

De Marre, M. (2020) 'Bad Girls'? Collective Violence by Women and the Case of the Circumcellions in Roman North Africa', in R. Evans and M. De Marre (eds), *Piracy, Pillage and Plunder in Antiquity: Appropriation and the Ancient World*, London: Routledge, 145-69.

In 2006 Brent D. Shaw published an article called 'Bad Boys. Circumcellions and Fictive Violence' in which he explored the origins of the bad reputation of a group accused of sectarian acts of violence in Roman Africa during the fourth and fifth centuries. The article, and Shaw's later publications, show quite clearly how we can perpetuate manipulated images of antiquity when we are too dependent on the sources which transmit them. Shaw's article, however, dealt with men. What is explored in this chapter is, firstly, how ancient sources generally represent violence perpetrated by women, particularly when acting as a group (or part of a group), within the context of the Roman world up to end of the 5th century CE. In the second instance, in reviewing these constructions of female violence in ancient texts and visual media during the earlier part of this period, the chapter investigates whether the patterns established in these processes are at all useful in assessing the accounts of the 'bad girls', the alleged female members of the Circumcellions in our sources.