

Perry, M. (2015) “The *Paterfamilias* and the Family Council in Roman Public Law”, in K. Tuori and L. Nissin (eds) *Public and Private in the Roman House and Society*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series* 102, 77-86.

This chapter explores the recognized role of the *paterfamilias* and the family council in regulating public—including criminal—transgressions. I argue that the primary significance of allowing “private” jurisdiction over certain criminal offenses is that it gave the family an opportunity to reassert its control over its members. Individuals who engaged in illicit activities not only damaged the public wellbeing, but also the family’s honor—and, I assert, this was especially true in cases involving female family members. By allowing crimes to be resolved privately rather than in the public courts, Roman lawmakers were granting families agency to repair the damage done to their reputations by the misconduct of one of their members.