

CAVETE COVID-XIX!

SUMMER WORKSHOPS IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

As Martha Altieri reports on the next page, the 2020 Summer Workshop program was thrown into disarray by the COVID-19 pandemic. On short notice, Zoom virtual gatherings replaced the usual format. Martha and her cohort, Ginny Blasi, recruited four experienced CLC teachers to assist them in the presentations, and they also asked them to stand in for our usual scholarship winners in sharing their impressions of the program:

Stephanie Spaulding has taught the Cambridge Latin Course at Hamden Hall Country Day School in Hamden, CT for 17 years. She earned a B.A. in Latin and Greek from the University of Vermont and an M.A. in Classics from Yale University. In addition to teaching, Stephanie is a writer and podcaster.

Three Big Take-Aways from the Summer Workshops



This summer, the Latin Teacher Workshops went where they have never gone before...online! I want to send a big thank-you out to everyone who participated and shared so many great ideas! In case you missed the workshops, the following reflection includes three big ideas that I will carry with me into this school year.

Big Idea #1: The Story is Everything

I love the fact that my students are getting everything they need--culture, history, grammar, vocabulary, etc. -from reading the *CLC* stories. If you were to track a minute-by-minute analysis of how I spend class time, reading the stories would get the biggest slice of the pie every week. "Reading" can mean a variety of approaches to arrive at comprehension of the stories. Try reading the Latin aloud, listening to a recording, watching a video dramatization, asking/answering comprehension questions, small-group discussions, or retelling through acting, telling, or drawing. The more variety, the better! For ideas about how to approach the reading method, visit the webinar library at <https://cambridgelatin.org/training> and check out the webinar, "Aims of the Reading Method."

Big Idea #2: It's in that Order for a Reason!

The organization of each stage provides your roadmap. First, cover the title page and discuss clues from the artifact picture and title. Then move on to the model sentences. Here, we should slow down to pore over the pictures in detail and ask exhaustive questions about the content of the Latin, providing a few verbal prompts in English to prime the pump for new grammar, but without doing any explicit grammar instruction. Then, we dive deep into the stories where the learners will start to understand new concepts before meeting them formally. Deal with About the Language pages where they fall in the chapter. Let student observations lead the way, asking comprehension questions and providing plentiful practice. When we follow this order, our students gain confidence and competence before we ever put them in the "grammar hot seat." If you decide to do a vocabulary assessment, try putting it near the end of the chapter so students can absorb new words in story context first. *Caveat rhetor:* There is one important exception to my do-it-in-order approach: the cultural essay at the end of the chapter should be visited regularly during the course of covering a stage.

continued on pages 3-5

Director's Message

Martha Altieri



O tempora, o mores! 2020 is a year none of us will ever forget. There was no opportunity to visit with many of you at the ACL Institute and the NJCL National Convention this past summer. I hope we can do that again next summer! And for those of you who begin the new school year teaching, whether virtually or in the classroom, I commend and admire your dedication, flexibility and creativity to provide the best experience possible for your students.

In this virtual world all of us have had to adapt to, so did the summer workshops funded by Cambridge University Press. Participation was via Zoom, and its breakout room feature was well received since it enabled smaller groups to interact with one another. Three novice-level and three experienced-level workshops were offered with start times set in Eastern, Central, and Pacific zones. **Samantha Radovich**, CUP Latin Specialist, facilitated the six workshops and did an excellent job of moving the participants in and out of breakout rooms and also provided us with some 'calm' moments during the day. The workshops were well attended with approximately 125 novice and 110 experienced participants.

In addition to working with NACCP, I am a *CLC* Trainer for Cambridge University Press along with **Ginny Blasi**. I'd like to use this forum to provide information about the workshops for the majority of you who were not able to participate.

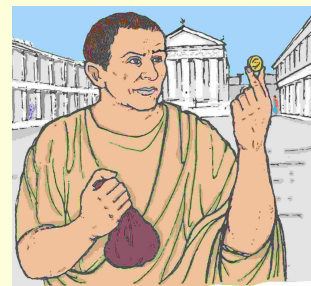
After preparing for in-person two-day workshops for both novice and experienced at three locations, we re-designed the content into a one-day online workshop for each level. One workshop was designed for new or nearly-new teachers who wanted to learn about the reading method and how it integrates culture and language. The other was designed for experienced teachers who wanted to explore the reading method more deeply and collaborate with one another to learn new tools.

In order to showcase different styles/approaches and individual perspectives on using the *CLC* in the classroom, the workshop team included **Stefanie Gigante**, **Nora Kelley**, **Stephanie Spaulding** and **Patrick Yaggy**. They shared their expertise in using the *CLC* and integrating technology virtually, e.g., Padlet, EdPuzzle, Pear Deck and Gimkit. They share their workshop experiences elsewhere in this newsletter.

NACCP's consistent focus is on how we can best support classroom teachers. We encourage you to join us on Social Media, view our website that has an archive of CUP webinars and links to other resources, and see samples of Teaching Materials available for purchase at a nominal fee. On our website you can also donate to our Scholarship Fund and/or apply for scholarships to assist with attendance at next summer's workshops if the pandemic allows us to gather together again.

