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<th>AUTHORITY</th>
<th>POINTS TO CONSIDER/INCORPORATE</th>
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| Luuk de Ligt, *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* | 1. Disappearance of parents as commemorators of men over 28 does not indicate passing away of older generation as LPV argue: weak aspect of this is revealed through commemorations for women: shift away from parents to husbands as commemorators has already taken place by 20.  
2. Agreement (with revised LPV view) that AAFM for men was around 23.  
3. Disagreement over female AAFM: Augustan legislation would point to 20. This needs answering. |
| Walter Scheidel | 1. LPV view is weakly based on two separate hypotheses, one determining AAFM for males, the other for females.  
2. Shift from surviving fathers of deceased married males as commemorators “around the age of 30” could not be explained by a thick clustering of deaths in short time span.  
“Epigraphic evidence has made a vital contribution to this development: statistical analysis of **tens of thousands of tombstone inscriptions** has generated new insights into mortality regimes, marriage practices, and family structures in various parts of the ancient Mediterranean.” – Presumably only a small proportion of these inscriptions are useful in relation to the study of AAFM. They would need to state age at marriage or LOM + AAD. It might be interesting to hear something of the story of how the relevant data were discovered. Or was it just a matter of tedious, painstaking work at obvious sites? Is the Latin straightforward? Are there typical abbreviations that need to be decoded, as in modern small ads in the newspapers? |
| Beert Verstraete | 1. Accepts argument (1) from Scheidel: there should be only one hypothesis for both genders explaining shift in commemorator away from parent. Wives, as well as husbands, would have become commemorators after there were surviving offspring. Calculating back from 30, this takes AAFM for men to mid-twenties.  
2. LPV are now in accordance with Saller and Shaw in agreeing a ten-year age difference between spouses. |
| Walter McCall, *Bryn Mawr Review* | Appendices grew out of thesis by Bill’s postgrad student Thomas Permatteo. What has become of him? I find myself wondering if there is a bit of “human interest” to add here. McCall’s comment suggests this was more than just a young guy doing donkey work under Bill’s direction. If he came up with anything brilliant, it would be interesting to tell the story of how he did so. |
| James Jope, *Italian Quarterly* | “The only unfortunate aspect is that the authors’ expressed aim to make it accessible for general readers is neglected. The reader must cope with untranslated and often unexplained legal terminology…” Quite! Examples of problems for the layman are given from p.42 & p.85.  
“...it is hardly convincing to present the tyrannical political manipulations of emperors as a typical exercise of patria potestas. Surely any monarchs, especially when their regime is lacking in an
established principle of succession, would readily find whatever legal pretexts they required.” He’s got a point, hasn’t he? Factual literary evidence from ordinary families is hardly to be expected. What about inferences from drama etc?

“Incidentally, it is surprising that LPV do not object to the inclusion of freedmen’s inscriptions in the sample on which this argumentation is based. A freedman had no paterfamilias. Although his independence was restricted by certain obligations to his former master, he represented the start of a new citizen lineage. His natural father, who, if not dead, might still be enslaved, would not be a likely commemorator.” Any comment from LPV? Or just PV?

“LPV’s use of legal and literary sources to fill out a picture not attested by epigraphy alone does not need any apology. It is rather one of this book’s major strengths. Indeed it should have been taken further. Only the early Republican chapter, with its extensive consultation of Plautus and Livy, really exploits the literary sources satisfactorily. Pliny could be mined more deeply. For example, Letter I, 14, even while attesting the normalcy of arranged marriages, shows an intriguing tinge of hesitancy at placing financial considerations alongside of the character and good looks of the proposed groom. An informed and well reasoned interpretation (a scholarly ‘impression’) of an incident in Petronius which describes the mock wedding and deflowering of a young girl could tell us more about Roman attitudes on this prickly issue. The recurrence in late ancient novels of those far-fetched comedy plots designed to reconcile romantic love with extended-family requirements could be studied to determine to what extent they reflect similar social conditions. Probably also the satiric and the elegiac poets could provide relevant material.” In response to the above, especially the parts with my added emphasis, is there anything LPV now wish to add, or could add without too much trouble?

From letter to Bill:
Incidentally, I happen this week to be reading Lucian’s Dialogues of the Courtesans, a second-century A.D. source describing the doings of a middleclass segment of society, and I was struck by the persisting power of the paterfamilias among them even so late. Young men who patronize the prostitutes are consistently described as having no more financial resources than an allowance from the father, and expecting their fortune only when he dies.

