nothing about procreation because marriage could lead to the production of children, which would mean more mouths for the Corinthians to feed. This best explains why Paul is in agreement with 1 Cor 7:1b. If a “man touches a woman,” then this act could lead to the distraction of having children. Sex, in and of itself, does not seem to be Paul’s main concern throughout 1 Corinthians 7, though certain kinds of sexual activity do concern Paul in chapters five and six. The problem is that most interpreters of 1 Corinthians 7 have not paid attention to some of the more salient features beginning with v. 32 Paul employs the literary device known as paronomasia (i.e. use of words with the same root). In this case Collins is referring to Paul’s use of μερι- words.

311 Thirteen of ἀρέση’s 17 NT occurrences are in Paul. The word itself is a legal term that later on developed aesthetic connotations. Thus, in this context it has more to do with obedience. For more, see, Collins, First Corinthians, 296.

312 MacDonald argues that Paul addresses Corinthian women, who were striving to maintain their holiness by remaining single. The idea is that the Corinthian women found the hope of a new kind of freedom in the social world of Roman Corinth. On p. 172 she maintains that even though Paul has spoken first about “the unmarried man” (v. 32), “the impulse for celibacy came mainly from women, since the celibate efforts of these traditionally subordinate members of the community would most likely require the blessings of males if the community was to continue as a mixed group.” See, MacDonald, “Women Holy in Body and Spirit,” 161-81. Among the Stoics it was expected that a wife should please her husband. See, for example, Antipater of Tarsus, SVF 3.255.22-23. This was also expected among the Neo-Pythagoreans. See, for example, Letter to Kleareta 116.4-12.
of Paul’s directives. Instead they have sought to liberate Paul from seemingly negative views of marriage and rehabilitate him with more positive ones. Be that as it may, it is important to recall Wire’s point: *There is no need to apologize for Paul.*

### 4 A Redescription of Paul’s Advice to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 7

The majority of scholars do not read 1 Corinthians 7 in the way it is read here. Instead of paying attention to singleness and the lack of concern for children, most readings of 1 Corinthians 7 focus on ways to rehabilitate Paul’s seemingly negative views on sex and marriage. One way of rehabilitating Paul is to read him in light of Stoic philosophy and to view him as a proponent of marriage and children. For example, Collins argues that what Paul says in 1 Cor 7:1-7 resonates with the Hellenistic moral philosophy of Musonius and Hierocles. He suggests that some of Paul’s linguistic usage such as “it is good for a man” (καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ; v. 1b) and “similarly” (ὁμοίως δὲ κατι; v. 3) echoes the language of the Stoics and Cynics. As he

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314 MacDonald, “Reading 1 Corinthians 7 through the Eyes of Families,” 45, notes, “There has been great attention given to the origins of Paul’s thought in 1 Corinthians 7 by New Testament scholars, especially in comparison to the philosophers of his day.” In particular, she cites Deming, *Paul on Marriage and Celibacy*. Reading Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 in light of Stoic texts goes back to the work of Weiss. See, Johannes Weiss, *Der Erste Korintherbrief*, Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1925) 172. More recent treatments that rely on Musonius include Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 276; and, Zeller, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 239. See, as well, Roy Bowen Ward, "Musonius and Paul on Marriage," *NTS* 36 (1990) 281-9. It is important to note that both Fitzmyer and Ward point to several problems with attempts at comparing Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 to Musonius Rufus’ advice on marriage in his lectures. However, despite their cautions, they still tend to see connections between Paul and Musonius. The most recent treatment of Paul and the Stoics on marriage can be found in Deming, *Paul on Marriage and Celibacy*. It is not clear at all why Treggiari, *Roman Marriage*, 177, maintains that marriage was morally neutral among the philosophical schools.
315 Collins, *First Corinthians*, 255. Collins engages in a major error which occurs regularly among New Testament scholars. He assumes without any qualification that the Stoics and the Cynics can be grouped together even though they represent two different “schools of thought.” As Irvine relates, “One thing that made Stoicism attractive was its abandonment of Cynic asceticism: The Stoics favored a lifestyle that, although simple, allowed creature comforts. The Stoics defended this abandonment by arguing that if they avoided the ‘good things’, as the Cynics did, they...
relates, “Marital responsibility and mutuality within the relationship are two of the motifs frequently raised in the philosophic discourse.” The problem with this is that such may be true among the Stoics, but it is not true when it comes to Paul and the Cynics. In fact, a closer reading of 1 Corinthians 7 reveals that Paul has more in common with the Cynics, who despised marriage and children, than he does with the Stoics, who praised marriage and procreation.

Musonius’ basic thoughts on marriage come from his lectures. In particular, lectures 12-15 contain a number of insights into his beliefs concerning women, children, sex, celibacy, and adultery. By and large his views are influenced by the Lex Julia de Maritandis Ordinibus (18 BCE) and Lex Papia Poppaea (9 CE), since he upholds the Roman notion that children are important and that the more children a man has the more powerful he will be. In Lecture 15 he writes:

Is it not true that the lawgivers, whose special function it was by careful search to discern what is good for the state and what is bad, what promotes and what is detrimental to the common good, all considered the increase of the homes of the citizens the most fortunate thing for the cities and the decrease of them the most shameful thing? And when the citizens had few or no children did they not regard it as a loss, but when they had children, yes, plenty of them, did they not regard it as a gain? So it was for this reason that they forbade women to suffer abortions and imposed a penalty upon those who disobeyed; for this reason they discouraged them from choosing childlessness and avoiding parenthood, and for this reason they thereby demonstrated that the things in question really were good--were things that, if they did not hide them from themselves, they would crave. The Stoics enjoyed whatever ‘good things’ happened to be available, but even as they did so, they prepared themselves to give up the things in question.” See, William B. Irvine, A Guide to the Good Life: The Ancient Art of Stoic Joy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 33. I use the term “school of thought” for the sake of convenience. In reality, Cynicism and Stoicism encompassed a “way of life” and not “schools of thought.” For more on this, see, R. Bracht Branham and Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé, "Introduction," in The Cynics: The Cynic Movement in Antiquity and its Legacy, ed. R. Bracht Branham and Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996) 1-27; esp. 2, 22ff.

317 Collins, First Corinthians, 255.
318 Pace May, “The Body for the Lord,” 181, who writes, “Nor (and we shall return to this in the next chapter) do the Stoic-Cynic dialogues themselves provide a plausible social parallel for Corinthian asceticism: they represent a debate between philosophers on how the individual philosopher should behave, and not a community’s discussion about how to structure their common life. The Cynic was always a lone individual.”
319 The most accessible text of Musonius’ lectures and fragments is Cora Lutz, "Musonius Rufus, the Roman Socrates," Yale Classical Series 10 (1947) 3-147. All quotes from Musonius come from Lutz’s work.
320 For a list of relevant passages among the Stoics pertaining to marriage, see, Michael Trapp, Philosophy in the Roman Empire: Ethics, Politics and Society (Hamshire: Ashgate, 2007) 161.
gave to both husband and wife a reward for large families, and set a penalty upon childlessness.

In Lecture 13a Musonius notes that the end of marriage is “community” (κοινωνία) and the “procreation of children” (γενέσεως παιδών). As he relates, “The husband and wife... should come together for the purpose of making a life in common and procreating children, and furthermore of regarding all things in common between them...” Additionally, he maintains that within marriages there should be “perfect companionship” (πάντως συμβίωσίν) and “mutual care” (κηδεμονία) for one another, all of which are absent from 1 Corinthians 7.

In Lecture 14 he restates a number of these ideas. Here he notes that marriage is not a hindrance to the study of philosophy. In order to prove his argument, Musonius points to the examples of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Crates, each of whom had wives and practiced philosophy. He continues by noting how Hera, Eros, and Aphrodite watch diligently over marriage. For Musonius these deities are responsible for “bringing together man and woman for the procreation of children” (πρώτη μὲν Ἡρα... εἶτα Ἐρως, εἶτα Αφροδίτη: πάντας γάρ τούτους ὑπολαμβάνομεν ἔργον πεποιησθαι τούτο, συνάγειν ἄλληλοις πρὸς παιδοποιίαν ἄνδρα καὶ γυναῖκα).

He concludes Lecture 14 by noting how the single life is not the best choice for a philosopher. He queries, “Can it be that the man who chooses the single life (ὁ μονήρης Βίον) is more patriotic, more a friend and partner of his fellow man, than the man who maintains a home and rears children and contributes to the growth of his city, which is exactly what the married

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321 Trapp writes, “Marriage, in their presentation, is the prime medium for the expression of human beings’ natural impulse towards association and community with those around us.” See, Trapp, Philosophy in the Roman Empire, 161.
322 It is important to note that Stoic ethics are built on the concept of οἰκείωσις or “brotherhood.” For more on this, see, A. A. Long, Stoic Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 152-4.
man does?” He answers, “It is clear, therefore, that it is fitting for a philosopher to concern himself with marriage and having children.”

The early second century Stoic, Hierocles, echoes many of Musonius’s thoughts. In his work *On Duties*, Hierocles contends that nature teaches that the married life is to be preferred to the single life: “But it seems that even before the wise man, nature, which also excites the wise man himself to marry, urges us to do so” (4.22.21ff.). Moreover he adds, “Nature not only made us gregarious, but also disposed us to live in pairs, and enjoined that copulation have one purpose, I mean the procreation of children and a steady way of life.” There is no advantage, then, to being against marriage. In fact, Hierocles believes that households are imperfect if they do not have a husband and a wife. Though this is the position of Musonius, Hierocles,

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324 An older but useful summary of philosophical attitudes toward marriage in antiquity can be found in F. Bock, "Aristoteles, Theophrastus, Seneca de matrimonio," *Leipziger Studien zur classischen Philologie* 19 (1899) 1ff. A more recent treatment can be found in Trapp, *Philosophy in the Roman Empire*, 161-5.


326 He writes, “This argument especially appears to me to put to shame those persons who are prejudiced against marriage.” The argument he is referring to runs, “It is impossible to conceive of what governs without what is governed, or of what is governed without what governs.” In an early text known as *On Duties*, Hierocles suggests that there should not be a sharp distinction between what women do in a house versus what men do. As he relates, “Before anything else I should speak about the occupations by which a household is maintained. They should be divided in the usual manner, namely, to the husband should be assigned those which have to do with agriculture, commerce, and the affairs of the city; to the wife those which have to do with spinning and the preparation of food, in short, those of a domestic nature. It is not right, however, that they should be completely inexperienced in each other’s work. For it would on occasion be fitting for the wife, when she is in the country, to supervise the laborers and to take the place of the master of the house; and for the husband to turn his attention to domestic affairs, to inquire about some things and to oversee others that are taking place.” See, Malherbe, *Greco-Roman Moral Exhortation*, 98. The spinning of wool is seen in Greco-Roman culture as an activity engaged in by the ideal female. ILS 8403, composed by a 2nd C BCE male obituary writer, contains the following brief statement: Donum Servavit. Lanam Fecit - “She kept up her household; she made wool.” For more on this, see, M. I. Finley, "The Silent Women of Rome,” in *Aspects of Antiquity*, ed. M. I. Finley (London: Penguin, 1968, 1991) 130-31. Additionally in 130 BCE Antipater of Tarsus, who was head of the Stoic school, wrote a brief rant against those who thought marriage was a burden which inhibits personal freedom. He relates, “But for a male who loves the good and wishes to lead a life of leisure devoted to reason or to political deeds or both, the matter is just the same (τελείως... ἀμετάφραστον). The more he is turned away from household management, the more he must take a wife to do the housekeeping for him and make himself free from distractions (ἐξαιτόν ἀμετάφραστον) about daily necessities. Quoted in Balch, “1 Cor 7:32-35 and Stoic Debates about Marriage,” 432.

and other Stoics, the Cynics view marriage as an obstacle to be overcome by self-control and self-denial.\textsuperscript{328}

In Cynic philosophy marriage is something negative which prohibits a true Cynic from doing their work because marriage and childrearing are distractions.\textsuperscript{329} As Diogenes Laertius relates concerning Diogenes the Cynic, “He would praise those who were about to marry and refrained” (ἐπήνευσεν τοὺς μέλλοντας γαμῆν καὶ μὴ γαμῆν; 6.29).\textsuperscript{330} This same attitude toward marriage is also found in two fragments containing the sayings of the Cynic Bion of Borysthenes. In fragments 61a and 61b Bion responds to a question concerning whether or not one should marry with the following answer: “If the wife you marry is ugly, she will be your downfall; if beautiful, you will not be able to keep her to yourself” (my translation).\textsuperscript{331}


\textsuperscript{329} The only Cynic that accepted marriage because it led to the procreation of children was Antisthenes (Diog. Laert. 6.11). The case of Crates and Hipparchia is most unusual, and it should not be treated as the norm among Cynics. In fact, Apuleius in his \textit{Florida} XIV describes it as an embarrassing moment in Cynic history. For more on this marriage, see, Luis E. Navia, \textit{Classical Cynicism: A Critical Study}, Contributions in Philosophy, vol. 58 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996) 119-44.


Regarding this brief saying, Jan Kindstrand writes, “According to the fragment we must assume that Bion is critical of marriage.”

In the account of the Cynic philosopher Demonax, written in the mid to late 170s CE, Lucian notes the following: “When Epictetus reproached him and advised him to marry and have children, saying that it was right for a philosopher to leave behind a natural substitute for himself, Demonax demolished him utterly with the reply, ‘All right, Epictetus, give me one of your daughters’” (55). Since the Cynics believed in “defacing the currency” (ὀντως νόμισμα παραχαράττων; Diog. Laert. 6.71) it is no wonder that they opted for singleness instead of marriage in a society that promoted marriage and childbearing as a way of preserving the state.

As J. Dorcas Gordon relates, “Sexual continence neutralizes marriage and family, and, in turn, the statuses and behaviours that specifically pertain to that institution are dramatically altered.”

To sum up, the Stoics maintained that marriage was only one part of a larger system of morality. Because humanity forms a natural community, they began with the universe itself and the place of marriage within it.

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332 Kindstrand, *Bion of Borysthenes*, 273.
335 Gordon, *Sister or Wife?*, 61. Gordon points to the PhD dissertation of Ross Kraemer, who states, ‘In traditional societies, the rejection of sexuality usually entails the rejection of roles associated with one’s sex and with sexuality, namely reproduction, child-raising and often the associated tasks of domesticity. Since, in most cases, all of these tasks fall to women... the rejection of sexuality carries with it the potential release of women from obligations and roles which are almost always linked to sex and sexuality.’ See, Ross Kraemer, *Ecstatics and Ascetics: Studies in the Functions of Religious Activities for Women in the Greco-Roman World*. (PhD dissertation; Princeton University, 1976) 138.
336 Gordon, *Sister or Wife?*, 85.
transcending all social and political orders.\textsuperscript{338} As Will Deming relates, “[T]he Stoic marriage discussions reflect one of the great issues that faced intellectuals in the Hellenistic period, namely, whether the Greek city-state could continue as the social, economic, and political center of a person’s life.”\textsuperscript{339} What was really at stake, then, was whether or not the traditional Greco-Roman understanding of human society should continue to be affirmed or abandoned.\textsuperscript{340}

In contrast to the Stoics, the Cynics upheld individualism and self-sufficiency, which took the place of things like marriage and the city-state.\textsuperscript{341} For example, Diogenes the Cynic rejected the duties which came with being a citizen and instead took a stand against marriage. He maintained that an alternative option was for a man to take joint custody of a number of women and their children. As Diogenes Laertius relates, “He advocated a community of wives, recognizing no other marriage than a union of the man who persuades the consenting woman. And for this reason he thought sons should also be held in common” (6.72; my translation). Additionally, Diogenes the Cynic encouraged the practice of masturbation in place of all forms of sexuality which demanded a partner.\textsuperscript{342} Several stories are told about Diogenes the Cynic masturbating in public. These anecdotes contain the euphemistic expression, “[H]e wished it were as easy to relieve hunger by rubbing an empty stomach” (καὶ τὴν κοιλίαν ἵνα παρατρίψαντα μὴ πεινῆν; Diog. Laert. 6.46, 69; my translation). As Gordon maintains, “Whereas the Stoic

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{338} For an overview of Stoic views on marriage, see the relevant sections in Rist, \textit{Stoic Philosophy}, 56-57.
\item \textsuperscript{339} Deming, \textit{Paul on Marriage and Celibacy}, 54.
\item \textsuperscript{341} It is important to keep in mind the remarks of Meeks, who notes that in the first century the Cynic school was known primarily through the writings of the Stoics. Additionally he notes that many differences existed within Cynicism itself. For example, he points out that some Cynics are “mild” while some are “austere.” For him, an “austere” Cynic is one who gives up on trying to find any good in society; a “mild” Cynic takes the common institutions of the \textit{polis} for granted. For more, see, Wayne A. Meeks, \textit{The Moral World of the First Christians}, Library of Early Christianity (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1986) 55. For more on first century Cynicism, see, Harold W. Attridge, \textit{First-Century Cynicism in the Epistles of Heraclitus}, Harvard Theological Studies, vol. 29 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1976).
\item \textsuperscript{342} For more on the “shamelessness” or ἀναίδεια of Diogenes, see, Downing, 50-3. See, as well, \textit{Diog. Laert.} 6.32, 46, 58, 61, 69, for examples of Diogenes’s acts of shamelessness.
\end{itemize}
generally did not criticize existing institutions, the Cynic carried out a rigorous and practical
critique of social traditions.”