Traditionally our Fall Newsletter features pictures from the summer workshops and profiles of our scholarship recipients. Kudos to our editor, **Stan Farrow**, for addressing current issues and providing background and perspectives in this newsletter.

PHINNEY-GLEASON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



**\$500 Scholarships for
Cambridge School Classics Project
Summer Workshops in 2021**

**Lodging, meals and/or travel
up to a total of \$500**

**Information and application forms at
<http://www.cambridgelatin.org>**

Big Idea #3: Don't forget to Read the Pictures

Prompt your students to look at the pictures (line drawings, illustrations and photos) for clues about Rome. Use questioning techniques to train them to think critically and interpret the images as evidence. This is one of the most powerful higher order thinking skills we can help our students cultivate. Every image in the *CLC* has been carefully curated to convey cultural and historical information and support reading comprehension. Even when you are crunched for time, don't forget to read the pictures!

Nora Kelley attended Cornell University, earning a B.A. in Classics, followed by an M.A. in Classics at University of California, Santa Barbara. She has taught all levels of Latin, including AP and IB, at Washington Lee High School in Arlington, VA. She is an enthusiastic believer in the benefits of spoken Latin and tries to attend as many spoken-Latin venues as her wallet will allow.



Per aspera ad...minora aspera could have been the motto for my challenging, but incredibly rewarding, experience this past summer as an “adjunct” for the *CLC* virtual workshops. Anyone who knows me knows well that I am absolutely terrified of presenting, and when I do present, it's a major feat if I spend only a week or two ruminating afterwards about what I said (or didn't say); still, for some reason, I have this compulsion to push myself to do things I find difficult (like majoring in Latin and Greek).

So, I was terrified, honored, excited, and terrified (in that order) when Ginny and Martha asked me, back in February, to be part of the *CLC* summer workshop team for the DC Metro area—although I have a sneaking suspicion they might have asked me because in my previous appearances at workshops (I've attended at least 10 summer workshops out of my 13 years as a teacher, I think) I was so enthusiastic about Cambridge and the reading method that I spoke up (i.e., interrupted) way too much; and what do you do with the kid who does that? You give her a job to keep her busy.

Then COVID-19 hit, and the summer workshop turned virtual, which was a whole 'nother kettle of *garum*; I had tried to teach virtually several times in the spring and had nearly had a stroke (all right, a tad hyperbolic). It was so awkward and distracting and I had no idea how to manage the technology; but I knew that teaching virtually was something I was going to have to master by the fall or risk having a real stroke (on camera and probably recorded). So, I fully embraced the idea of doing my best to make virtual presenting, and teaching, a success.

We presented two days of workshops (one for novice, one for experienced) three times from June 15th to July 22nd; our specific topics included: “how to teach a story,” “how to teach a stage,” “how to use a specific technology tool,” and a series of lunch “chats.” I found that I prepared either too much or too little and, although I went back to the drawing board after each session, it was a daunting task to get it right. It seems that gauging your lessons virtually vs. gauging them face-to-face are two different things. Also, it turns out, not surprisingly, that getting “students” to repeat back in Latin is much more awkward and difficult to do virtually than in a traditional classroom where reading the room is easier.

I think one of the things I enjoyed the most was the lunchtime opportunity for breakout chats. My “room” was slated to discuss transitioning to AP/IB, which we did, but we also spent a good deal of time sharing our experiences last spring and speculating on what next year might look like. I found it therapeutic and really enjoyed meeting such a wide variety of teachers, from throughout the country, who were all so supportive and focused on making the best of the situation. We Latin teachers are a great bunch!

At the end of the “season,” I think I did end up being a better presenter than when I began, and I am much more confident and excited now about teaching virtually in the fall. I've even made a Bitmoji for my Canvas Classrooms; but she doesn't hang out in the classroom, she hangs out in the forum, or Fishbourne Palace, or Roman Bath, or, of course, the Domus Caecilii.

Patrick Yaggy received an AB in Classics and MA in Classics from the University of Georgia. He taught in Gwinnett County, GA for 17 years and currently teaches at BASIS Tucson North in Tucson, AZ. This is his 20th year teaching and 15th year using the CLC. He is the current Chair of the ACL Mentoring Program.



The summer of 2020 brought a lot of professional challenges for current and prospective teachers, not the least of which was the alteration, and in some cases, cancellation of important professional development opportunities. For me, it meant a change in plans for one of my favorite summer events: assisting CLC trainers, Martha and Ginny, in the professional development “bubble” of an in-person CLC Workshop. The silver lining for me, however, was that the change to an online format meant that I was able to attend all three series of workshops!

The other huge benefit to this online format, besides being able to pet my dogs during sessions, was the increased number of participants. I think in all there were over two hundred teachers in attendance! For the novice workshops, it meant a lot of meaningful work drilling down on the core values of the reading method and introducing new teachers to the Caecilius family and the nuances of Salvius’ character; for the experienced workshops, the large group provided an abundance of veteran voices lending their collective expertise to various aspects of the curriculum. In both workshops, we focused on the fundamentals, the role of technology in instruction, the vast resources available from NACCP, and everything in between.

