

## Juvenal 6

By Chiara Sulprizio & Sarah Blake

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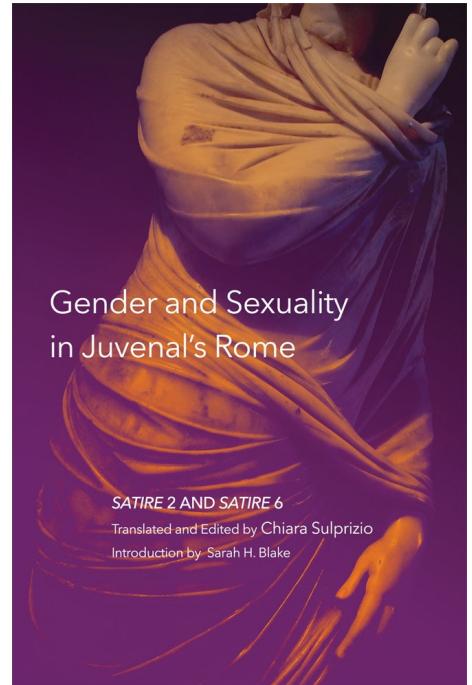
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### Introduction

Juvenal's 6<sup>th</sup> Satire is famous for its misogyny. In this module, we highlight key passages, suggest useful companion texts to pair with the Satire, and offer a set of discussion questions focusing on misogyny in the Imperial Roman context. A sample lecture and PowerPoint is included.

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Juvenal's 6th Satire is an advanced and unpleasant text. It's useful to show the elements and range of Roman misogynistic thinking (women's bodies, behaviors, sexuality). There's a shock value in reading some of J's most obscene passages, e.g., the description of Messalina.



Satire 6 is also about male effeminacy and men's failure to control women, and so speaks to regimes of masculinity in Roman thinking (see also Satire 2).

You could also teach Juv. 6 in a larger module on Satire as a Roman literary form, or in an advanced Latin class, and read with Horace, Persius, Lucilius.

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## **Primary Sources:**

“Juvenal: Satire 6” in Chiara Sulprizio, Sarah Blake, *Gender and sexuality in Juvenal’s Rome: Satire 2 and Satire 6*. Oklahoma series in classical culture, volume 59. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2020.

(assign either all of Satire 6 = pp. 65-95; or lines 1-62, 78-135, 286-345, 435-456, 474-507, 627-661) (1-3)

Suggested companion texts:

Medical texts on female bodies and liquids

Semonides, **fr. 7**, on a catalogue of types of women

Pliny, **NH 10.172**, on Messalina’s sexual competition with a sex worker

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## **Secondary Sources:**

Blake, “Introduction” in Sulprizio 2020 (pp. 13-16, 20-24, 27-35) (1-3)

Richlin, Amy. “Invective Against Women in Roman Satire.” *Arethusa*, vol. 17, no. 1, 1984, pp. 67-80, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26308604> (2-3)

Gold, Barbara K. “‘The House I Live In Is Not My Own’: Women’s Bodies in Juvenal’ Satires.” *Arethusa*, vol. 31, no. 3, 1998, pp.

369-86, <https://doi.org/10.1353/are.1998.0013>. (2-3)

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## **Multimedia Resources:**

Onion, Rebecca. “**It Is a Miracle That Employers Don’t Murder More Secretaries** .” *Slate*, 17 Aug. 2018.

(1-3)<https://slate.com/human-interest/2018/08/the-1945-book-what-men-dont-like-about-women-excerpted-in-esquire-makes-for-a-jaw-dropping-read-in-2018.html>.  
(1-3)

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## **Activities:**

Lecture notes (Sulprizio) (1-3)

**Juvenal 6 Satire lecture notes with analysis of Gold 1998**

## **Discussion/Reading Questions**

- What are Juvenal’s complaints about women? What stereotypes/images does he invoke?

- What about men? About marriage?
- How is it that Roman women and men came to be like this, according to Juvenal?
- What cultural work does this kind of poetry (satire) do? How do you think a Roman reader/listener would respond to this poem?
- What historical contexts inform the production of this poem? Or, more simply, why do you think Juvenal wrote this at the moment he did?
- Is there such a thing as a good woman in Juvenal? Is his misogyny distinctive to his world or universal?
- Can women produce satire? Why or why not?
- What similarities, if any, do you see between Juvenal's "advice" to Postumus to avoid marriage, and contemporary ideas about women, men, and relationships?

### Slideshow

Juvenal, Satire 6 (aka "Women, you can't live with 'em...") Powerpoint

Presentation <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1z-1sGKpqgByMOEPLQlUIInPt2tzQ1q23M/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=107459944983329366494&rtpof=true&sd=true>  
(1-3) (Sulprizio)