Scholars have suggested around fourteen Cynic “catch-words” which appear often in
Cynic writings. Of these terms, four appear with some frequency in the Pauline corpus,
particularly in the Corinthian correspondence. For example, αὐτάρκεια appears in 2 Cor 9:8,
while αὐτάρκης appears in Phil 4:11. Additionally, παρρησία appears in 2 Cor 3:12, 7:4 and
Phil 1:20. Most important for our purposes is the fact that variations of ἐλευθερία appear in 1
Cor 7:21, 22, and 39, and ἀκρασία in 7:5.

Paul uses the term ἐλευθερία when discussing slavery and widows in 1 Corinthians 7.

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343 Gordon, *Sister or Wife?*, 86. Additionally, Gordon points out that Stoics and Cynics differed on marriage in four ways: (1) Whether marriage is desirable (especially for the wise man); (2) Whom one should marry; (3) Relations between husbands and wives; and on (4) The significance of having children.


345 For more on the Cynic use of αὐτάρκεια see, Desmond, *The Greek Praise of Poverty*, 166-67.


347 It is unclear why Downing’s list of Cynic “catch words” does not include ἀκρασία since it appears regularly in the Cynic *Épîstîles*. For a list of its appearances, see, Malherbe, *The Cynic Épîstîles*, 316. For a discussion of the Cynic use of ἐλευθερία see, Long, *From Epicurus to Epictetus*, 358-9.


349 The text reads, “τί γὰρ ὅρθος ἄνδρος μὴ ἐλευθέρου;” See, Malherbe, *The Cynic Épîstîles*, 59. In the writings of Pseudo-Anacharsis there is an example of how the Cynic reverses society’s expectation of slavery and freedom. Letter 6 reads, “You have flutes and a purse, but I have arrows and bows. Therefore, with good reason you are a slave, but I am free (ἐγώ δὲ ἐλευθέρος). And you have many enemies, but I have none. But should you be willing
slavery echo the question of the Cynic Pseudo-Diogenes, who asks, “For what good is a man who is not free?”350 In response Pseudo-Diogenes relates, “Without a doubt, this very condition is slavery, when people make provision for their life in the grips of fear.”351

Paul’s use of ἁκρασία in 1 Cor 7:5 is particularly important because he uses it in the context of one’s inability to control their sexual appetites. In the case of the Cynics, ἁκρασία is often linked with ἡδονή. For example, Pseudo-Crates writes, “Shun not only the worst of evils, injustice and self-indulgence (ἁκρασίαν), but also their causes--pleasures (ἡδονάς).”352 Sometimes Cynics even advised suicide for one who lacked self-control--“[E]ither learn self-control or hang yourselves!”353

F. Gerald Downing points out that one does not have to use Cynic terms in order to be considered a Cynic.354 All that is needed is for ones statements to sound Cynic or for ones actions to resemble those of the Cynics.355 In the case of 1 Corinthians 7, Paul not only uses Cynic terminology but he also sounds and acts like a Cynic by his lack of interest in procreation and his negative assessment of marriage.

Though Paul never tells us his opinions regarding the purpose of sex, except to say that it has something to do with the untranslatable πορνεία, a more fitting background to Paul’s advice to throw away your money, to carry bows and a quiver, and to live as a free citizen (πολιτεύεσθαι) with the Scythians, then these same conditions will obtain for you, too.” See, Malherbe, The Cynic Epistles, 43.

353 See, Malherbe, The Cynic Epistles, 123.
355 This point is also made by Vaage, “Like Dogs Barking,” 25, who writes, “In antiquity the idea of Cynic ‘theory’ could hardly be maintained. Nonetheless, for the better part of 1000 years from classical Athens to Christian Rome, one knew when a member of the ‘breed’ (versus someone else) was hounding.” On p. 30 he points out that being a Cynic has as much to do with terminology as with actions. See, for example, Teles 11H; and Diog. Laert. 6.32, 6.66.
can be found in the *Cynic Epistles*. Instead of having sex for the purpose of producing children, Pseudo-Diogenes tells Amynander, “For birth is a consequence of sexual activity, which is engaged in for the sake of pleasure, not procreation (ἀπερ ἡδονής ἐνεκεν, οὐ γενέσεως ἐπιτηδεύεται).” Similarly he informs Metrocles, “Intercourse with women provides enjoyment to the general, uninformed public. But they, in like manner, are damaged because of this practice; but you will learn in the company of those who have learned from Pan to do the trick with their hands.” Finally, Pseudo-Diogenes sounds most Pauline when he informs Zeno:

> One should not wed nor raise children, since our race is weak and marriage and children burden human weakness with troubles. Therefore, those who move toward wedlock and the rearing of children on account of the support of these promises, later experience a change of heart when they come to know that they are characterized by even greater hardships.

Like the Cynics, Paul informs the Corinthians that if they marry they too will experience “many troubles in this life” (1 Cor 7:28), which, as we saw above, has something to do with begetting children.

### 5 Conclusion

As we have seen, nothing Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7 fits with the positive assessment of marriage and procreation as found in the philosophical remarks of Stoics like Musonius and Hierocles. The need to make Paul a champion of marriage and procreation—or more like a Stoic—usually stems from various ideological concerns among modern interpreters. To quote Martin

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once again, studies which attempt to rehabilitate Paul on sex and marriage are often driven by
unstated “contemporary sexual ideology derived mainly from modern psychology and
psychotherapy (including acceptance of the modern category of ‘sexuality’).”360 The downside
of interpreters approaching Paul with their contemporary ideologies intact is that they tend to
miss the fact that he wants the Corinthians to resist sensual allurements.361 In other words, he
wants them to practice ἀκρασία. For Paul, then, it is possible to learn how to live without a
spouse even though this may seem impossible to many modern readers of the apostle.362

It seems safe to say, then, that throughout 1 Corinthians 7 Paul is not interested in Stoic
ideas about marriage and procreation. As we have seen, the Stoics sought to maintain the
household, the city, and the state. Paul, on the other hand, is more concerned with the individual
and whether or not s/he produces children. When read with the Cynics, Paul’s lack of interest in
procreation and children, his negative assessment of marriage, and his disregard of the Augustan
marriage legislation makes perfect sense. Simply stated, Paul’s advice does one thing: It
“defaces the currency” of the social norms prevalent in Roman Corinth. However, lest we too
quickly assume that Paul is engaged in an all out assault on the Augustan marriage laws, a
comparison of 1 Corinthians 7 with the Lex Julia de Maritandis Ordinibus and Lex Papia
Poppaea in the next chapter will reveal that the two have a very complicated relationship. That
relationship is not based on binary opposition but on what Homi Bhabha calls “malleable
hybridity.”

360 Martin, 209. A similar point is made in Kloppenborg, 247-63.
361 I agree with Vaage that the best way of describing this type of ascetic behavior is to refer to it as “An Asceticism
362 Barrett, Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, 158.
Chapter 4

The Augustan Laws and 1 Corinthians 7

Having discussed both the Augustan marriage laws and Paul’s directives on 1 Corinthians 7, this chapter will provide a *redescription* of Paul and the Corinthians highlighting both similarities and differences between Paul and the Augustan legislation on marriage and singleness. Mark C. Taylor notes that all such comparisons involve the interplay between “sameness and difference.” The challenge of comparisons is to avoid the extremes of highlighting only similarities or highlighting only differences. As Taylor relates, “The challenge of effective comparisons is to find a mean between these extremes that allows interpreters to understand differences without erasing them.”

The comparisons offered here are what Jonathan Z. Smith refers to as “analogical” comparisons instead of “genealogical” comparisons. In an analogical investigation one does not undertake the investigation in order to find direct parallels and/or relationships. Rather, one view of marriage (i.e. Paul’s) will be compared to another (i.e. Augustus’) in order to highlight both similarities *and* differences. As Smith contends it is not so much the similarities that matter but the differences. It is precisely in discovering these differences that we are invited into

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365 Smith, 42-47. Additionally, Smith maintains, “It is axiomatic that comparison is never a matter of identity. Comparison requires the acceptance as the grounds of its being interesting, and a methodical manipulation of that difference to achieve some stated cognitive end. The questions of comparison are questions of judgment with respect to difference: What differences are to be maintained in the interests of comparative inquiry? What differences can be defensibly relaxed and relativized in light of tasks at hand?” See, Smith, 13-14.
366 Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 42, 47.
“negotiation, classification and comparison.” Thus, as I suggested in the introduction to this work, it is only in describing the peculiarities of Paul’s directives on marriage and singleness in relation to Augustus’ directives that we will be able to note what is truly distinctive—if anything—about Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7.

This chapter begins by noting a number of similarities between Augustus’ legislation and Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7. In particular, this chapter highlights the fact that both Augustus and Paul have a theory of gender rooted in eschatological expectations. Their respective theories uphold Greco-Roman notions of hierarchy and subordination in which women are seen as the *imbecilitas sexus* or “weaker sex.” Additionally, both Augustus and Paul offer particular ethical directives regarding marriage and singleness as a remedy for the deterioration of the present age.

Next, this chapter highlights the differences between Augustus’ legislation and Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7. It demonstrates that Paul and Augustus disagree on whether or not widows should remarry in order to produce children for the state. Additionally, it contends that Paul’s interest in children is much lower than Augustus’ interest, which many scholars have failed to see because of their hopes of finding a “theology of marriage” in 1 Corinthians 7.368

When these similarities and differences are taken into account, Paul becomes a complex figure, who is far from unique. In fact, the comparisons in this chapter demonstrate that Paul was a product of his culture, and that Paul had the ability to be anti-Roman while simultaneously mimicking trends based on Augustus’ marriage legislation. In contrast to empire-critical scholars who attempt to create a Paul who is part of a binary “us-versus-them schema,” the comparisons in this chapter will reveal that Paul is engaged in what Homi Babha calls

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367 Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 42.
368 Héring, 48; and, May, 165.
“hybridity.” A recognition of this fact will help to explain why some scholars find a Paul who is against Augustus’ legislation, while others find a Paul who is informed by his legislation. These comparisons will ultimately lead to a redefinition of 1 Corinthians 7 and a refinement of the debate concerning Paul’s directives on marriage and singleness.

1 Similarities

John Kloppenborg has shown that egalitarianism is a myth within the Pauline communities, based largely on three main pieces of evidence. As he notes, the most commonly cited evidence consists of three Pauline and deuter-Pauline baptismal texts, Galatians 3:28, 1 Corinthians 12:13, and Colossians 3:11. For example, Robin Scroggs claims that these texts abrogate ethnic, social, and gender markers within the Pauline communities. Second, many scholars cite the evidence of women working in leadership positions within the Pauline communities. As Kloppenborg maintains, this prosopographic evidence tends to support the claim that the baptismal texts support equality within the Pauline communities.

Finally, many scholars point to the fictive kinship language of the Pauline letters. For example,

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369 Jacques Derrida refers to a binary opposition as a “closed field of oppositions,” which is how I use it throughout this chapter. See, Jacques Derrida, Positions, trans., Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) 42. In fairness to empire-critical scholars, many, such as Horsley and Elliott, have begun to see a much more complex Paul who is both “pro-” and “anti-” empire. For more on this development, see, Stephen D. Moore, "Paul after Empire," in The Colonized Apostle: Paul Through Postcolonial Eyes, ed. Christopher D. Stanley (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011) 12-21.

370 Kloppenborg, 252.

371 In the history of scholarship recent treatments of egalitarianism in the Pauline communities can be traced to the following works: James Burtchell, From Synagogue to Church: Public Services and Offices in the Earliest Christian Communities (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992); and, Wayne A. Meeks, The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983). See the overview of these works and critiques in Kloppenborg, “Egalitarianism in the Myth and Rhetoric of Pauline Churches,” 248-52. Regarding the so-called “baptismal texts,” Stowers is right to suggest that we have no evidence as to whether or not texts like Gal 3:28 were part of a baptismal formula, especially a pre-Pauline formula. See, Stowers, 303.


374 For a recent example of this, see, MacDonald, 199-220.
the use of terms such as ἀδελφός indicates a rhetoric of “belonging” among the Pauline groups.\(^{375}\)

The problem which arises when scholars assume that there is evidence for egalitarianism in Paul’s letters is that the term “egalitarian” is left undefined.\(^{376}\) Additionally, there is an omission of the fact that Paul’s directives on sex and gender are ambiguous, which can be seen by comparing Paul’s directives in 1 Cor 7:2-6 with 1 Cor 11:2-16.\(^{377}\) As Kloppenborg insightfully notes, “[T]he search for the origin of ‘egalitarianism’ is a special interest of ours that needs to be declared and controlled carefully, lest the situation at Corinth and Paul’s own considerable rhetorical achievement be obscured by apologetics.”\(^{378}\)

Both Augustus and Paul create a theory of gender which is unabashedly hierarchical.\(^{379}\) Daniel Boyarin maintains that Paul’s theory of gender is contained in 1 Cor 11:2-16.\(^{380}\) Here

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\(^{375}\) Kloppenborg notes that ἀδελφός occurs 115 times in the undisputed Pauline letters, 129 times if 2 Thessalonians and Colossians are included.

\(^{376}\) Kloppenborg, “Egalitarianism in the Myth and Rhetoric of Pauline Churches,” 252. It is important to note that our word “egalitarianism” is entirely anachronistic when projected back into the first century world. Its origins are the French égal or “equal.” Simply stated, “egalitarianism” is a doctrine stemming from the French Enlightenment, which maintains that all humans are equal in fundamental worth or social status. See, Arneson Richard, “Egalitarianism,” The Standard Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2002). Web: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/egalitarianism. There are also ideological commitments involved in suggesting that Paul endorsed egalitarianism. For more on this, see, Jennifer G. Bird, “To What End? Revisiting the Gendered Space of 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 from a Feminist Postcolonial Perspective,” in The Colonized Apostle: Paul Through Postcolonial Eyes, ed. Christopher D. Stanley (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011) 175-85.

\(^{377}\) Castelli, “Paul on Women and Gender,” 221.

\(^{378}\) Kloppenborg, “Egalitarianism in the Myth and Rhetoric of Pauline Churches,” 260 (italics original). Cf. the remarks of Stowers, “Paul and Slavery,” 303, regarding modern interpreters of Paul who want to see him emancipating slaves in 1 Corinthians 7. Stowers writes, “[I]nterpreters typically make assumptions that are modern and will not work for the ancient text.” See, as well, the insightful comments of McManus concerning the practice of using ancient women in order to discuss modern feminist ideology. See, Barbara McManus, Classics & Feminism: Gendering the Classics (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1997) 7.

\(^{379}\) As Punt, notes, “Ambivalence toward women can be seen throughout Paul’s letters, particularly when he deals with matters of authority and power.” See, Jeremy Punt, “Pauline Agency in Postcolonial Perspective - Subverter of or Agent for Empire?,” in The Colonized Apostle: Paul Through Postcolonial Eyes, ed. Christopher D. Stanley (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011) 54.

\(^{380}\) Boyarin, 123. This position is also maintained by Jennifer Wright Knust, “Paul and the Politics of Virtue and Vice,” in Paul and the Roman Imperial Order, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2004) 155-73. On p. 157 she writes, “[H]owever pointed Paul’s critique may have been, when he adopted sexual virtue and vice as his anti-imperial code language, he reconformed a gendered hierarchy that assumes woman is derived from man and identifies desire with ‘slavishness’. Many scholars attempt to defuse the hierarchical statements of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11. They do so by claiming that κεφαλή does not mean “head” but “source” or
Paul notes things such as: (1) every man’s head is Christ, but a woman’s head is man (v. 3); (2) woman is the reflection of man... woman originates from man... woman was created for man, not man for woman (vv. 7-9); and, (3) in the Lord there is neither woman without man nor man with woman... everything comes from God (vv. 11-12). As Dale Martin relates, “[T]o the ancient reader this would clearly imply hierarchy, since only those of lower status are said to exist for the sake of someone else.”

