

Pompeii provides us a unique opportunity to study the organization and scheduling of public spectacles outside of Rome. The *edicta munerum*, the painted announcements of coming games found on the walls of Pompeii, are the unique and critical source. These provide a wealth of data on *munera* including their patrons, the actual spectacle promised -whether gladiatorial, prisoner executions, athletics or *venationes*, and in some cases the dates of the games. These are collected in *CIL* IV as well as more recent and analytical studies (Sabbatini Tumolesi 1980). A number of recent authors have found these a rich source for discussions on a variety of topics including political sponsorship of games, (Franklin 2001, 93), *munera* in the context of leisure activities at Pompeii (Cooley and Cooley 2004, 44-71) and the organization and social structure of games (Jacobelli 2003, 39-47). The only comment on the dates in these recent works states that “spring (from March to June) was preferred for the weather” (Jacobelli 2003, 40). In fact, the 41 dated games, 25 advertising games at Pompeii and 16 at surrounding communities, display patterns worthy of further analysis as they reveal the priorities that drove the scheduling of games as well as the extent to which Pompeii avoided conflict with the major spectacles in Rome, suggesting the possibility of audience overlap.

The games advertised at Pompeii cover the entire calendar from early January until mid-December indicating that clement weather is not the driving force behind scheduling spectacle. Notably, there are gaps in the distribution of games. No records survive of any held at Pompeii in September or during early November. These gaps correspond with the largest and most important of the regularly occurring spectacle games at Rome: the *ludi Romani* held in the first half of September and the *ludi Plebei* in early November. The *ludi Romani* in honor of Jupiter might be responsible for the fact that no *munera* records survive from Pompeii anytime in September. Certainly by the end of the Republic the sixteen days of games might have drawn Romans from as far as the Bay of Naples. The largest single block of dates known from the *edicta munerum* at Pompeii occurs in late November, in the dates following the *ludi Plebei*. The notion that politics or activities at Rome influence games at Pompeii is reinforced by the repeated mentions of Nero and “Neronian games” in the *edicta* suggesting that games were as much to celebrate Nero as the local *editor*. I conclude that local factors beyond weather also influenced scheduling. The large number of spectacles in May occur just prior to the local elections and the change of offices; surely this reinforces the role of *munera* in the local political process as well as their links to Rome.