

## Squeezing Two Lemons: Juvenal 7.41 and 7.43

Juvenal describes the hall a rich man provides for a poet's reading (39-44):<sup>1</sup>

tu si dulcedine fama  
succensus recites, maculosas commodat aedes.      40  
haec longe ferrata domus seruire iubetur  
in qua sollicitas imitatur ianua portas.  
scit dare libertos extrema in parte sedentis  
ordinis et magnas comitum disponere uoces;  
42 porcas *Jessen* : portas *codd.*

If you give a recitation, fired by the sweetness of fame, he lends you a squalid house. This distant, barricaded building with doors that make the sound of squealing sows he'll require to be put at your disposal. He knows how to position his freedmen on the seats at the ends of rows and how to distribute his retinue with their loud voices.

I offer exegetical notes on two details:

1. The pigs introduced into 41 by *Jessen*'s conjecture seem obviously better than the manuscripts' gates, but I used to wonder about the gender. Are they *porcas*, not *porcos*, because that is the easier error, only one letter different from *portas*, and thus marginally more likely, or are the squeals of sows more annoying and rusty-hinge-like than those of boars? Five or six years ago, I asked Mr. Cole Kaufmann, then-president of the FFA<sup>2</sup> chapter at Buffalo Gap High School in Swoope, Virginia, and he assured me that sows have higher-pitched voices than boars and are more annoying when they squeal, at least to human ears. Any temptation to suggest *porcos* as an alternative conjecture, meaning either boars or pigs of both genders, should therefore be resisted.

2. On 43, Courtney notes that "The freedmen . . . sit at the end of the benches . . . so that the shouts of applause will not seem to come from a hired clique". That they spread out is clear from *disponere* (44), but none of the parallels seem to specify the ends of the benches. I suggest that the reason for that is to make it difficult for anyone else to leave early: they would have to climb over the claqueurs to get to the aisle. Also, claqueurs will likely want to leave immediately themselves once they've earned their pay.

<sup>1</sup> Text, translation, and the pertinent bit of the *apparatus criticus* are quoted from Braund's Loeb.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly the Future Farmers of America, they decided to go by their initials, like KFC.