“origin.” Thus, Paul is not talking about a hierarchy or rulership. See, for example, Fee, 502-3; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "Kephále in 1 Corinthians 11:3," Interpretation 57 (1993) 52-59; and, Wayne Grudem, "Does kephale ('Head') Mean 'Source' or 'Authority over' in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples," Trinity Journal 6 (1985) 38-59. The problem with these interpretations is that they tend to ignore the very words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11. For example, in v. 7 Paul claims that man is the δώγα of God, whereas woman is the δώγα of man. The implication here is that the first pair (God-man) cannot be denied to the second pair (man-woman). The “priority of origin,” which is the norm in ancient ideology, supports Paul’s statement of hierarchy in v. 7. As Martin relates, “The link between origin and hierarchy can be seen in various aspects of Greco-Roman culture, one of which is the tendency of Greeks to claim higher status than Romans due to acknowledged Roman borrowing of older Greek things. Jews made much the same claims; Philo and Josephus, for example, attempt to prove that everything that is of value in Greek culture was prefigured in Hebrew sources: Solon (or whoever) simply stole his ideas from Moses. This idea is also reflected in the commonplace that the imitator is inferior to the original.” See, Martin, 295 n. 14. The idea that “the imitator is inferior to the original” can be clearly seen in Diogenes Lartius’ Lives 6.84. Here he relates, “Onesicritus some report to have been an Aeginetan, but Demetrius of Magnesia says that he was a native of Astypalaea. He too was one of the distinguished pupils of Diogenes. His career seems to have resembled that of Xenophon; for Xenophon joined the expedition of Cyrus, Onesicritus that of Alexander; and the former wrote the Cyropaedia, or Education of Cyrus, while the latter has described how Alexander was educated: the one a laudation of Cyrus, the other of Alexander. And in their diction they are not unlike: except that Onesicritus, as is to be expected in an imitator, falls short of his model.” See, Laertius, 87. For an overview of scholarship on 1 Cor 11:2-16, see, Wire, 220-3.

Attempts to read vv. 11-12 as Paul’s egalitarian “correction” of his “apparent” subordination of women are somewhat unconvincing. For these types of readings, see, Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, "Sex and Logic in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16," CBQ 42 (1980) 496. The problem is that vv. 11-12 teach the interdependence of man and woman and not their equality. This is similar to a point made by Martin in which he argues that slaves needed their masters just as much as masters needed their slaves. But, this does not mean that slaves and masters were equal in ancient ideology. See, for example, Martin, 123, 152. Perhaps instead of trying to rehabilitate ancient Christianity or 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 it would be best to note its sexism reflected in various biblical texts rather than trying to reread these texts in order to de-emphasize sexism. For more on this, see, Francis Watson, "Strategies of Recovery and Resistance: Hermeneutical Reflections on Genesis 1-3 and Its Pauline Reception," JSNT 45 (1992) 79-103. Cf. Bird, “To What End?,” 175-85.

Martin, The Corinthian Body, 232. See, as well, Mary Rose D’Angelo, "Veils, Virgins and Tongues of Men and Angels: ‘Women’s Heads in Early Christianity,’” in Off with Her Head! The Denial of Women’s Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture, ed. Howard Eilberg-Schwartz and Wendy Doniger (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) 131-64. It is not clear at all what Paul was so vexed about when he composed 1 Cor 11:2-16. Some have suggested that Paul was arguing against a familiar practice in the Greco-Roman mystery cults in which women wore their hair unbound during cultic services. See, for example, Schüssler Fiorenza, 226-7. Others have suggested that Paul sought to quiet a group of pneumatic women be reasserting gender hierarchies by means of hairstyles and veils. See, for example, Wire, The Corinthian Women Prophets, 116-34; 181-8. Finally, some have argued that Paul’s real concern was with men who prayed with their heads covered, which was an activity reserved only for elite males.
In these same verses Paul asserts that “nature itself” teaches a woman that her hair is her pride and that cutting her hair would be shameful (αἰσχρός, 11:6, 14-15). Additionally, he notes that long hair for men is shameful (αἰσχρός, v. 14). Scholars may interpret these statements in a variety of ways, but it is difficult to deny that throughout 1 Corinthians Paul views women as subordinate in every way to men. For example, in the Greco-Roman world hairstyles often mark gender difference or gender deviance. Dio Chrysostom notes that men who violate “nature’s laws” are prone to “feminine” glances, posture, and hairstyles (Or. 33.52). Seneca the Elder maintains that effeminate men braid their hair and purposely speak with a high pitched voice in order to compete with women in softness and finery (Con. ex. 1.8-9; cf. Caes. B. Gall. 5.14.3; Luc. 1.443; Quint. Inst. 2.5.12). What Paul and these other authors contend is that long, carefully coifed hair symbolizes an abandonment of masculinity. Thus, when Paul states that men should never wear their hair long and women should never wear their hair short,

For this position, see, Elliott, 210-11. The most obvious reading of 1 Cor 11:2-16 is that Paul is attempting to reassert gender hierarchies.

Krause notes that the so-called “problem” with “women passages” in Paul’s letters is usually confined to 1 Cor 11:2-16 and 1 Cor 14:34-36. See, Deborah Krause, "Paul and Women: Telling Women to Shut Up is More Complicated Than You Might Think," in Paul Unbound: Other Perspectives on Paul, ed. Mark D. Given (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2010) 161. In the Roman world hairstyle was often connected with nationalistic pride. For more on this, see, Kleiner, 37.

As Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 241, relates, “For the husband to be subordinate to the wife was of course never acceptable.” For example, Martial writes, “The mistress of the house should be subordinate to her husband... for in no other way will there be equality” (Spect. 8.12). Additionally, he adds, “Polla! You set a watch upon your husband, but you refuse to have any set upon yourself! You are making a wife out of your husband” (10.69). A minority of scholars have questioned whether or not Paul wrote 1 Cor 11:2-16. For a discussion of these views, see, Richard A. Horsley, 1 Corinthians, Abingdon New Testament Commentaries. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998) 152-7. Be that as it may, the vast majority of scholars have concluded that these verses are authentic.

A similar point is made in Hellenistic Jewish literature. In The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides, the author cautions against young boys wearing their hair long and braided because long hair is reserved for voluptuous women. Quoted in Bernadette J. Brooten, Love between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) 63.

A similar case can be made for not wearing veils and illicit sexual activity. See, Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 150.
he is attempting to maintain gender difference and a hierarchy of gender in the Corinthian ekklēsia.\textsuperscript{387}

What is said in these verses is based on discussions of “nature” going back to Greek philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle. To the Greeks “nature” incapacitated women making them weaker and colder than men.\textsuperscript{388} For example, Aristotle writes:

For the soul by nature contains a part that rules and a part that is ruled, to which we assign different virtues, that is, the virtue of the rational and that of the irrational. It is clear then that the case is the same also with the other instances of ruler and ruled. Hence there are by nature various classes of rulers and ruled. For the free rules the slave, the male the female, and the man the child in a different way. And all possess the various parts of the soul, but possess them in different ways; for the slave has not got the deliberative part at all, and the female has it, but without full authority, while the child has it, but in an undeveloped form (Pol. 1.1260a).\textsuperscript{389}

\begin{quote}
\textit{περὶ τὴν ψυχήν: ἐν ταύτῃ γὰρ ἐστὶ φύσει τὸ μὲν ἄρχον τὸ δ’ ἄρχόμενον, ὄν ἔτεραν φαμὲν εἶναι ἄρετῆν, οἷον τοῦ λόγου ἐχοντος καὶ τοῦ ἄλογου. δῆλον τοίνυν ὅτι τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ἔχει καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἄλλον, ὡστε φύσει πλείον τὰ ἄρχοντα καὶ ἄρχόμενα. ἄλλον γὰρ τρόπον τὸ ἐλεύθερον τοῦ δούλου ἄρχει καὶ τὸ ἄρρεν τοῦ θῆλεως καὶ ἀνήρ παιδός, καὶ πᾶσιν ἐνυπάρχει μὲν τὰ μόρια τῆς ψυχῆς, ἄλλ’ ἐνυπάρχει διαφερόντως. ὦ μὲν γὰρ δούλου ὥριας οὐκ ἔχει τὸ Βουλευτικὸν, τὸ δὲ θήλην ἔχει μὲν, ἄλλ’ ἄκυρον, ὀ δὲ παις ἔχει μὲν, ἄλλ’ ἀτελές.}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{387} Plucking of the beard was also thought to be an even clearer indication of gender deviance, while long hair also cast suspicion on a man’s manliness (cf. Arr. Epict. diss. 1.16.9-14). This is discussed by Maude Gleason, “The Semiotics of Gender: Physiognomy and Self-Fashioning in the Second Century CE,” in Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World, ed. David M. Halperin, John J. Winkler, and Froma I Zeitlin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990) 399-400. See, as well, Kenneth J. Dover, Greek Homosexuality (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978) 74-77. Additionally, Balsdon notes that the reason a bride’s hair was parted before her wedding has to do with the fact that evil spirits were thought to reside in the hair. Parting a young bride’s hair was a ritualistic way of dispelling these evil spirits. See, Balsdon, 182-3.

\textsuperscript{388} See the remarks in Knust, “Paul and the Politics of Virtue and Vice,” 164-5. Additionally, I agree with the sentiment of Bird, “To What End?,” 179, regarding the contradictions between 11:3, 7-9, and, 11:11-12. She relates, “I have yet to discover a scholar who denies that there is a contradiction between 11:3, 7-9 and 11:11-12. Why, then, does it seem appropriate to so many scholars to go on and find a way to say that these two ideas actually form a coherent whole? What is at stake for them (or for Paul) if someone were to claim that either some of this content is not from Paul or that Paul himself was not fully rational?”

\textsuperscript{389} Cf. Plato Ti. 50d and Aristotle Metaph. 1.6.998a. For more on the portrayal of women in these sources, see, Kenneth J. Dover, Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974) 96-102. Additional discussions on women in Hellenistic sources can be found in Eva Cantarella, Pandora’s Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity, Ancient Society and History (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993) 92-97. For Roman sources, see, Treggiari, 205-28.
In contrast, the freeborn, elite, male citizen is dominant, self-controlled, and in no way deficient when it comes to virtue. This means, then, that in the Greco-Roman world gender was delineated on the basis of status. As Ann Pellegrini notes, “What counted... was not the anatomical ‘sex’ of the sexual partners but their social genders--the degree, that is, to which their sexual roles did or did not correspond to their respective positions in a rigid social hierarchy.”

These comparisons may also help to explain Paul’s remarks in 1 Cor 14:34-36. Though Paul never explicitly refers to women as the “weaker sex” (see below), he may have had this concept in the back of his mind mind when he wrote that women should “remain silent” in the cultic services of the *ekklēsia*. As Deborah Krause notes, vv. 34-36 form a “discourse of power,” which, “reveals the struggle for controlling speech within Corinth (or some later part of the church) and the challenge of the speech of women to the established order of the church.”

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391 Pellegrini, “Lesbian Historiography before the Name?,” 580.
392 Krause, “Paul and Women: Telling Women to Shut Up Is More Complicated Than You Might Think,” 161-9. For a discussion as to why the phrase “cultic services” or “cultic assemblies” is appropriate here, see, Fitzmyer, 531.
393 Krause, “Paul and Women: Telling Women to Shut Up Is More Complicated Than You Might Think,” 171. The suggestion that 1 Cor 14:34-36 is a “discourse of power” comes from Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991). Castelli engages Paul’s letters as “constructions of power.” Instead of a sociological analysis of Paul’s rhetoric, Castelli examines Paul’s use of mimesis from the angle of ideological criticism and cultural criticisms, influenced in particular by the work of Michel Foucault. For Castelli Paul’s rhetoric is not “natural” or “necessary” but constructed. This “construction of power” is forged in an ideological commitment to “sameness” which resists difference and seeks to deny the presence of tension and conflict. Though this may have been Paul’s ultimate desire, Castelli notes that in his letters, “Paul doth protest too much.” Thus, in Paul’s writings we find instances where there are struggles for social control and political conformity within a larger cultural context of heretical identities and competing ideologies. Homi Bhabha suggests that “discourses of power” are brought about by “colonial contexts.” He maintains that “uncertainty” is what typically afflicts these types of discourses. See, Bhabha, 162. It should be noted that throughout the history of interpretation, scholars have produced five main ways of engaging 1 Cor 14:34-36. These interpretations range from “interpolation theories” to “theories of Pauline paraenesis.” The manuscript evidence suggests that these verses were originally part of 1 Corinthians, but it is not clear where these verses should be located within the text. Viewed in this light, these verses reveal a Paul who is reacting negatively to the practice of some Corinthian Christian women who have been pressing for equality and speaking out of turn in the sacred assemblies. This means, then, that Paul is attempting to save these women from utterly disgracing themselves. Additionally, this means that Paul is taking a position at great variance with Gal 3:28 because now his concern is to insure the stability and order of the Corinthian *ekklēsia*. For more on this way of reading vv. 34-36 see, Norbert Baumert, *Woman and Man in Paul* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996) 195-8; and, G. G. Blum, "Das Amt der Frau im Neuen Testaments," *NovT* 7 (1964-65) 142-61. For an overview of the five different ways of interpreting vv. 34-36 see,
The key to understanding Paul’s theory of gender, then, lies in a recognition of the fact that Paul does not do for women in the ekklēsia what he, to some extent, attempts for slaves, Gentiles, and people of lower economic status. In other words, when 1 Cor 11:2-16 is taken into account, Paul does not question the ideology of hierarchy implicit in the Greco-Roman world concerning the place of women and men. In fact discussions of 1 Cor 7:2-6 which maintain that Paul’s attitude toward married women and men is one of “mutuality” tend to miss the point that Paul is controlling women throughout 1 Corinthians 7 by never once suggesting that they marry in order to procreate. One must conclude, then, that Paul’s theory of gender

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However, Stowers, “Paul and Slavery,” 295-311, makes a convincing case that throughout 1 Corinthians Paul also upholds ancient notions of master-slave relations. Pace Elliott, Liberating Paul, 31-40.

Castelli opines, “That men and women bring shame upon themselves through nonidentical behavior--that is, men are shamed by covering their heads, but women are shamed by not covering their heads--suggests that Paul’s potential egalitarianism (as it is discerned by some in chapter 7) is not as thoroughgoing as it might at first appear.” See, Castelli, 228. She continues, “Indeed, as the argument continues in 1 Corinthians 11, it becomes clearer that Paul is quite concerned with the careful maintenance of gender differences in appearance (justified in part by the curious argument that ‘nature’ affirms the conventional practice of men wearing their hair short and women wearing their hair long) not simply because he thinks it is a good idea, but because he thinks that the created order demands it.” See, as well, Bernadette J. Brooten, "Paul's Views on the Nature of Women and Female Homoeroticism," in Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality, ed. Clarissa W. Atkinson, Constance H. Buchanan, and Margaret R. Miles (Boston: Beacon, 1985) 61-87. For an alternative perspective, see, L. Ann Jervis, "But I Want You to Know…: Paul's Midrashic Intertextual Response to the Corinthian Worshipers (1 Cor 11:2-16)," JBL 112 (1993) 231-46.

