

## CAESAR'S WOMEN

### Mother Aurelia Cotta (c. 120-54 BC)

Tacitus (*Dialogus de oratoribus* section xxviii) and Plutarch (*Caesar's Life*) both portray her as respectable, renowned for brains and beauty. She and her brother, Gaius Cotta, both defended Caesar after he refused to divorce his wife, Cornelia Cinna. She gave evidence at the Bona Dea trial.<sup>1</sup>

### Aunt Julia (c. 130-69 BC)

Married Gaius Marius. Her devotion to him and to their son contributed to her reputation, which allowed her to keep her status even during Sulla's persecutions of Marius and his allies. Caesar gave a [funeral oration](#) for her.

### Sisters

#### **Julia Major** (c. 102-68)

Married to Lucius Pinarius and to Quintus Pedius, one son from each union. Her grandsons (sons?) Lucius Pinarius and Quintus Pedius were named in Julius Caesar's will along with Octavian. Either she or her sister testified, along with their mother, at the Bona Dea trial.

#### **Julia Minor** (101-51 BC)

Married Marcus Atius Balbus. Her second daughter, Atia Balba Caesonia, was the mother of Octavia Minor and Octavian, who delivered her funeral oration at ten years of age.

### Daughter Julia (c. 76-54 BC)

Caesar broke off her first engagement so that she could marry Pompey. Despite the c. 30-year difference in their ages, the union was a happy one. In 55 BC she suffered a miscarriage after seeing blood on Pompey's toga (not his own); she died in childbirth the following year. Due to the will of the people (and despite the attempted interference by the enemies of her father and husband), her ashes were placed in the Campus Martius. Caesar held funeral games - including gladiatorial combat - in her honor in 46 BC (Dio Cassius, xliii. 22).

### Wives

#### **Cornelia Minor** (c. 97- c. 69 BC)

Daughter of Lucius Cornelius Cinna, she wed Caesar in her teens. He refused to divorce her at Sulla's command and lost his priesthood, her dowry, and his inheritance; he fled Rome in disguise but was eventually allowed to return due to petitions by his family and others. Cornelia gave birth to the only child Caesar claimed as his own: Julia. When she died, Caesar gave a funeral oration in her honor.

#### **Pompeia** (fl. 1<sup>st</sup> century BC)

Her parents were Quintus Pompeius Rufus and Cornelia, the daughter of the Roman dictator Sulla. She married Caesar in 67 BC but became involved in the Bona Dea scandal in 62 BC (Caesar had become Pontifex Maximus in 63 BC). Although Caesar admitted that she could have been innocent, he divorced her, saying that Caesar's wife must be above suspicion.

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<sup>1</sup> Aurelia, Caesaris mater, testis in iudicio audita est. Ea pro testimonio dixit suo iussu eum esse dimissum; idem dixit Iulia, soror Caesaris. Et tamen post haec absolutus est. [Scholia Bobiensia](#).

### **Calpurnia** (born c. 76 BC)

Daughter of Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, she wed Caesar in 59 BC. Suetonius (*Caesar's Life*, 81.1 ff.) recounts that she had a premonition about his assassination; on her husband's death she delivered his papers to Mark Antony.

### Lovers and others

#### **Servilia** (c. 102- sometime after 42 BC)

She was Caesar's lover for c. 20 years, and rumors abounded about their relationship. He brought her a massively expensive black pearl after the Gallic Wars. It was whispered at one time or another that her son Brutus and her daughter [Junia Tertia](#) were Caesar's children. Another story said she offered her daughter Junia Tertia (who was not Caesar's daughter in this story) to Caesar as a lover when his affections for Servilia began to wane.<sup>2</sup> During Senate debates during the Conspiracy of Catiline, a note was brought to Caesar; Cato (her half-brother) demanded that the note be read aloud to confirm his suspicion that Caesar was a member of the conspiracy - it was a love letter from Servilia.

During the Civil Wars, Servilia was put into a difficult position as both Brutus and Cato supported Pompey (despite the fact that Pompey had a hand in the death of Brutus' father). Brutus cemented his allegiance to Cato by divorcing his wife to marry Cato's daughter [Porcia](#). Servilia was reported to be wary of the match lest Porcia exert too much influence over her son. After Caesar's assassination, the conspirators met at Servilia's house; Porcia and Junia Tertia were also in attendance at this meeting. Porcia was rumored to have killed herself after the death of her husband by swallowing hot coals. Servilia and Junia Tertia both escaped the subsequent purges and died natural deaths.

#### **Eunoë** (wife of Bogudes, king of Mauretania)

Perhaps Caesar's lover for a few months in 46 BC.

#### **Arsinoë IV** of Egypt

Taken as a captive to Rome by Caesar in 47 BC; her dignified bearing won the respect of the Roman crowds. She was held at the Temple of Artemis in Ephesus until executed under the orders of Mark Antony on Cleopatra's behalf in 41 BC.

#### **Cleopatra** (69-30 BC)

Caesar helped her to the throne of Egypt amidst family intrigue in 47 BC. They were lovers and she claimed her son Caesarion was Caesar's, though he did not acknowledge the boy. She was in Rome at his assassination but did not have success trying to have her son declared Caesar's heir.

In case you aren't confused enough by now: [Julia \(women of the Julii Caesares\)](#)

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<sup>2</sup> Cicero once remarked of a real estate transaction: "It's a better bargain than you think, for there is a third (tertia) off."