

D. A Written Constitution for Rome

1. The Importance of Written Laws
 - a) Written laws are important because when the people know the laws, they can make sure to follow them (and thus avoid being criminals), but also because people who know the law can more easily *change* the laws, or even rebel against them if they are very unfair.
2. The Second Secession of the Plebeians (449 BC)
 - a) The plebeians wanted written laws, but the patricians did not like the idea of having another limit placed on their power.
 - b) In order to force the patricians to make the change, the plebeians *seceded* again.
3. The Laws of the Twelve Tables
 - a) The final set of laws produced are known as the “Laws of the Twelve Tables” because they were engraved on twelve bronze tablets.
 - b) The laws were placed on display in the center of the city.
 - c) Sadly, the tables were destroyed by the Gauls in a war with Rome c.390 BC.

E. Lex Canuleia (445 BC)

1. The constant desire of patricians to have power over the plebeians stemmed from the belief that patricians were superior (in every every important way) to plebeians.
2. Because they thought they were superior, patricians made it illegal for patricians to marry plebeians.
3. Gaius Canuleius, a tribune, pushed for this law to be changed.
4. The Lex Canuleia (“lex” means “law”), obviously named after him, made it legal for plebeians to marry patricians.

F. The Patrician Reaction: Censorship

1. The patricians were worried that plebeians would ruin the character of their noble families.
2. They created the office of censor to use the power of the government to make patricians stay true to their traditions.
 - a) The censors kept a census – a list of names of all patricians.
 - b) They monitored the behavior of patricians in public.
 - c) If patricians were deemed to behave in an immoral manner, they could have their names struck off the list of patricians.
 - d) If you weren’t on the list, you could not participate in the government.

G. The Licinian Laws (367 BC)

1. Patrician consuls could not make laws favoring the plebeians, or they would be accused of treason, so most positive changes came to Rome because of tribunes.
2. To help the plebeians get a fair share of the power of the government, a tribune named Gaius Licinius insisted that one consul should be a plebeian from now on.
3. When the patricians resisted, the plebeians re-elected Gaius Licinius as the tribune for ten years running. The patricians finally gave in.