As I noted in the last chapter many scholars attempt to compare Paul’s directives in vv. 2-6 with Stoic ideas of mutuality between women and men. For example, Collins compares Paul’s directives with those of the Stoics Hierocles and Antipater. He then concludes, “Paul’s own exposition ‘On Marriage’ likewise focuses on mutuality and on physical communion.” He continues by noting, “Paul’s words in this regard urge the spouses’ mutual submission to one another. Equality within the sexual relationship is the norm. Paul’s plea for mutuality in the relationship is underscored by the use of such telling expressions as ‘similarly’ (homoiōs de kai, vv. 3, 4) and ‘by mutual agreement’ (ek symphōnou, v. 5).” See, Collins, 255-6. Collins seems to assume that Paul advocates equal partnership or κοινωνία between husband and wife in a manner similar to that found in Xenophon’s Oeconomicus. In this work Xenophon provides an economic interpretation of the ideal marriage in that the usefullness of marriage is: (1) the production of children, so that (a) the species may not become extinct (a purpose common to all animals) and (b) the parents may be fed in their old age (peculiar to humans); and (2) the provision of shelter for protection from the elements, stocked with food and supplies (7.13; 10.3-4). For more mutuality or concordia in the Roman world, see, Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 120-1, 245, 251-3. Treggiari defines concordia as, “Agreement between husband and wife resulting from trust and sympathy.” Examples of concordia can be found on numerous tombstones: CIL 1.1220 = ILS 8401 = ILLRP 365 = CE 1563; 2.3569, 6.9663, 10215, 13300, 18414, 21165, 26926 = CE 461, 37556, 9.1837 = CE 960, 3158. For the marital Concordia Augustorum found on Antonine coins, see, Natalie Boymel Kampen, "Biographical Narration and Roman Funerary Art," AJA 85 (85) 47-58. See, as well, Dixon, 107-8.
seeks “to control” women in the Corinthian ekklēsia as much as Augustus sought to control
women’s behaviour with his marriage laws.

As we saw in chapter two, the Roman world portrayed women as the imbecillitas sexus in
its laws and in its literature. For example, Juvenal remarks on the “evils of women” with:
“What! Postumus, are you, who once had your wits, taking to yourself a wife? ... how much
better to take some boy bedfellow! ... But Ursidius approves of the Julian law! ... what can you
think impossible if Ursidius takes himself a wife? (Satires 6.28-42).” Like the Greeks, Roman
writers and jurists stereotyped women because they believed they were more sexually charged
than men and because they were seen as intruding illegitimately in various masculine domains.

Because of this the Roman Senate condemned the loose morals of women (Dio 54.16).

Additionally, the Twelve Tables suggest that women were given a tutela because of their
“lightmindedness.” This attitude is also attested in the papyri. P.Oxy. 2.261 informs us of a
woman named Demetria, who was not able to engage her dispute in court because of her
“womanly weakness.” Additionally, P.Oxy. 24.2713 contains a comment from Aurelia Didyme

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397 This is somewhat intriguing considering that later Roman law admitted that women mature faster than men. For example, the Code of Theodosius 2.17.1.1 relates, “We have decreed that women also, whose age (of maturity) precedes (that of men) by two years due to early puberty...” Quoted in Grubbs, 50. The bibliography on sexuality in the ancient world is enormous. Some important works include: Brooteen, Love between Women; Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume III: The Care of the Self (New York: Vintage, 1988); Maude Gleason, Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); David M. Halperin, John J. Winkler, and Froma I. Zeitlin, eds., Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Aline Rousselle, Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1988); and, Craig Williams, Roman Homosexuality: Ideologies of Masculinity in Classical Antiquity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).


399 Jane Gardner notes that Roman society viewed women as the weaker sex because of a belief derived from Greek philosophy and repeated in the works of Cicero. See, Gardner, 21. The stereotyping of women as the weaker sex is also discussed in Dixon, 147; and, Edwards, 46-47.

400 For more on this, see, Dixon, Reading Roman Women, 35; and, Kampen, 14.
on her gender. She notes, “You know quite well, my lord governor, that the race of women is easily despised on account of the weakness of our nature.”

Augustus enforced the concept of a rigid social hierarchy by establishing the *ius liberorum*. This law forced women to conform to the image of the ideal Roman wife and to the hierarchical structures imposed on them by Greco-Roman society. As Gordon Williams relates, “The basic attitude that the Augustan moral legislation seems to display is that control of female sexuality is the key to guaranteeing the stability of marriages in Roman society: the sexual behavior of men was no threat to marriage, that of women was.” This means, then, that the *ius liberorum* forced women to conform to the image of the ideal Roman wife and to the hierarchical structures imposed on them by society at large.

With the *ius liberorum* Augustus could control the behaviour of women through rewards and punishments connected with procreation and the *tutela*. Augustus’ logic was simple—if a

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401 Additionally, Balsdon, *Roman Women*, 272, notes that much of Rome’s satirical literature condemned women for drinking too much, since it was popular to assume that women were more likely than men to get drunk at dinner parties. As he relates, “No civilized society has ever liked the notion of an intoxicated woman; in the Roman tradition, dislike was an obsession.”

402 According to Brennan, Stoics such as Musonius Rufus fought against the concept of women as the *imbecillitas sexus* by actively trying to educate them (Stobaeus 2.31.123, 2.31.126). See, Tad Brennan, *The Stoic Life: Emotions, Duties, and Fate* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005) 15. The idea of Roman leaders controlling the sexual practices of their citizens goes back to Cicero. In 46 BCE he wrote, “It is for you alone, Gaius Caesar, to reanimate all that you see lying shattered, as was inevitable, by the shock of war itself; courts of law must be set on foot, licentiousness must be checked, and growth of population fostered; all... must be knit together by stringent regulation” (*Marcell.* 8.23).

403 Hallett maintains that there were three basic roles for Roman women: (1) that of father’s daughter; (2) that of mature sister; and (3) that of mother. See, Judith P. Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) 32.

404 Williams, 134.

405 Guardians for women are attested as early as 450 BCE on Table 5 of the *Twelve Tables*. Though there are surprisingly few references in Roman literary sources to the *tutor mulierum*, one of the few surviving references is in Apuleius’ *Apologia* 101.4-5. He writes, “You have said that I bought a very attractive estate in my own name with a large amount of my wife’s money. I say that it was a trifling little property worth 60,000 sesterces, and that it was not I, but Pudentilla who bought it in her own name, that Pudentilla’s name is in the records, and that the tax for this little property was paid in Pudentilla’s name. The public treasurer to whom it was paid out, the excellent Corvinius Celer, is present (in the court); and indeed my wife’s guardian (*tutor auctor*) is here, a most important and venerable man, to be named by me with all honor—Cassius Longinus. Ask him, Maximus, whose purchase he authorized, and for what tiny little price a wealthy woman bought her own little property.” Quoted in Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire*, 34. Additionally, Gaius tells us that non-Roman women in the provinces, while not subject to the same *tutela* as Roman women, nevertheless “often are in a sort of *tutela*” (*Inst.* 1.193).
woman wanted to be free of her guardian, she needed to produce three or four children for the state, otherwise she would be forced to contend with her *tutela* throughout her entire life.\(^{406}\) This was particularly problematic for poorer members of the Roman empire, since women who were rich and influential could obtain a dispensation freeing them from their guardians without having to produce the required number of children.\(^{407}\) As Beryl Rawson relates, “Poverty must also have been a disincentive sometimes [to having children], but there is little explicit evidence that in wealthier circles the number of children was limited to prevent fragmentation of estates.”\(^{408}\)

When one compares Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 with the Augustan legislation, it is easy to see that both are interested in controlling female sexuality.\(^{409}\) In the case of Paul control of female sexuality stems from urging singleness instead of procreation, which means that women in the Corinthian *ekklēsia* would be stuck in a perpetual state of childhood, since the transition point from childhood to adulthood for women in the Roman empire was marriage and the production of children.\(^{410}\) Moreover, Paul’s lack of interest in procreation would mean that women in the Corinthian community could never achieve the *ius liberorum*, which would mean that they would always be under the care of a *tutela*. If Gaius is correct, non-Roman women were even subject to some type of guardian under Roman law. Regarding this, he writes, “Among foreigners (*peregrini*), women are not in *tutela* in the same way as among us. However, they often are in a sort of *tutela*: as, for instance, the law of the Bithynians orders that if a

\(^{406}\) According to Gaius, females both below and above the age of puberty were to have guardians (*Inst. 1.144*). Suzanne Dixon, *Reading Roman Women*, 73, writes, “[The] *tutela mulierum perpetua* (‘perpetual guardianship of women’) was instituted to safeguard masculine control of family property, but rationalised by later generations as a safeguard of ‘womanly weakness’.”

\(^{407}\) For a discussion of the issues involved, see, Treggiari, *Roman Marriage*, 122-4.

\(^{408}\) Rawson, 10.

\(^{409}\) Cf. Cicero who wrote the following to Gaius Caesar, “It is for you alone, Gaius Caesar, to reanimate all that you see lying shattered, as was inevitable, by the shock of war itself; courts of law must be set on foot, licentiousness must be checked, and growth of population fostered; all...must be knit together by stringent regulation” (*Marcell. 8.23*).

\(^{410}\) MacDonald, 42.
woman undertakes any contract, her husband or adult son must give his authority” (Inst. 1.193). Additionally, if a woman with 20,000 sesterces did not have a child she would be taxed an extra sum under Augustus’ laws. Such a regulation could have possibly affected someone like Chloe, who seems to be a wealthy widow without children (1 Cor 1:11).

Moreover, Paul’s directives—if followed—would have prevented a woman from the rewards of the *ius stolatae*. According to Pál Čsillag, “The laws of Augustus authorized mothers of the adequate number of children to wear this publicly honoured piece of clothing, *viz. stola instita*.” This practice is described by Propertius in his *Elegies* 4.11.61: “Yet I lived long enough to earn the matron’s robe of honour, nor was I snatched away from a childless house” (*et tamen emerui generosae vestis honores, nec mea de sterili facta rapina domo*). Here the poet speaks of Cornelia’s privilege of wearing a robe of state in view of her numerous children. Thus, women following Paul’s directives could find themselves in a situation in which their clothing publicly displayed their childlessness.

What many studies fail to notice is that Paul’s directives and Augustus’ legislation do not just affect women. Both control male sexuality, which is significant since it was mainly men and not women who protested Augustus’ moral reforms. As Judith Evans Grubbs notes, “Only the protests of male members of the upper classes are mentioned; there is no record of any female

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411 Quoted in Grubbs, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire*, 27. Grubbs notes, “After the mid-first century, the only women really restricted by *tutela mulierum* were freedwomen. The tutor of a freedwoman (*liberta*) was her former owner, her *patronus*, and he (like the now-abolished agnate tutors of freeborn women) was *tutor legitimus* and had inheritance rights in regard to his freedwoman’s property.”

412 McGinn, 79-80.

413 Čsillag, 173.


415 Pace Williams, “Representations of Roman Women in Literature,” 131. Balsdon, *Roman Women*, 214, correctly notes, “In the surviving literature of antiquity social criticism is a male preserve.” When western academics attempt to save ancient women from Pauline patriarchalism, this is similar to what Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” 92, refers to with the sentence, “White men are saving brown women from brown men...” Ironically, the western academic fascination with understanding women in the Pauline communities has led to an almost total disregard of how Paul’s directives affected—and still affect—men.
demonstration against the Augustan laws.” The reason for this is that women—with the exception of the Vestal Virgins—had always been expected to marry and have children. In fact, the majority of Roman women had no choice but to marry at least once.

The clearest example of a male protesting Augustus’ legislation is Tacitus himself. In *Annales* 3.24.2 the historian characterizes Augustus’ exile of his daughter Julia and the punishment of her alleged lovers as extreme and unprecedented behaviour. In fact, he goes so far as to claim that adultery is simply a “common misdeed between men and women” (*culpam inter viros ac feminas vulgatum*). Moreover, he suggests that Augustus’ treatment of those who failed to live up to his laws went beyond *clementiam maiorum*. As Judith Hallett notes, “[F]orgiveness rather than harshness seems to have been regarded as the republican *mos maiorum* when elite Roman wives were discovered to have strayed, and it is by no means clear that whole-hearted and successful efforts at discovery were invariably made.”

One of the more clever ways in which Roman men evaded Augustus’ legislation was by making engagements with immature girls and still claiming the privileges of married men. For example, Suetonius informs us, “And on finding that the spirit of the law was being evaded by betrothal with immature girls and by frequent changes of wives, he shortened the duration of betrothals and set a limit on divorce” (*Aug.* 34.2). Similarly, Dio Cassius relates, “Inasmuch, too, as certain men were betrothing themselves to infant girls and thus enjoying the privileges granted to married men, but without rendering the service expected of them, he ordered that no betrothal should be valid if the man did not marry within two years of such betrothal” (54.16.7).

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418 As Dill notes, when reading Tacitus it is important to remember that he moralizes history. As he relates, “The key to the interpretation of Tacitus is to regard him as a moralist rather than a politician.” See, Samuel Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* (London: MacMillan, 1919) 26.
419 Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society*, 239.
In another section he provides the following statement from Tiberius, “Yet I allowed you to pay your court to girls still of tender years and not yet ripe for marriage, in order that, classed as prospective bridegrooms, you might live as family men should; and I permitted those not in the senatorial order to wed freedwomen, so that, if anyone through love or intimacy of any sort should be disposed to such a course, he might go about it lawfully” (56.7.2). These types of protests are likely linked to the fact that bachelors—*caelibus*—were debarred from receiving inheritances from outside a very narrow circle—the third grade—of their own families.  

The main reason why Roman men protested Augustus’ legislation so vigorously is that the number of children a man had was connected with how easily he rose through the ranks of political office. For example, in the senatorial *cursus*, candidates for office could stand for the various magistracies as many years before the usual minimum age based on the amount of children they had.  

Additionally, tie votes for political offices were resolved by giving preference to the candidate with the largest family. This may explain why there is little to no evidence for men in the early Jesus movements in political offices. For example, if men in the Corinthian *ekklēsia* followed Paul’s directives and remained single without any children, they would have little chance of holding any significant office in the city.

Another reason why men spoke out against the Augustan legislation has to do with issues of status. Augustus retaliated against single men by banning them from public entertainments.

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420 See, Balsdon, *Roman Women*, 76. Additionally, Balsdon relates, “In Rome the story was told that at a date as early as 403 B.C. elderly bachelors had not merely been reproved by the censors Camillus and Postumius for failing in their natural duties but had been forced to pay a heavy fine” (p. 191). Balsdon is referring to Suet. *Aug*. 89.2.

421 Galinsky, 129.

422 Even Erastus does not seem to have as prominent a place in the city of Corinth as was once thought. For more on this, see, Steven J. Friesen, “The Wrong Erastus: Ideology, Archaeology, and Exegesis,” in *Corinth in Context: Comparative Studies on Religion and Society*, ed. Steven J. Friesen, Daniel N. Schowalter, and James C. Walters (Leiden: Brill, 2010) 231-56; and, Justin J. Meggitt, ”The Social Status of Erastus (Rom. 16:23),” *NovT* 38 (1996) 218-23.
and spectacles.\textsuperscript{423} As Çsillag notes, “Penalties of this kind created much stir in Roman society, in particular when it is remembered that in Rome the organization of pageantries, public entertainments, etc. was the duty of the state and participation in them meant a veritable pastime for the population.”\textsuperscript{424} In fact, the ban extended to the attendance at the \textit{ludi saeculares}, religious festivals, and state banquets.\textsuperscript{425} In some respects it may have felt for men in the Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia} that they went from having their lives controlled in one system (i.e. Augustus’ system) to having their lives controlled in another (i.e. Paul’s system). Either way, Paul interfered in the private lives of the members of the Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia} just as Augustus interfered in the privates lives of Roman citizens. As Thomas A. J. McGinn notes, before the \textit{lex Iulia} sexuality was generally “conceded to the private sphere.”\textsuperscript{426} Interestingly, even Paul tends to make sex public in the Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia} (cf. 1 Cor 5:1-5, 6:9-11).