This kind of paper confirms my prejudice about historians eclipsing literary classicists. While it is true that the historians have scored imaginative achievements in recent decades while the literary scholars have wallowed in the mire of silly “theory”, here we confront the ultimate result: Greco-Roman civilization is treated like prehistory rather than history…and nobody other than the historians any longer has any compelling reason to study it.
<table>
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<td>“It’s interesting to note that under today’s peculiar definition of pedophilia – i.e. someone having sex with someone under 18 this makes pedophiles of most Romans [TOC: Well, it could make sex offenders of them as the A.O.C. in many U.S. states is 18, and increasingly, in hostile usage, those who have sex even with older minors are being dubbed paedophiles. Purists would object that strictly speaking paedophiles are those interested in prepubescents. However, it may be that W.A.P.’s trenchant remark – albeit qualified as I have done – would not be out of place in a popular version of the book?]”</td>
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<td>“Now I do realize that changes, from generation to generation even, in the age of marriage could occur, but this is especially true for the poor who were dependent on cycles of economic decline and prosperity to cohabit continuously for any length of time or to marry. But with significant fewer pregnancies because of breastfeeding and also probably higher death rates due to poverty, hunger, malnutrition, poor clothing, poor housing, poor sanitation, one needs to consider Galen and Soranus as well as hosts of other material.”[TOC: meaning?]</td>
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<td>“I also challenge these epigraphers to name the most prominent Romans known not only from tombstones and not from manuscript or papyri, they should remember the ______ so that even the women of this class could become wonderful heroines they should also try to figure out the average age of death of upper class of males in general of fathers in particular and grandfathers, by my calculations, is what Saller and Shaw’s statistics reveal. “That is the fathers of husbands who dedicated, died at 28 must have been a generation older and if their first surviving child was 23 if they married at 18 to a wife of 14 and it took 5 years to produce the first child, you can figure that the average child must have been spaced out so that you reach a total final surviving rate of hearty grandfathers and husbands somewhere between 55 and 62. You do the math.” [TOC: This is clearly important but also clearly unclear! Actually, if a guy marries at 18 and it takes his wife five years to have a child, that will take him to 23. If there is one child every four years, and there are three of them, he would be 35 at the birth of the last. If the last child is 28 when the father dies, the father will be 63. But 28 is the average age of offspring at father’s death, so more likely (with three children in family) the father will be 59 at death. This fits with Bill’s figures, but his figures would be wrong if average family size is 10, say, or the age spacing is different.]”</td>
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| Using only the 26 specific marriage ages for females that we collected in our Age of Marriage, Schay decisively disproved Saller, Shaw and Scheidel. We also amassed almost 200 age-specific marriages for males (about 5 times more than Hopkins had), which would much more completely refute their theory of average age of marriage at 28. More specific ages at first marriage came from the senatorial class which, it is true, never constituted more than 1 in 1,000 of the general population. Scheidel has made several weak efforts to limit our data to that highest
class, appearing twice on the *Princeton Stanford Classical Working Papers* website and once in an article in *Classical Studies*. He didn’t address the fact that the *alimenta* let the girls out at 14 presumably only to be married, which takes care of the lowest class. The epigraphic evidence from the upper middle class – the commemorators, if rightly interpreted, actually confirms the average age of marriage at 14 to 15 for females and 18 to 19 for males, because fathers of husbands died on average when the husbands reached 28. Wives had living issue, on average, when they reached 15.

**Géza Schay**

At the University of Massachusetts in Boston, Géza Schay, a distinguished statistician with a Ph.D. from Princeton, wrote in the second edition of his *Introduction to Probability with Statistical Applications* (2007):

In cases where the sample is small, the distribution is unknown and the evidence seems to point very strongly against the null hypothesis, we may use Chebyshev’s inequality to estimate the P-value, as in the next example. *Example 7.2.7 (Age of First Marriage in Ancient Rome).* Lelis, Percy and Verstraete studied the ages of Roman historical figures at the time of their first marriage. They did this to refute earlier improbably high age estimates that were based on funerary inscriptions. Others had found that for women, the epitaphs were written by their fathers up to an average age of 19 and after that by their husbands, and jumped to the conclusion that women first married at an average age of 19. (A similar estimate of 26 [TOC: Actually 28 not 26] was obtained for men.)

From the historical record, the ages at first marriage of 26 women were 11, 12, 12, 12, 12, 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 14, 15, 15, 15, 15, 15, 16, 16, 16, 17, 17. [TOC: Now I see why the data are so significant in terms of the paedophilia argument, or at least the hebephilia one: age is not tightly clustered around 14 but goes considerably lower, at a time when the average age of puberty for girls might easily have been 14 or 15.]

The mean of these numbers is 14.0 and the standard deviation is 1.57.

A random sample of size 26, is just barely large enough to assume that the average is normally distributed with standard deviation $1.57/\sqrt{26}$ to 0.31; nevertheless, we first assume this, but then obtain another estimate without this assumption as well.

This sample, however, is a sample of convenience. We may assume, though, that it is close to a random sample, at least from the population of upper-class women. We also assume that marriage customs remained steady during the centuries covered. (For this reason, we omitted three women for whom records were available from the Christian era.)

We take the null hypothesis to be that the average is 19, and the alternative hypothesis to be that it is less. With the above assumptions, we can compute the P-value, that is, the probability
that the mean in the sample turns out to be 14 or less if the population mean is 19, as

\[ P(\bar{X} \leq 14) = P\left( \frac{\bar{X} - 19}{0.31} \leq \frac{14 - 19}{0.31} \right) = \phi(-16) \approx 0. \]

Thus, the null hypothesis must be rejected with practical certainty, unless the assumptions can be shown to be invalid.

The ridiculously low number we obtained depends heavily on the validity of the normal approximation, which is questionable. We can avoid it and compute an estimate for the P-value by using Chebyshev’s inequality (see Theorem 5.2.6) instead, which is valid for any distribution. Using the latter, we have

\[ P\left( \left| \bar{X} - \mu \right| \leq \varepsilon \right) = P\left( \left| \bar{X} - 19 \right| \leq 5 \right) \leq \frac{\sigma^2}{n \varepsilon^2} = \frac{1.57^2}{26 \cdot 5^2} = 3.8 \times 10^{-3}. \]

This estimate, though very crude (in the sense that the true P-value is probably much lower), is much more reliable than the one above, and it is still sufficiently small to conclude that the null hypothesis, of an average age 19 at first marriage, is untenable.

Using only the 26 specific marriage ages for females that we collected in our Age of Marriage, Schay decisively disproved Saller, Shaw and Scheidel. [TOC: Schay’s formulae are hardly the stuff of a popular book for a non-technical readership. On the other hand, his work cries out: “This stuff is serious.” I wonder whether Schay’s contribution can be included as an appendix?]

Arnold Lelis  Why no input from Lelis? Shouldn’t there be?