

Women in Roman Law and Society

Jane F. Gardner



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The legal situation of the women of ancient Rome was extremely complex, and - since there was no sharp distinction between free woman, freedwoman and slave - the definition of their legal position is often heard. Basing her lively analysis on detailed study of literary and epigraphic material, Jane F. Gardner explores the provisions of the Roman laws as they related to women.

Dr Gardner describes the ways in which the laws affected women throughout their lives - in families, as daughters, wives and parents; as heiresses and testators; as owners and controllers of property; and as workers. She looks with particular attention at the ways in which the strict letter of the law came to be modified, softened, circumvented, and even changed, pointing out that the laws themselves tell us as much about the economic situation of women and the range of opportunities available to them outside the home.



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