As with the Augustan legislation, the textual evidence of the New Testament suggests that it was by and large men who protested Paul’s directives on singleness in 1 Corinthians 7. For example, it is in the Deutero-Pauline letter Ephesians 6:1-4 that children suddenly have a prominent place in the Christian \textit{ekklēsia}.\textsuperscript{427} Additionally, children are prominent in the Pastoral Epistles. In 1 Timothy 2:15, the production of children “saves a woman” during childbirth. The qualifications for bishops and deacons also includes directives concerning their children (3:4,

\textsuperscript{423} Çsillag, \textit{The Augustan Laws on Family Relations}, 173.
\textsuperscript{424} Çsillag, \textit{The Augustan Laws on Family Relations}, 173.
\textsuperscript{425} These measures appear to be the result of a \textit{senatusconsultum de ludis saecularibus} promulgated in 17 BCE. See, Bruns, Gradenwitz, and Mommsen, 191, 53. The SCC. de ludis Saecularibus reads, “...\textit{quos, quod spectare quam plurimos convenit propter religionem atque etiam quod tali spectaculo nemo iterum intererit, permittendum videri... ludorum eorum diebus qui nondum sunt maritati, sine fraude sua ut adsint, quid de ea re fieri placerit, de ea re ita censuerunt, ut quoniam ludi iei religionis causa sunt instituti neque ultra quam semel ullam mortalium eos spectare liceat, ...ludo quos magistri XV virorum sacris faciundis edent, sine fraude sua spectare liceat iei, qui lege de maritandis ordinibus tenentur.” Cf. Suet. \textit{Aug.} 31; Dio 54.30.5.
\textsuperscript{426} McGinn, \textit{Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome}, 141.
12). Thus, it seems that Paul’s later interpreters—who were likely all male—protested Paul’s directives in a manner similar to the men who protested Augustus’ legislation.\(^{428}\)

Both Paul and Augustus root their understandings of sex, marriage, and procreation in eschatological discourse.\(^{429}\) In Virgil’s fourth *Eclogue* he prophesies the return of the Golden Age (Χρυσόν Γένος).\(^{430}\) This means that the Virgin Justice and the reign of Saturn will return. As Virgil writes, “Now is come the last age of Cumaean song... Now the Virgin returns, the reign of Saturn returns.”\(^{431}\) What follows is the birth of a miraculous child, who will forever change the world: “[T]he iron brood shall at last cease and a golden race spring up throughout the world!”\(^{432}\)

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill notes that what is original in the fourth *Eclogue* is the notion of a return.\(^{433}\) He compares Virgil’s vision with the picture of the messianic age found in Isaiah.\(^{434}\) In Isaiah 11:6-9 the Hebrew prophet speaks of a time when the lion will dwell peacefully with the lamb and a little child will lead them. In similar fashion Virgil’s fourth *Eclogue* addresses the promised miraculous child with, “But for you, child, the earth untilled will pour forth its first pretty gifts, gadding ivy with foxglove everywhere, and the Egyptian bean blended with the laughing briar; unbidden it will pour forth for you a cradle of smiling flowers” (20-23).

Additionally, Virgil notes that the serpent will perish along with the plant which hides its poison (25). Regarding these similarities Wallace-Hadrill writes, “It should now be accepted that Virgil

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\(^{429}\) Thus, it is wrong, as Barclay claims, that “eschatology” was a strictly Judaeo-Christian concept, “a depiction of salvation far removed from the main currents of Graeco-Roman thought.” See, J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE - 117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996) 390. For an overview of Greco-Roman apocalyptic ideas, see, David Hellholm ed., *Apocalyptic in the Mediterranean World and the Near East* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983).

\(^{430}\) On the background to the *Eclogues* see the classic treatment of Syme, 217-20.


had indirect access to Jewish-oriental Messianic ideas through hellenistic Jewish ‘Sibylline oracles’, such as the one which in its surviving form predicts the accomplishment of the vision of Isaiah.”

The return of the Golden Age is also a major theme in the works of Horace and Ovid. In response to Romans who have contempt for pudor and pudicitia, Horace writes, “O goddess, be pleased to rear our young, and to grant success to the Fathers’ edicts on the yoking together of men and women and on the marriage law (lege marita) for raising a new crop of children, so that the unfailing cycle...may bring round singing and games.” Later on he adds the following utopian note to his interpretation of Augustus’ reforms, which he sees as connected with the return of the Golden Age: “For then the ox ambles over the pastures in safety... sailors wing their way across a sea clear of lawlessness, fidelity takes care not to incur blame, the home is pure, unstained by any lewdness... mothers are praised for having children...” He even goes so far as to pray for the redemption of nature (cf. Rom 8:20-23). Additionally, Horace connects the return of the Golden Age with Augustus’ marriage legislation. The phrase leges marita is an unambiguous reference to Augustus’ reforms. Moreover, the phrase, “fidelity takes care not to incur blame,” is a clear reference to the Julian law against adultery (18 BCE).

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436 Horace, 263.
437 Horace, Odes and Epodes, 235.
439 Fraenkel, 42.
Ovid describes the Golden Age with language that resonates with what Mircea Eliade would call *illud tempus* or “sacred time.” In the *Metamorphoses* the Golden Age is a time when nature and reason coexist harmoniously and humanity is intrinsically good:

Golden was the first age, which with no one to compel, without a law, of its own will, kept faith and did the right. There was no fear of punishment, no threatening words were to be read on brazen tablets; no suppliant throng gazed fearfully upon its judge’s face; but without defenders lived secure. Not yet had the pine-tree, felled on its native mountains, descended thence into the watery plain to visit other lands; men knew no shores except their own. Not yet were cities begirt with steep moats; there were no trumpets of straight, no horns of curving brass, no swords or helmets. There was no need at all of armed men, for nations, secure from war’s alarms, passed the years in gentle ease. The earth herself, without compulsion, untouched by hoe or plowshare, of herself gave all things needful (*Met.* 1.89-100).

In order for Augustus to bring about the eschatological Golden Age, he must first abolish *scelus*, or sin. For example, in *Eclogues* 4.13, Virgil writes, “And in your consulship, Pollio, any remaining traces of sin will disappear” (*te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri*). As Wallace-Hadrill notes the way Augustus abolishes *scelus* is by setting up laws and enforcing “subjection of every Roman to the person of the emperor.” Additionally, in Horace’s picture of Augustus, *scelus* is overcome by the introduction of the *Lex Iulia* of 18 BCE. As he writes,

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441 Regarding sacred time, Eliade explains that many myths “present us with a twofold revelation: they express on the one hand the diametrical opposition of two divine figures sprung from one and the same principle and destined, in many versions, to be reconciled at some *illud tempus* of eschatology, and on the other, the *coincidentia oppositorum* in the very nature of the divinity, which shows itself, by turns or even simultaneously, benevolent and terrible, creative and destructive, solar and serpentine, and so on (in other words, actual and potential).” See, Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Rites, Symbols: A Mircea Eliade Reader*, ed. Wendell C. Beane and William G. Doty, vol. 2 (New York: Harper Colophon, 1976) 449.

442 Ovid, *Metamorphoses Books I-VIII*, trans., Frank Justus Miller, LCL, vol. 42 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004) 9. It is important to recall, though, that for Ovid the Golden Age may not be all that golden. In *Amores* 2.277-8, he hints that Augustus’ Golden Age is golden precisely because gold was able to purchase love.

443 Cf. *Georgics* 1.466-514.

“Law and morality have overcome polluting wrong” (Odes 4.5.22).\textsuperscript{445} Something similar seems to be happening in the letters of Paul.\textsuperscript{446}

In Galatians 1:4 Paul declares that the Galatians live in the “present evil age” (αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεσθότος πνημόθ).\textsuperscript{447} A similar remark is made in 1 Cor 2:8 where the “rulers of this age” (τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) are singled out as the ones who crucified Jesus.\textsuperscript{448} Paul’s recognition that the present world is imperfect is clearly indicated in other places such as 1 Thess 1:9-10, 5:4-5, 1 Cor 2:6, 15:25-26, 56, and Gal 3:19, 4:3.

The conviction that the present aeon is deteriorating is in large part the main thrust of the Golden Age myth.\textsuperscript{449} For example, the Cynics imagined an original “Golden Age” (i.e. “the kingdom of Kronos”), when life was lived simply, without possessions, luxury, technology, or rivalry.\textsuperscript{450} In the Epistulae, Seneca also tells of a “Golden Age,” when, “No farmers tilled the fields / Nor was it right to mark the plain with bounds, / Men sought from a common source and

\textsuperscript{445} mos et lex masculosum edomuit nefas. See, as well, J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, Continuity and Change in Roman Religion (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979) 92-100.


\textsuperscript{447} Regarding this phrase, Longenecker writes, “[T]he phrase αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεσθότος (‘the present age’), which is the equivalent of the Jewish expression ἡ ὄλαμ ἡζηζ (ὁ αἰὼν οὐτος, ‘this age’) as contrasted to ἡ ὄλαμ ἡββα’ (ὁ αἰὼν ὁ ἐρχόμενος ορ ὁ αἰὼν ὁ μέλλων, ‘the age to come’), is a NT hap. leg. And though the evil character of this age is implied in Rom 12:2 (cf. 1 Cor 1:20) and assumed in all Paul’s writings, it is only here that the adjective πονηρός is directly attached to αἰῶν.” See, Richard N. Longenecker, Galatians, ed. Ralph P. Martin, WBC, vol. 41 (Waco: Word Books, 1990) 7-8.

\textsuperscript{448} Sampley maintains that 1 Cor 2:8 suggests that there is an “unbridgeable gulf” between those who belong to this aeon and those who belong to the next aeon. He relates, “The ‘secret and hidden’ character of God’s wisdom lies not just in its never having been disclosed before but also in its anticipated grandeur. Neither normal eyesight nor human imagination, as they are available to the rulers of this aeon and to unspiritual persons, can grasp ‘what God has prepared for those who love him’ (2:9, a Pauline amalgamation of scriptural echoes; cf. Isa 52:15; 64:3 LXX).” See, J. Paul Sampley, “1 Corinthians,” in The New Interpreter’s Bible, ed. Leander Keck (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002) 820-1. Regarding the τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, Horsley is right to suggest that they are not “demonic forces.” Instead he argues that they are “human political rulers (like the rulers in Rom 13:3 and other NT literature.)” As he relates, “Paul may be referring here to rulers of the Roman Empire generally whereas in 2:8 he focuses on those responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus. But also, Paul stands in the tradition of Jewish apocalyptic literature in which human rulers act under the influence of superhuman demonic forces.” See, Horsley, First Corinthians, 58. For the view that the “rulers of this age” are demonic forces, see, Barrett, 70; and, Conzelmann, 61.

\textsuperscript{449} Downing, 235.

earth itself / Produced most lavishly without any man’s demand” (90.37).  

Seneca claims that this race of men was the most “blessed,” and that they “enjoyed the world in common” (90.38).  

Greed is responsible for the destruction of this age. As he relates, “Avarice broke into these fine conditions, and in wanting to divert something and turn it to its own use, it put everything beyond its control and reduced itself from unlimited abundance to a narrow compass” (90.38).  

Commenting on Seneca’s Cynic-based ideas, F. Gerald Downing maintains, “A conviction that our present state is one of deterioration--and increasing deterioration--is in fact the main thrust of the Golden Age myth.”

Pseudo-Anacharsis is also aware of this mythological idea. In Letter 9 he tells Croesus, “The earth was long ago the common possession of the gods and of men. In time, however, men transgressed by dedicating to the gods as their private precincts what was the common possession of all. In return for these, the gods bestowed upon men fitting gifts: strife, desire for pleasure, and meanness of spirit.”  

In fact, among some moral philosophers there existed the belief that a final conflagration would purify--or perhaps destroy--the present, decaying world. For example, in De rerum natura Lucretius writes, “Even now the power of life is broken, and the exhausted earth scarce produces tiny creatures, she who once produced all kinds and gave birth to the huge bodies of wild beasts.”  

Additionally, Pliny the Elder in his Naturalis historia relates, “You can almost see that the stature of the whole human race is decreasing daily, with few men taller than their fathers, as the crucial conflagration which our age is approaching

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452 Seneca, Selected Letters, 186.  
453 Seneca, Selected Letters, 186.  
455 Malherbe, 47.  
456 Quoted in Downing, Cynics, Paul and the Pauline Churches, 234.
exhausts the fertility of human semen” (7.16.73). The solution for the Greco-Roman moralists was to live a life of simplicity and purity in the present evil age.

As with Augustus, eschatology affects Paul’s ethics. For example, before a brief discussion about the παρουσία in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to live a life of holiness, free of lust and free of passions (vv. 1-8). In 1 Corinthians Paul suggests that there is a connection between what individual Corinthians do with their bodies (1 Cor 6:12-20) and the resurrection body in the future ἔσχατον (1 Cor 15:35-56). Additionally, like Augustus, Paul thinks that sin can be mastered because of a “new age” brought about by Jesus’ death (Rom 6:12-14).

What is significant in these comparisons is that both Paul and Augustus provide moral directives within the context of the deterioration of the present order. Both seem to think that the way through this deterioration is to commend a certain way of life, which for both means reiterating the established hierarchy of gender relations in the ancient world. For Paul, this hierarchy is maintained by advocating a life of singleness without children for members of the Corinthian ekklēsia; for Augustus this hierarchy is maintained by appeal to the moral values of the Golden Age.

2 Differences

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457 In plenum autem cuncto mortalium generi minorem in dies fieri propemodum observatur, rarosque patribus proceriores, consumente ubertatem semen exustione in cuius vices nunc vergat aees.
458 Downing, Cynics, Paul and the Pauline Churches, 237, writes, “In contrast with the corruption of civic society around them, as Cynics saw it, they themselves claimed to be able to live here and now the simplicity of the Golden Age. In their austere but easy life-style, the kingdom of Kronos had reappeared.” Cf. Seneca, who writes, “Even in this age he would be eager to live as simply as possible” (Epist. 90.13-14).
459 For a discussion of these verses, see, Abraham J. Malherbe, Paul and the Thessalonians (Mifflintown: Sigler Press, 2000) 50-52.
460 For more on this concept, see, Robert Jewett, Romans, ed. Eldon Jay Epp, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007) 408-12.
In analogical comparisons the differences are more telling than the similarities. As I noted at the beginning of this chapter, it is only in describing the peculiarities of Paul’s directives on marriage and singleness in relation to Augustus’ directives that we will be able to note what is truly distinctive—if anything—about Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7. Obviously Paul and Augustus disagree on the purpose of marriage. For Paul the purpose of marriage seems to be a prophylactic against the untranslatable πορνεία.\textsuperscript{461} For Augustus, marriage was for procreation, which was a socially induced obligation.\textsuperscript{462} But, in reality, these are only surface differences.

Perhaps the most radical difference between Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 and Augustus’ legislation concerns their respective treatment of widows. In 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 and 39-40 Paul advises widows (χήραις) within the Corinthian ekklēsia.\textsuperscript{463} Additionally, Paul groups widows together with the single members of the ekklēsia, which has led some scholars to suggest that they represent two distinct groups within the community.\textsuperscript{464}

As an adjective ἄγαμος is only used in the NT in this chapter (vv. 8, 11, 32, 34) but with multiple meanings.\textsuperscript{465} In v. 11 it refers to a woman separated in divorce; in v. 32, it refers to a

\textsuperscript{461} Martin, The Corinthian Body, 212-8.
\textsuperscript{463} For a thorough discussion of the relationship between vv. 8-9 and vv. 39-40 see, Lietzmann, 37. It is also possible that vv. 39-40 form a “short appendix” to Paul’s discussion of virgins. See, Schrage, 204. For a general introduction to widows in early Christianity, see, Bonnie B. Thurston, The Widows: A Women's Ministry in the Early Church (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989). Hering perceptively notes, “7:8 and 7:9, which depend directly on what precedes, only repeat in different words the recommendation of 7:1, to which 7:7 has recalled us; but now ‘chērais’, ‘widows’, are expressly mentioned.” See, Hering, 51.
\textsuperscript{464} Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 283. See, as well, Ruth Kritzer in Artz-Grabner, 1 Korinther, 263, who maintains that in v. 8 Paul makes clear distinctions between married and unmarried persons. She relates, “Während er dem Anschein nach eine Trennung zwischen Unverheirateten (Männern und Frauen) und Witwen vornimmt.” See, Peter Artz-Grabner, Ruth Elisabeth Kritzer, et al., 1 Korinther: Papyrologische Kommentare zum Neuen Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006) 263. Cf. Heinrich who relates, “... nicht die ganze Kategorie der Nichtwirr, auch nicht blos die Wittwer ord die ledigen Männer überhaupt, sondern die über das normale Alter hinaus unverheiratet gebliebenen beider Geschlechter.” See, C. F. Georg Heinrich, Der erste Brief an die Korinther (Göttingen: Vandenhof und Ruprech, 1896) 218-9. Additionally, see, Allo, 162. Pace Nash, 193. Nash writes, “While some see two very different groups in v. 8, the not-yet-married (agamoi) and those whose spouses have died (chērais), most likely only one major group is intended, namely those formerly married.
\textsuperscript{465} Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 287, relates, “The question is, to whom does the word agamoi (‘unmarried’) refer? Traditionally this has been seen as addressing all categories of the unmarried, especially the
single man, and in v. 34 it refers to a single woman.\textsuperscript{466} In v. 8 it is juxtaposed with χήρος, therefore, many commentators suggest that it refers to a specific group of unmarried men—namely, male widowers.\textsuperscript{467} According to Gordon Fee, ἀγαμὸς has traditionally addressed all categories of the unmarried.\textsuperscript{468} In particular it was thought that the word especially addressed the “never-before married” to which Paul adds the special category of widows. Despite this, Fee thinks that the best translation of ἀγαμὸς is the masculine “widower.” He bases this on the fact that Attic Greek distinguishes between the female “widow” and the male “widower,” but Koine does not. He argues that during the Koine period Greek texts rarely spoke of male widowers.\textsuperscript{469}

One could also make Fee’s argument on purely linguistic grounds. For example, some have suggested that χήραις (fem.) be read as χῆρος (masc.) because of the masculine ἀὐτοῖς and the active γαμησάτωσαν of v. 9.\textsuperscript{470} The problem with this is that these words also relate to τοῖς ἀγάμοις in v. 8, which can refer to either single women or men.\textsuperscript{471}

Other Greek texts suggest that ἀγαμὸς means “the unmarried in general” with no distinction between whether or not they are male or female.\textsuperscript{472} For example, in Euripides’s \textit{Orestes} ἀγαμὸς refers simply to a single individual in a religious context: ἐννυχίοις ἀγαμὸς, and

\begin{itemize}
\item never-before married to whom Paul adds the special category of widows...
\item On balance, ‘widower’ seems to be the best understanding of the word here.” It is important to note that Greek distinguishes between female and male widows. Though Greek has a word for a male widower, it was seldom used—perhaps never—in the koine period. In fact, it was replaced by ἀγαμὸς in the koine period. See \textit{LSJ}. Interestingly the supplement to \textit{LSJ} suggests “celibate” as the translation of ἀγαμοῖς. If this is correct, it would mean that Paul is talking to two different groups.
\item BDAG, 5.
\item Collins, \textit{First Corinthians}, 268.
\item Fee, \textit{The First Epistle to the Corinthians}, 287.
\item See, \textit{LSJ}, 5 and the entry ἀγαμετὸς. \textit{LSJ} suggests that ἀγαμὸς refers to the “unmarried, single, prop. of the man, whether bachelor or widower (ἀνανδρός being used being used of the woman).” It also maintains that ἀγαμὸς could refer to a “marriage that is not marriage, fatal marriage,” but the supplemental section rejects this interpretation.
\item See the discussion in Héring, \textit{The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians}, 51.
\item See, Schnabel, 367. He rightly notes, “Das mit Unverheiratete (οὶ ἀγαμοὶ) übersetzte Wort bezieht sich auf die Männer und Frauen in der korinthischen Gemeinde, die nicht verheiratet sind (γαμοῖς ist das Wort für „Hochzeit“ und für „Ehe“).”
\item This point is made by Lindemann, \textit{Der erste Korintherbrief}, 163, who relates, “Gemeint sind diejenigen Männer und Frauen (ἡ ἀγαμὸς V. 11a.34), die gegenwärtig nicht...verheiratet sind).”
\end{itemize}
here it refers to a presumably single girl.\textsuperscript{473} If Paul is using this word in a similar manner, it may refer just to single men or single people in general or to people who have never been married. Most interpreters contend that this is how ἀγάμος functions throughout 1 Corinthians 7. For example, in v. 11 ἀγάμος refers to divorced women, while in v. 34 ἀγάμος refers to virgins.\textsuperscript{474}

In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul tends to use ἀγάμος in a more general sense as in “anyone who is unmarried,” or, “single.” When combined with χήρα, which always indicates a widow (see P.Mich. 1.29 and BGU 8.1849),\textsuperscript{475} Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7:8 is to male widowers and female widows and anyone else who is single.\textsuperscript{476} The likely reason why Paul combines ἀγάμος with χήρα is that in classical Greek literature, χήρα refers exclusively to a female widow (e.g., Homer, Il. 2.289; 22.499; 6.432; 22.484; 24.725; Soph., Aj. 653; Euripides, Andr. 348; Tro. 380; Lys. 2.71; Paus. 8.22.2).\textsuperscript{477} The addition of ἀγάμος would make it clear to the Corinthians that Paul is talking about both males and females. This is also the observation of S. J. Kistemaker, who opines, “The unmarried are a class of people that includes widowers and both men and women who are single, separated, or divorced.”\textsuperscript{478} Moreover, Thiselton rightly maintains that this way of looking at the “unmarried” and “widows” makes more historical sense given the

\textsuperscript{473} This phrase occurs in line 205 of Electra’s speech. She says: “But it was not well done. You killed and were killed, my mother! and you have slain a father and your own children; for we are dead or as good as dead. You are in your grave, and the greater part of my life is spent in weeping and wailing, and tears at night; unmarried, childless, I drag out forever a joyless existence.”

\textsuperscript{474} See the instructive comments in Schnabel, Erster Korintherbrief, 367-8.

\textsuperscript{475} The only other rendering of χήρα provided by LSJ is, “one who is bereaved.” Although it can also refer metaphorically to a dish prepared “without sauce” or “bereft of sauce.” See, Sotad.Com. 1.26.

\textsuperscript{476} Cf. Deming, 130. He applies v. 8 to “those who have been previously married and are now single.” This is the same position as Schrage, Der Erste Brief an die Korinther, 94.

\textsuperscript{477} The Latin equivalent of χήρα is vidua, which also refers to female widows. See the entry for χήρα in Middle Liddell.

\textsuperscript{478} S. J. Kistemaker, 1 Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1993) 217. See, as well, Witherington III, 30. He suggests reading ἀγάμος as the general term and καί as meaning “especially.”
of marriage, especially for girls in the Roman empire. Thus, there is no need to make any major distinctions here between ἀγαμός and χήρα.

Of particular interest is Paul’s point in v. 39 in which he claims that a woman is free to remarry if her husband dies. As I noted in the last chapter, Paul contradicts himself between what he states here regarding widows and what he states previously concerning them. In v. 8 he suggests that widows should not marry, but in v. 39 he contends that widows are free to remarry as long as they do so “in the Lord.” In v. 40 Paul states his preference that Corinthian widows do not remarry. Be that as it may, Paul’s preferences throughout indicate that he would like it if widows and widowers remained single, which is one of the more intriguing things he says in 1 Corinthians 7.

According to numerous Roman authors, the ideal Roman woman was a chaste woman. In inscriptions, words like pudica or castissima are often used to praise the ideal Roman woman. Sometimes pudica was used alone (CIL 8.7156) or in conjunction with casta in epitaphs (e.g., CIL 6.11252). For example, in one epitaph, “Graxia Alexandria” is commended for her pudicitia (CIL 6.19128). Typically a married couple was fortunate if their marriage lasted between ten and fifteen years. CIL 6.16592 is an inscription inscribed to the nurse Crispina,

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479 Thiselton, 516. In higher (and probably other) ranks in Roman society “a widow was expected to remarry within a year, a divorcee within six months.” For more on this, see chapter two of this work, and, Aline Rousselle, “Body Politics in Ancient Rome,” in A History of Women in the West, ed. Pauline S. Pantel (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992) 316.

480 Pace Hays, 118. He writes, “The word ‘unmarried’ (agamoi) is used here to refer specifically to widowers, not in a generic fashion to include all those who are not married.” Of course, it is possible that in 1 Corinthians 7 χήρα refers to widows as a distinct group, similar to those mentioned in Acts 6:1 and 1 Timothy 5:3-16. However, there is no way to confirm this speculation. For more, see, Héring, The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, 51; and, Klauck, 51.

481 Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 105.

482 Lattimore, 296.
dead at thirty, erected by her husband Albus in commemoration of their seventeen years of married life. Such inscriptions were normal in the imperial period.  

The Romans linked the concept of chastity with widowhood, since most women who survived the dangers of childbirth usually outlived their husbands. Inscriptions on epitaphs routinely praise a woman who married only once. As we have seen, these women were called univira in the inscriptions and throughout Roman literature. For example CIL 3.1537 uses the phrase solo contenta marito (content with her husband alone) vel sim. CIL 3.2667 uses the phrase uno contenta marito (content with her one husband). Despite Roman praise for the univira, Augustus’ legislation broke with this ancient tradition even though the purpose of the laws was to reinforce older morals.

Augustus’ reforms required widows to remarry within two (or three) years of their husband’s death. If a widow did not remarry within the allotted time frame, she could not inherit from people who were not related to her in the sixth degree. Since the idea of the univira was linked to Rome’s past, Augustus was forced by the Roman people to introduce other provisions which mitigated the rigorous demands of his earlier legislation. Ulpius informs us, “The lex Iulia granted exemption from its penalties to women for a year after the death of their husbands, and for six months after a divorce had taken place; the lex Papia granted them two more years from the death of their husbands, and a year and six months after a divorce...”

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483 For more, see Shaw, 30-46.
484 Dixon, 6.
485 Balsdon, Roman Women, 75. Throughout Augustus’ reforms there is a blatant--yet unstated--“double standard.” For more on this, see, Hallett, 244.
486 The original law of 18 BCE, the lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus, had allowed only a year’s delay in remarrying for widows, and six months for divorcées, but this was changed by the later lex Papia. See, Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 73-4.
487 Dixon, The Roman Mother, 59.
488 Csillag, The Augustan Laws on Family Relations, 89.
means that Augustus was forced to soften his views because of a public outrage against his assault on the institution of the univira.489

Part of why Augustus had to change his regulations pertaining to widows is that widows were often left desolate after their husbands had died.490 For example, Julia Pacata erected a tombstone in honour of her late husband Julius Classicianus. On the epitaph she refers to herself as “Infelix uxor,” or, “his unhappy widow.”491 Additionally, Seneca’s De matrimonia contains a list of grieving widows. It reads:

When Cato’s younger daughter Marcia was in mourning for her husband and women asked her when her mourning would end, she said, “At the same time as my life.” When a relative advised Annia to marry again, since she was still young and handsome, she said, “I never will. Suppose I find a good husband; I do not want to live in constant dread of losing him. If I pick a bad one, why, after the best of husbands, must I put up with the worst?” When somebody was praising a nice woman who had married for the second time, the younger Porcia said, “A woman who is really happy and chaste never marries more than once.” When the elder Marcella was asked by her mother if she was glad that she had married, she answered, “Blissfully. That is why I should never marry again.” Valeria, sister of the Messalae, when asked why she would not marry again after the death of her husband Servius, said, “As far as I am concerned, he is alive still, and always will be” (72-7).492

The women mentioned here by Seneca are univirae.493

Unlike Augustus, the people of Rome viewed the “ideal society” as one in which no woman would be married more than once.494 Tacitus tells us of a Germanic tribe he discovered

489 See, Sarah B. Pomeroy, Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity (New York: Schocken Books, 1995) 161. She writes, “Augustan legislation encouraged widows, like divorcées, to remarry. There was some tension between the emperor’s concern that women bear as many children as possible and the traditional Roman idealization of the woman like Cornelia who remained faithful to her dead husband.”
490 Balsdon, Roman Women, 208.
491 M. P. Charlesworth, Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Claudius and Nero (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939) 42.
493 For additional details, see, Majorie Lightman and William Zeisel, “Univira: An Example of Continuity and Change in Roman Society,” Church History 46 (1977) 19-32.
in which men refused to marry a woman who was not a virgin (Germ. 19). Additionally, he informs us that in this barbaric society there were women who loved not so much their husbands but the married state--or perhaps the political state itself.\textsuperscript{495} He praises these barbarians for their virtues in much the same way that the people of Rome admired the \textit{univirae}. In fact, the \textit{univirae} were the only ones who could undress a bride on her wedding night--so theirs was a privileged position.\textsuperscript{496} However, for the sake of his reform program, Augustus sought to undo this long standing tradition, which produced what many Romans saw as Augustus’ double standard. Or, as one Roman author put it: \textit{If only there was the same law for wife and husband; for if a wife who is good is content with one man, why should not a man be content with one wife?} (Plaut. \textit{Merc.} 817-29).

Interestingly, a few \textit{univirae} may be found in the Pauline letters. In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul makes a reference to “Chloe’s people.”\textsuperscript{497} Chloe’s people were the ones who notified Paul of the divisions within the Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia}, which was one of many factors that led him to write 1 Corinthians.\textsuperscript{498} As Margaret MacDonald relates, “The fact that the people who gave the report are identified in deference to Chloe (literally, the ones belonging to Chloe) suggests that

\textsuperscript{494} Dixon writes, “The significance for this study of the ideal of the \textit{univira} is confined to any possible relationship it might bear to the image of the widowed mother who devoted herself to her children’s interests. The two stereotypes do not quite coincide. Cornelia (mater Gracchorum) was praised for rejecting wealthy suitors in her widowhood (Plut. \textit{Tib. Gr.} 1.7), but her daughter was long since married by then and her sons dead. Augustus’ widowed mother Atia did remarry (Nicolaus 3.5), but was still a model of the conscientious and influential Roman mother (Nicolaus 3.6; 4.10). On the whole, the remarriage of a widowed mother was deemed dangerous to her children’s interests...” See, Dixon, \textit{The Roman Mother}, 22. For a discussion on the irony of Livia being the ideal \textit{univira}, see, Kampen, “Gender Theory in Roman Art,” 33-38.

\textsuperscript{495} This would certainly make sense, since as Edwards, \textit{The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome}, 60, notes, the state was like a universal father. She writes, “Augustus was now \textit{pater patriae}, ‘father of the fatherland’ - the ultimate \textit{paterfamilias}. The whole state had become his household.”

\textsuperscript{496} Balsdon, \textit{Roman Women}, 185.

\textsuperscript{497} According to Meeks, Chloe’s “people” were probably members of her household, slaves or former slaves, or business partners. See, Meeks, \textit{The First Urban Christians}, 59, 63.

she was the head of this household." 499 Additionally, MacDonald notes that if Chloe is the “head of a household,” she would likely be a wealthy widow, who was managing her own estate after the death of her husband. 500 In fact, early Christian literature points to a number of such well-to-do women as can be seen in Acts 17:4-12, which mentions “prominent Greek women,” and Col 4:15, which mentions Nympha, who offered her house for a Christian meeting.

Phoebe may also qualify as a univira. In Romans 16:2 Paul identifies Phoebe as προστάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη καὶ ἐμοῦ αὐτοῦ. 501 The identification of Phoebe as a προστάτις means that she is a “protectress, patroness, and a helper.” 502 As Robert Jewett demonstrates the masculine counterpart of προστάτις takes on the technical sense of a legal patron. 503 This would

499 MacDonald, “Reading Real Women Through the Undisputed Letters of Paul,” 200. Similar to MacDonald is the interpretation of Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 219, who maintains that Chloe was one of “the outstanding women leaders” in the Corinthian church. For a different interpretation, see, Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 141.

500 Women as “heads of households” are common in the inscriptions and papyri. For example, in BGU 13.2225 a woman registers her ownership of a house and court via her κυριός. Heron. At line 6 she registers ἐμὴν καὶ τοῦ ἐμοῦ κτλ. “myself and my family.” Additionally, P.Mil.Vogl. 3.193a, 193b, 194a, 194b are census returns all submitted by women who are heads of households.

501 There are a number of variants to this phrase, which is typically rendered “[she] became a patroness to many and to myself as well.” The original form is most likely found in A B C 1573 1874 1881 2495. D instead of D 1573 1874 1881 2495. F and G provide ἐμὸν in place of ἐμοῦ in Μ. 323 326 424 614 945 1175 1375 1735 1836 1874 1881 2495. D places πολλὰν (“many”) after ἐμὸν to produce “and many others,” as does P 502 in its fragmentary text: καὶ ἐμὸν πολλὰν. While F and G’s παραστάτις (“helper”) fits into the pattern of attempting to downplay the status of Phoebe. Other texts appear as efforts to correct the loose syntax of the original.

502 Jewett, Romans, 946. Gardner also provides evidence for female patrons in Roman society. She relates, “As is well known, women are attested as patrons, but not as members, of guilds (collegia), other than one or two all-female groups, such as an association of mime-actresses in Rome or nine slave ornatrices, not specified as a ‘college’ but belonging to different owners, at Ostia.” See, Gardner, Women in Roman Law and Society, 239. I am not entirely sure Gardner is correct on this point. See, for example, the evidence of women in collegia in John S. Kloppenborg and Richard S. Ascough, Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations, and Commentary. I. Attica, Central Greece, Macedonia, Thrace (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011) 76, 84.

503 Jewett, Romans, 946. Here Jewett takes on the assertion of Käsemann that there is no extant evidence for women as female patrons. For Käsemann’s argument, see, Ernst Käsemann, Commentary on Romans, trans., G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 411. In response, Jewett writes, “The social function of προστάτις figures in Plutarch is instructive. Cor. 8.1 refers to the Roman Senate ‘electing five men as patrons of those who needed help (προστάτις τῶν δεσμών ὑπηρετῶν)’. At the time of Solon’s reforms, the Athenian poor ‘began to join together and exhort one another not to submit to their wrongs, but to elect a faithful man as their patron, to set free the condemned debtors... (ἐνα προστάτην ἄνδραν πιστὸν ἀφελέσθαι τοῖς ὑπηρετῶσι... Plutarch Sol. 13.3) Theseus’s tomb in Athens became a place of refuge for runaway slaves and impoverished citizens since he had been ‘patron (προστάτηκοι) of such during his life, and graciously received the supplications of the poor and needy’ (Plutarch Thes. 36.2). The same word can be used to describe foreign kings who provide funds and military
mean, then, that Romans 16 offers evidence of Greco-Roman women working for the sake of the gospel without male partners. As MacDonald maintains, “Phoebe is the most obvious example of such a woman (Rom 16:1-2), but Mary and Persis may also fall into this category.”

Scholars have generally viewed Phoebe as a wealthy, independent woman, who may have moved in more elite circles than Paul. Because there is no mention of Phoebe’s husband, it is likely that she was following the pattern of a Roman univira.

In light of Corinth’s Roman culture, Dieter Zeller is correct to state that Paul’s preference that “widows not remarry” upholds the ancient Roman ideal of the univira. In this particular case, Paul is not the Paul of “empire-critical” readers, who view him as continually at odds with Roman ideals. In fact, when compared to Augustus’ legislation, Paul’s preference that widows remain single means that he is in agreement with the vast majority of Romans, who were not in favour of Augustus’ command that widows remarry and produce more children for the state.

Thus, Paul upheld the right of widows to remain single in the Corinthian ekklēsia, or, at the very least, he preferred that this is what they would do.

There is also a male equivalent of the univira, though it certainly did not gain the same respect as its female counterpart. Both Catullus and later Propertius adopt the loyal, trustworthy, female role of the univira in their writings. In poem 68 lines 138-40 Catullus compares himself to Juno, who was constantly deceived by her philandering spouse just as Catullus was by Lesbia. He writes, “And though she is not content with Catullus alone, I will bear faults, for few they are,

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506 Additional data can be found in Wendy J. Cotter, "Women's Authority Roles in Paul's Churches: Countercultural or Conventional?" NovT 36 (1994) 350-72.
507 Zeller, Der erste Brief an die Korinther, 276.
of my modest mistress, lest we become as tiresome as jealous fools. Juno, too, greatest of the heavenly ones, has often beaten down her anger for her husband’s fault, as she learns the many loves of all-amorous Jove.”

In his *Elegies* Propertius expresses utter revulsion at the possibility of marrying another woman (2.7.7-10). He relates, “For sooner should I let my head be severed from my neck than I could quench the torch of love to humour a bride’s whim, or as a married man pass by your barred threshold, looking back with tearful eyes at the house I had betrayed. Ah, what dire slumbers would my wedding flute warble for you, that flute more dismal than the trumpet of death! How should I furnish sons for our country’s triumphs? No soldier shall ever be born of my blood.”

Regarding the fact that Catullus and Propertius take on a traditionally feminine stance in their writings, Hallett opines, “Of greatest importance, however, remains the fact that Propertius, like Catullus, expects faithfulness from men as well as, if not more than from, women and thereby spurns the double standard characterizing Roman male-female relationships.”

It is worth asking if Paul himself adopted the feminine role of the *univira* much like Catullus and Propertius. A clue to Paul’s own marital status comes from 1 Cor 7:8 where Paul classifies himself among the ἀγάμους καὶ ταῖς χήραις. This has led to some speculation that Paul may have been a widower. For example, Joachim Jeremias once suggested that prior to his call,
Paul was a widower, because as an ordained Jewish חכם with the capability of making legal pronouncements (cf. Acts 9:1-2), he would have had to have been married and at least 40 years old according to the teachings of the rabbis. Others have suggested that because of Paul’s remarks on his Pharisaic background in Phil 3:5 it would have been completely normal for him to have been married. P.-H. Menoud maintains that since his “conversion” Paul lived a life separated from his wife. For Menoud this makes Paul a law abiding Jew.

A modification of Jeremias and Menoud’s argument is found in the work of G. Bouwman, who questions whether or not Paul was a widower. His theory maintains that instead of being a widower Paul was divorced. Bouwman makes his case based on the hypothetical reference to expenses for a wife in 1 Cor 9:5-6, which he maintains is based on an earlier report of Paul’s material needs. Be that as it may, Jeremias, Menoud, and Bouwman all agree on one thing--Paul was probably married at an earlier point in his life.

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(1929) 321-23. Arens comments on the lack of unity among the early Church Fathers regarding Paul’s marital status. His conclusion is that Paul had once been married, but was now living a celibate life. He bases this on Jewish customs as well as what Paul writes in vv. 7-8 and 1 Cor 9:5.

513 Jeremias, “War Paulus Witwer?,” 310-12. Collins, First Corinthians, 260, tends to agree with Jeremias. He relates, “Sine he was a law-abiding Jew (cf. m. Yebam. 6:6; b. Yebam. 62b-64a) it is likely that Paul would have been married at some point in his life. Had Paul been a rabbi of some sort it would have been virtually impossible for him not to have been married.” The same point is made by Phipps, 128.

514 For more on this, see, Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 512. My own opinion on how to interpret Phil 3:5 is similar to that of Ekkehard and Wolfgang Stegemann. They write, “One special problem is the presentation in the Acts of the Apostles, according to which Paul was also a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee (23:6), and a student of Gamaliel (22:3), and the Christian community in Jerusalem included ‘some believers who belonged to the hairesis of the Pharisees’ (15:5). There are good reasons to regard the latter piece of information as Lukan fiction without historical basis. But is that also true of the characterization of Paul? Even according to his own witness, he was ‘as to the law, a Pharisee’ (Phil 3:5). Yet it is clear that Paul himself is not simply speaking of himself as a Pharisee but merely expressing the idea that according to the law (kata nomon), he was a Pharisee. As the context shows, he is thereby describing himself as one who was serious with his Jewish identity and in particular with his observance of the Torah and the concomitant separation from the outside world. Strictly speaking, however, this means only that he led a Jewish life that corresponded to the Pharisaic interpretation of the Torah, and he expresses this in Gal 1:14 by saying that he once lived within Judaism (ioudaismos) and advanced in Judaism beyond his contemporaries in that he was especially zealous for the traditions of his ancestors.” See, Ekkehard Stegemann and Wolfgang Stegemann, The Jesus Movement: A Social History of its First Century, 1st English-language ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999) 159.


The idea that Paul was a widower or divorced is filled with anachronisms, and such theories have generally been rejected.\footnote{See, for example, Erich Fascher, "Zur Witwerschaft des Paulus und der Auslegung von I Cor 7," ZNW 28 (1929) 62-9; A. Oepke, "Probleme der vorchristlichen Zeit des Paulus," TSK 105 (1933) 406-10; and, H.-U. Wili, "Das Privilegium Paulinum (1 Kor 7, 15f)--Pauli eigene Lebenserinnerung? (Rechtshistorische Anmerkungen zu einer neueren Hypothese)," BZ 22 (1978) 100-08.} For example, a number of questions arise as to whether or not one can use later rabbinic materials to try and reconstruct Paul’s situation in the first century CE.\footnote{For a general introduction to using rabbinic literature in the interpretation of the New Testament, see, Reimund Bieringer and others, The New Testament and Rabbinic Literature, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism, vol. 136 (Leuven: Brill, 2009). For cautionary remarks on the use of rabbinic literature for understanding the New Testament, see, Jacob Neusner, Rabbinic Literature and the New Testament: What We Cannot Show We Do Not Know (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1994).} Moreover, if Paul had done something so drastic as separate from his wife after his call, his emphasis on mutual duties (vv. 2-4) suggests that he would never have thought of leaving his wife to whom he had obligations if he follows the same advice he is giving to the Corinthians.\footnote{Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 512.} Still, Paul does place himself in the group he refers to as the ἀγάμοις καὶ ταῖς χήραις, which begs the question of whether or not he saw himself as the male equivalent of the univira or was sympathetic to them in some way.\footnote{Lindemann is right to suggest that there is simply not enough evidence to answer the question of Paul’s marital status. See, Lindemann, Der Erste Korintherbrief, 161, “Die spekulative Diskussion darüber, ob Paulus verheiratet gewesen war, also inzwischen Witwer, ist, führt zu keinem Ergebnis.”}

3 Hybridity

At this point it is worth inquiring as to what Paul is doing in 1 Corinthians 7.\footnote{Most of my ideas in this section have come from my reading and interaction with L. Ann Jervis, "Reading Romans 7 in Conversation with Postcolonial Theory: Paul's Struggle toward a Christian Identity of Hybridity," in The Colonized Apostle: Paul Through Postcolonial Eyes, ed. Christopher D. Stanley (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011) 95-109. Additionally, I have been influenced by Marshall, 157-78. Another important study on Paul and the postcolonial concept known as “hybridity” is Robert Seesengood, Competing Identities: The Athlete and the Gladiator in Early Christian Literature, ed. Mark Goodacre, Library of New Testament Studies, vol. 346 (New York and London: T&T Clark, 2006). See, in particular, pp. 20-34.} At times he seems to say certain things which sound political and anti-Roman, such as never mentioning
procreation as the end result of marriage, while at other times he seems to engage in the same sorts of practices as Augustus’ legislation, such as when he reinforces the traditional hierarchy of men and women. And, at other times, he stands with the Roman people, speaking out against Augustus’ lack of respect for the role of the *univira*.

There may be some evidence within 1 Corinthians itself which suggests that Paul was directly influenced by the Augustan legislation or at least knew of it. In 1 Corinthians 5:1, Paul addresses an instance of *πορνεία*, which he claims is not even found among the Gentiles. The sentence reads: Ὅλως ἀκουόταται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία, καὶ τοιαύτη πορνεία ἢτις οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ὡστε γυναῖκά τινα τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχειν. This example of a man having sexual relations with his father’s wife is morally problematic for two reasons. As R. Scott Nash relates, “The case involved the double taboo of adultery and incest.”

Sexual relationships between men and their stepmothers were a common theme in Greco-Roman literature. For example, in Martial’s *Epigrams* 4.16 we find:

Privignum non esse tuae te, Galle, novercae
Rumor erat, coniunx dum fuit illa patris.
Non tamen hoc poterat vivo genitore probari.
Iam nusquam pater est, Galle, noverca domi est.
Magnus ab infernis revocetur Tullius umbris
Et te defendat Regulus ipse licet,
Non potes absolvī: nam quae non desinit esse
Post patrem, numquam, Galle, noverca fuit.

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522 It is generally assumed by scholars that Paul learned of this from Chloe’s people (1:11). Moreover, Paul often engages in a typical Jewish prejudice about the sexual mores of Gentiles (i.e. Rom 1:14-27; cf. Lev 18:3, 27). Paul specifically judges Gentile sexual behaviour in 1 Thess 4:5.
523 See, Zeller, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 199.
524 The present infinitive ἔχειν indicates that this is an ongoing relationship. Regarding the infinitive plus accusative noun, Smyth relates, “The use of the accusative with the infinitive seems to have originated from the employment of the infinitive to complement the meaning of transitive verbs... Gradually the accusative with the infinitive came to be used even after verbs incapable of taking an object-accusative.” See, Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (New York: American Book Company, 1916) 303.
525 Nash, *1 Corinthians*, 146. Collins identifies the problem as one of “incest” only, but this does not fit with Roman law, which would have identified the incest as adultery. See, Collins, *First Corinthians*, 206.
526 Klauck suggests that either the man or the stepmother was not a Christian. However, it is not clear what he is basing this on. See, Klauck, *1 Korintherbrief*, 41.
It was rumoured, Gallus, that you were not exactly the stepson of your mother, while she was the wife of your father. This however could not be proved while your father was alive. Your father, Gallus, is now no more; yet your step-mother still lives in the house with you. Even if the great Cicero could be recalled from the shades below, and Regulus himself were to defend you, you could not be acquitted; for she who does not cease to be a step-mother after a father’s death, Gallus, never was a step-mother.

What Paul says in 1 Cor 5:1 is of considerable interest since Roman law identified illicit relationships that constituted both adultery and incest. Gaius writes, “Moreover, I cannot marry my former mother-in-law or daughter-in-law, or my step-daughter or step-mother. We make use of the word ‘former’, because if the marriage by which affinity of this kind was established is still in existence, there is another reason why I cannot marry her, for a woman cannot marry two men, nor can a man have two wives” (Inst. 1.63). In Justinian’s Digest 10.1 we find, “We may not marry every woman without distinction; for with some marriage is forbidden. Marriage cannot be contracted between persons standing to each other in the relation of ascendant and descendant, as between a father and daughter, a grandfather and his granddaughter, a mother and her son, a grandmother and her grandson, and son, ad infinitum.”

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527 It should be noted that these types of relationships were taboo in the Greco-Roman world. See, for example Iamblichus, VP 31.210; and, Aelian, NA 3.47. See, as well, Patricia A. Watson, Ancient Stepmothers: Myth, Misogyny and Reality (Leiden: Brill, 1995).
528 Zeller, Der erste Brief an die Korinther, 200, notes a number of connections with Roman law. These connections are also noted in Helmut Merklein, Der erste Brief an die Korinther. Kapitel 1-4, ÖTKNT, vol. 7/1 (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1992) 32-33. Merklein also notes several connections with Jewish prohibitions including: Lev 18:7-8; Deut 23:1; 27:20; Philo Leg. 3.20ff.; Ps.-Phoc 179; Jub. 33:10; Josephus Ant. 3.12.1. See, as well, Lietzmann, An die Korinther 1 - 2, 23.
529 “Item eam, quae mihi quondam socrus aut nurus au privigna aut noverca fuit. Ideo autem diximus ‘quondam’, qula, si adhuc constant eae nuptiae per quas talis adfinitas quaesita est, alia ratione mihi nupta esse non potest, quia necque eadem duobus nupta esse potest neque idem duas uxores habere.” A complete discussion of the legal issues involved can be found in Winter, 44-57. See, as well, O. F. Robinson, The Criminal Law of Ancient Rome (London: Duckworth, 1995) 55-57.
530 “Ergo non omnes nobis uxores ducere licet: nam quarundam nuptiis abstinendum est: inter eas enim personas quae parentum liberorumve locum inter se optinent nuptiae contrahi non possunt, veluti inter patrem et filiam vel avum et neptem vel matrem et filium vel aviam et nepotem et usque ad infinitum.”
Justinian continues by noting that such persons who do you unite, “Contract a criminal and incestuous marriage.” Though these laws are later than the time of Paul and the Corinthians, they are based on Augustus’ *ad Iuliam de adulteriis et de stupro* of 18 BCE. Essentially, these laws held that sexual relations between a man and his stepdaughter, daughter-in-law, or stepmother were both adulterous and incestuous, meaning that both parties should be punished. This has led some scholars to conclude that Paul is directly influenced by Augustus’ legislation when he writes 1 Corinthians. For example, Hans-Josef Klauck notes that 1 Cor 5:1ff. demonstrates that these Roman laws had a great influence on the city of Corinth and perhaps on Paul himself. He relates, “…und auch das römische Recht, das Korinth beeinflußt hat…”

If Klauck is right, then this means that Paul rejects Augustus’ legislation on adultery when he claims that the status of the Corinthians has changed because of their new found identity in the Corinthian Jesus movement. For example, in 1 Cor 6:9-11 Paul notes that some of the Corinthians were formally μοιχοί or adulterers (v. 10). However, he follows this thought up by noting that the Corinthians were “justified” (ἐδικαιώθητε) in the name of the Lord Jesus (ἐν τῷ ὄνοματι τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; v. 11). This change in status is significant considering that under Augustus’ moral reforms those classified as “adulterers” could not remarry (Ulp. 48.5.30[29].1). As McGinn notes, “A woman convicted under the Augustan adultery statute was forbidden to remarry.” If an adulterous woman remarried then her husband was automatically guilty of *lenocinium*, or, “pimping.” Ironically, marriage contracted in violation of this ban rendered spouses *caelibes* under the marriage statute. To make matters even worse, adulterous

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531 “nefarias atque incestas nuptias contraxisse dicuntur.”
532 Klauck, *I Korintherbrief*, 41. He also notes that the legal punishment for this type of illicit relationship was exile.
534 For more on this, see, McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*, 53-58.
women were required to wear the toga as a symbol of their shame, making it the Roman equivalent of Hawthorne’s Scarlet-A.

Looking at this evidence one could easily conclude that Paul directly confronted Augustus’ legislation. This is certainly a possibility considering that Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 go against the Roman norm of procreation. Additionally, in 1 Corinthians 5-6 Paul makes an attempt to rehabilitate those in the ekklēsia whom Roman society deemed “adulterers,” which would also mean rehabilitating those levelled with the charge of lenocinium. Reading Paul this way would lead to Justin Meggitt’s conclusion that though Paul’s directives are “politically innocuous” to us, they were in fact veiled threats to Roman authority in the first century.\footnote{Meggitt, 188.} Or, as Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza maintains, “Paul’s advice to remain free from the marriage bond was a frontal assault on the institutions of existing law and cultural ethos, especially since it was given to people who lived in the urban centers of the Roman Empire.”\footnote{Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 225. It is important to note that Schüssler Fiorenza now has a much more nuanced view of Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 and his overall relationship to the Roman empire. See, for example, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, The Power of the Word: Scripture and the Rhetoric of Empire (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007) 69-110.}

A second option would be to note that Paul reinforces the gender hierarchy prevalent in the Roman world by making women subordinate to men throughout 1 Corinthians 7 and in 11:2-16. Robert Grant assumes as much when he writes, “Roman imperial policy... agreed with Paul’s attempts to regulate sex among Christians at Corinth.”\footnote{Robert M. Grant, Paul in the Roman World: The Conflict at Corinth (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001) 118.} Of course, what causes some difficulty with both of these options is Paul standing on the side of the Roman people when he maintains that widows can--and should--remain single. Thus, there seems to be a need to look for a third option.
A more likely possibility, which explains the complexities in 1 Corinthians 7 when compared to Augustus’ legislation, is what the postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha calls “hybridity.” Unlike Meggitt and other empire-critical readers who view Paul’s relationship with Rome as a binary relationship (i.e. us-versus-them), hybridity allows readers to see more than one option present when it comes to Paul and the Roman imperial order. In other words, Paul may actually be against Augustus’ legislation, utilizing Augustus’ legislation, and doing something entirely new all at the same time. As L. Ann Jervis relates, “Generally speaking, the hybrid identity is one that seeks to integrate features of a culture’s precolonial past with features of the colonizer’s identity in order to come up with a new, hybrid identity.”

Bhabha defines “hybridity” as, “[T]he sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities; it is the name for the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal (that is, the production of discriminatory identities, that secure the ‘pure’ and original identity of authority).” Moreover, “Hybridity is the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects.” Instead of creating a binary situation in which the “mother culture” and its “bastards” clash (Bhabha’s terms), with hybridity the illegitimate offspring of the mother culture repeats certain aspects of the dominant culture but does so differently.

This leads to what Bhabha calls “mimicry,” which allows those dominated by another culture to be a part of it but also to resist it by making certain aspects of the dominant culture

538 Jervis, “Reading Romans 7 in Conversation with Postcolonial Theory,” 96. Cf. Seesengood, Competing Identities, 21, who writes, “Through hybridization, new identities are constructed that are both resistant and compliant, that use tropes and selectively adopt values of the colonizer to construct a third identity.”
539 Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 159.
540 Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 159.
541 Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 159.
their own while adapting it to their own needs.\textsuperscript{542} As Bhabha notes, “Mimicry does not merely destroy narcissistic authority through the repetitious slippage of difference and desire. It is the process of the \textit{fixation} of the colonial as a form of cross-classificatory, discriminatory knowledge within an interdictory discourse, and therefore necessarily raises the question of \textit{authorization} of colonial representations.”\textsuperscript{543} Additionally, mimicry is not a pure harmonization of repression of difference, but “a form of resemblance, that differs from or defends presence by displaying it in part, metonymically.”\textsuperscript{544} Thus, though the colonizer—in this case Rome—may define the culture, those who are colonized—in this case Paul and the Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia}—can reinscribe the ideas of the colonizer (i.e. “mimic it”) as they see fit.\textsuperscript{545} This explains, in part, why previous interpreters of Paul have either seen him as resisting the Augustan marriage legislation or using it to reinforce sexual ethics at Corinth. The reality is that both of these things are going on simultaneously throughout 1 Corinthians. In other words, Paul is engaged in a process of “hybridization” and “mimicry,” which means that he is borrowing from Augustus’ legislation when it suits his purposes but also resisting it as any colonized individual would, who feels powerless given his current situation. Paul, then, is not creating some sort of “alternative” Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia} to the dominant Roman empire, as some empire-critical interpreters would have it. Instead he is engaged in a process of complex dialectic, which, in Bhabha’s terminology is true “subversion.”\textsuperscript{546}

\textsuperscript{542}Moore notes, “Colonial \textit{mimicry}, meanwhile, results when the colonized is seduced or coerced into internalizing and replicating the colonizer’s culture—a process replete with opportunity for the colonized...as mimicry readily teeters over into mockery” (italics original). See, Moore, “Paul After Empire,” 11. Or, as Seesengood, \textit{Competing Identities}, 21-22, relates, “Speaking a foreign cultural language, hybrids always have an accent; the culture of the colonizer is taken on in simultaneously compliant and subversive ways. Mimicry becomes mockery, ’a difference that is almost the same, but not quite’” (italics original).

\textsuperscript{543}Bhabha, \textit{The Location of Culture}, 129. Italics original.

\textsuperscript{544}Bhabha, \textit{The Location of Culture}, 128.

\textsuperscript{545}I borrow the idea of “reinscription” from Punt, “Paul and Roman Colonial Rule,” 55.

\textsuperscript{546}The idea that Paul creates an alternative society to Rome with the Corinthian \textit{ekklēsia} is maintained in Richard A. Horsley, ”1 Corinthians: A Case Study of Paul’s Assembly as an Alternative Society,” in \textit{Paul and Empire}:
When the powerless mimic the dominant culture but also reinterpret it for their own ends, they create what Bhabha calls “ambivalence” and “ambiguity.” This can manifest itself utilizing the language, symbols, and ideas of the dominant, mother culture.\(^{547}\) As Bhabha notes, “Hybrid agencies find their voice in a dialectic that does not seek cultural supremacy or sovereignty.”\(^{548}\) Additionally, “They deploy the partial culture from which they emerge to construct visions of community, and versions of historic memory that give narrative form to the minority positions they occupy: the outside of the inside; the part in the whole.”\(^{549}\) Unfortunately this is often missed by empire-critical scholars who create binary scenarios between Paul and Rome, which allow for no other options.

There are, in fact, third choices, which are “more ambivalent.”\(^{550}\) Bhabha’s criticisms of Frantz Fanon’s binary options in *Black Skin, White Masks* is of great importance.\(^{551}\) Fanon maintains that for a black person in predominantly white society the only options are these: (1) turn white; or, (2) disappear. However, as Bhabha notes, “There is the more ambivalent, third choice: camouflage, mimicry, black skins/white masks.”\(^{552}\) Paul seems to have chosen the “more ambivalent, third way” by at times mimicking Augustus’ legislation and at other times resisting it like many other Romans throughout the empire. This is why some, such as Daniel

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\(^{547}\) Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 161.

\(^{548}\) Bhabha, “Culture’s In Between,” 4.

\(^{549}\) Bhabha, “Culture’s In Between,” 4.

\(^{550}\) Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 172.

\(^{551}\) Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 2008) 120-84.

\(^{552}\) Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 172.
Boyarin, have suggested that Paul himself is a “hybrid,” who should be understood not as “Jew” or “Greek” but as “Jewgreek” or “Greekjew.”

Under Bhabha’s conception of “hybridity” it is always the small group which represents the true feelings of society. The small group is the “part” which is “already the whole.” As Bhabha notes, “The ‘part’ (which must be the colonialist foreign body) must be representative of the ‘whole’ (conquered country), but the right of representation is based on its radical difference.” In this light Paul and the Corinthian ekklēśia are a microcosm of what is occurring throughout the Roman empire. By this I mean that when Paul maintains that the purpose of marriage is to protect against πορνεία instead of producing children, he is mimicking something many other Roman men said, since numerous Roman men were looking for ways around Augustus’ legislation. Additionally, when Paul upholds the right of widows not to remarry, he simply reiterates what many Romans were already saying. Thus, much of what Paul has to say in 1 Corinthians 7 is informed by the dominant culture of which the Corinthian ekklēśia is a part. What is going on, then, in 1 Corinthians 7 is not a Paul-versus-the Augustan legislation, but a hybridization, in which Paul’s directives mimic and reinscribe Augustus’ legislation. In fact, the only way Paul can even come close to subverting Augustus’ moral reforms is by making use of them.

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553 Boyarin, 79. Regarding this, Boyarin writes, “It is precisely this ability... to discover and animate the ways in which Hellenistic and (Jewish) biblical ways of thinking could illuminate and enrich one another that constitutes [Paul’s] genius... One could with justice say that in Paul, as in Christ, ‘There is no Jew or Greek’... [T]his mapping... has become for him the very organic mode of his thinking. Jewgreek is Greekjew.” For more on Paul as a “hybrid,” see, Jervis, “Reading Romans 7 in Conversation with Postcolonial Theory,” 95-109.
554 Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 158.
555 Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 158. Italics original.
556 Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 158.
4 Conclusion

In chapter one I presented a quote from Justin Meggitt, who maintains that Paul’s advice throughout 1 Corinthians 7 “[though] politically innocuous to us, was in conflict with Augustus’ marriage legislation which encouraged fecundity and matrimony within the Empire.” What I have shown here is that to a certain extent, Meggitt is right. As I have argued, Paul, like the Cynics before him, “defaced the currency” by discussing marriage, widowhood, and singleness without ever mentioning procreation. Additionally, Paul’s advice to widows regarding “remarriage” reveals a person who was willing to uphold the ancient concept of the univira over and against Augustus’ legislation, which required widows under fifty to remarry and produce children for the state. However, what I have also demonstrated is that Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 is not a simple binary “us-versus-them” scenario, which is often maintained by those engaged in empire-critical studies, but it is, instead, an experiment in “malleable hybridity.”

Paul’s advice not only fits into his cultural context (e.g., his affinities with Cynic thought on marriage and procreation), but it also stands with many other voices in the Roman empire. By upholding the ideal of the univira and never once suggesting procreation as an end result of marriage, Paul joins in the chorus of protestations siding with the people of Rome by going against the legal reforms of Augustus, but also by mimicking Augustus’ reinforcement of gender

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558 Here I again echo the remarks of A. K. M. Adam, who writes, “The simplest way to construct identity involves drawing an absolute and simple distinction (what structuralists call a ‘binary opposition’): male/female, animate/inanimate, white/black, truth/falsehood, original/copy, center/margin, objectivity/subjectivity. Deconstructive thinkers note that these pairs always tend to favor one of the members: the first member tends to be defined as normal or normative, and the second member as not-the-first, or less-than-the-first.” See, Adam, Loc. 445ff.
hierarchy and eschatological expectations. This would mean, then, that when Paul addresses widows he is being his “most Roman” by saying what the majority of Romans wanted to hear—widows do not have to remarry. More to the point, when Paul says nothing about the purpose of marriage leading to procreation, his words may have been welcomed by many throughout the Roman empire, who thought the same exact thing. However, as we have seen throughout this study, this does not stop Paul from using the gender stereotypes of the Roman world to control women within the Corinthian ekklēsia.

At the beginning of this study I mentioned a brief quote from the anthropologist Clifford Geertz. Regarding his own discipline, Geertz once wrote, “Anthropology...is a science whose progress is marked less by a perfection of consensus than by a refinement of debate. What gets better is the precision with which we vex each other.” Part of my redefinition of Paul—or redescription—has been to demonstrate the need to read Paul in light of his Greco-Roman context and to take seriously the Roman nature of Corinth. When Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 are compared with Augustus’ legislation, we do not find a Paul who is creating a “unique Christian theology of marriage,” as some interpreters would have it. In fact, this comparative exercise has shown that little in Paul is sui generis, considering that he borrows and mimics the

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560 Cf. Treggiari, Roman Marriage, 499, who notes that many male widowers in the Roman empire did not want to remarry.

561 Geertz, 29.

562 This point has been made by the Latinist Spaeth, 61-82. Additionally, one should see, Martin, The Corinthian Body, xiii-xv; and, Krause, “Paul and Women: Telling Women to Shut up is More Complicated Than You Might Think,” 161. Krause argues that newer approaches to Paul need to spend more time investigating the role and place of women in the Greco-Roman world than whether or not Paul was “pro” or “anti” woman.

563 See, for example, Héring, The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians, 48; and, May, “The Body for the Lord,” 165.
Instead what we have found throughout this work is a Paul who is engaged in the cultural discussions of his day regarding marriage, singleness, and the value of children, or what some would refer to as the process of “mythmaking.”

What my *redescription* of Paul has shown is that he did not value marriage nor did he value children. This does not mean, as later church fathers would have it, that Paul was a radical ascetic as that word is typically understood. Nor does it mean that Paul was a champion of egalitarian rights, as many of us would have hoped for. Instead, Paul was someone engaged in a process of “malleable hybridity” in which he took elements from the dominant culture (i.e. Rome) and reinscribed them for his own purposes. This includes borrowing Rome’s myth of the Golden Age, utilizing its understanding of gender hierarchies when necessary, but also standing with the Roman people against the emperor and his legislation when it came to the revered status of the *univira*. Thus, the comparisons offered here demonstrate that “[w]hat has been neglected in studies of Paul and the Roman imperial order is the fact that one could be critical of aspects of Roman rule without necessarily being anti-Roman.” Perhaps, one could even say that this is what it means to be truly Roman.

Ironically, the most important thing that Paul and Augustus have in common is failure. Both failed in their various social experiments. In the case of Augustus his legislation never accomplished what he wanted it to accomplish. The poets protested the legislation in their literature, husbands and wives still tolerated each others’ infidelities, and our historical sources

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564 As Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 36 notes, “the unique” is a concept which needs to be disposed of.
565 For more on this, see, Mack, “Rereading the Christ Myth,” 35-74.
567 For a thorough investigation of how 1 Corinthians 7 was read during the patristic period, see, Clark, 259-374.
568 Longenecker, 270 n. 28.
indicate that the *lex Iulia* was applied irregularly. For example, Hallett relates, “During the Julio-Claudian period, even after the punishment of Augustus’ daughter and granddaughter [for breaking his laws], several women belonging to the publicly conspicuous imperial household itself are reported to have engaged in extramarital affairs which their husbands overlooked.”

Additionally, “It was the common opinion of the emperors Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Hadrian, the Antonini and the Severi that the Augustan laws together with their system of rewards and penalties needed further supplementation.” Eventually, everything Augustus sought to accomplish with his laws would be supplanted by the rise of Christianity to the throne of Rome. As Çsillag notes, the rise of Constantine “called into doubt the value of the Augustan principles.” However, we should also keep in mind that Paul’s social experiment had a similar fate.

Paul’s lack of interest in children and marriage was replaced rather quickly by later interpreters of Paul, who placed a high value on procreation, even going so far as to suggest that “childbirth saves a woman” (1 Tim 2:15). Other interpreters of Paul valued children to such an extent that they directly addressed them within the *ekklēsia* (Eph 6:1–4), which differs from Paul’s reluctant dismissal of them in 1 Cor 7:14 where children exist as a mere afterthought. Moreover, it was interpreters of Paul, later deemed heretical, who understood Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7 the best. It is in the second and third century CE texts known collectively as the *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* that Paul’s advice in 1 Corinthians 7 is seen clashing and

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569 For more on this, see, Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society*, 239. Additional criticism of Augustus’ legislation can be found in “Appendix 3” pp. 511-3 in Treggiari, *Roman Marriage*.
570 Hallett, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society*, 239.
agreeing with Roman society at large in perfect hybrid fashion. Unfortunately, this ambiguous, hybrid voice of Paul’s has been lost either through his later interpreters or through the church itself. Today there is rarely a “third choice” for understanding Paul’s directives in 1 Corinthians 7. Instead, we are left only with binary options which present us with a Paul who is either “pro-” marriage or “anti-” marriage, a Paul who is “pro-” woman or “anti-” woman, or a Paul who is “pro-” Rome or “anti-” Rome. The problem with this is that the real Paul lies somewhere in between these binary constructions.

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