I was fortunate to lead sessions on teaching a story (*mercator* in Stage 2 for the novice workshop and *Quintus de se* in Stage 16 for the experienced workshop), on teaching a stage (Stage 3 and Stage 40), and on using the internet-based program Gimkit to formatively assess students. While each elicited great conversations and new ideas, I have to admit that I looked forward especially to talking about Stage 40. I’ve always enjoyed teaching that stage; I’ve always felt that the Latin is beautifully written and the storyline cleverly concluded. However, even after teaching that content for over a decade, I learned a number of nuances to the story in preparing to lead this session, and I could not wait to share them! For instance, did you know that Ursus Servianus, the tertiary character who is in charge of Salvius’ prosecution, was an actual historical figure who at one point was Hadrian’s heir but was passed over in 136 AD due to some falling out with the imperial family? His role in the fictional account of Salvius’ trial taking place in 87 AD would have fit perfectly in Servianus’ biography - brilliant! Also, many of us know that Salvius was indeed a Roman senator in the first century AD, but did you know that the fictional *damnatio memoriae* decreed in Stage 40’s *damnatio* (thus eradicating the memory of his 86 AD consulship), corresponds to an omission in the actual consular *Fasti* (March-April of 86 AD)? Finally, a closer look at the *Fasti* reveals that Acilius Glabrio, whom, as we are told in *damnatio*, Domitian honored with a priesthood the next year (so, 88 AD), was the first consul of record in 91 AD, while Julius Silanus, another tertiary CLC character from Unit 3, became consul in 92.

In a reading method course, in which students learn Latin through their engagement with a storyline, it is absolutely essential that the characters and their story arcs be compelling and read like a novel, and not feel like the means to a linguistic or syntactical end. Stage 40 is the best encapsulation of this effort. Quintus’ and Salvius’ narratives conclude in the same way they began, with nuance and intrigue. The fact that our workshop participants shared stories of students going so far as to write fan fiction is confirmation that Stage 40 and all those before it masterfully achieve the core principles of the series. For me, seeing that realization and appreciation in other teachers as we discuss Stage 40 is so rewarding.

This summer afforded me the unexpected and pleasant surprise of helping Martha and Ginny in all the NACCP workshops, and I enjoyed every minute of that collaboration and those connections with my colleagues across computer screens. However, I do hope that next year I can get back into that normal “bubble” of a face-to-face workshop for those same discussions on the reading method, Salvius’ rise and fall, and Quintus’ triumph. I hope to see you there too.

Stefanie Gigante received her Bachelor's in Classics and Sociology from College of the Holy Cross (MA) and has Master's degrees in Education from Montclair State University and The College of New Jersey. She currently teaches at Ridgewood High School in NJ, where she is completing her 17th year in the classroom (her 3rd year as a CLC teacher). In addition she serves as a Technology Innovation Specialist in her district, a position she has held for the past six years. Stefanie presents frequently at conferences regarding technology integration and language classroom best practices.



What happens when you bring together fifty Latin teachers on Zoom? One result is finding out that *quamquam* is one of the most treasured words in our beloved language (along with *oppidum*, *subito*, *remugire*, and *eheu!*). Another more personal result is watching the magic of fifty teachers dedicated to learning and sharing with each other in the middle of the summer. While many of the three million teachers in America were enjoying a well-earned break from work, Cambridge University Press sponsored six fully online workshops for both novice and experienced teachers which garnered attendance of approximately fifty teachers in each session. I had the privilege of working with CLC head trainers, the eminent Ginny Blasi and Martha Altieri, as a teacher presenter, sharing my experiences in a variety of ways.

As this is the summer of 2020, the year in which education was turned upside down thanks to COVID-19, there were a number of very productive discussions about integrating technology into lessons in order to meet our students in virtual and hybrid formats. In my capacity as a teacher presenter, I showed my colleagues Pear Deck, an

interactive presentation software that can be used in a synchronous and asynchronous way to instruct, assess and engage students in lessons. During Martha's and Ginny's presentations, an active backchannel chat discussed both the impact of their powerful suggestions as well as best practices for executing their sound pedagogical approach to the reading method. In each level of workshop, the participants received an hour-long presentation from a teacher-presenter like myself about how to approach teaching a particular stage in the *Cambridge Latin Course* Units I-IV. Those segments of the day were filled in addition with constructive feedback from participants sharing their own experiences from the trenches in those stages, proving the reward of working within such an active and supportive community of teachers.

Perhaps the most transformative segments in each workshop featured discussions about addressing sensitive social and cultural issues in our Latin curriculum. Although many on the outside might imagine that Latin teachers concentrate their efforts and thoughts on the past, it was vividly clear throughout this summer's workshops that every single teacher participant consistently makes connections between the ancient world and the modern world. Of course, our modern world, in its social *mores* and the diversity of its people has become much more nuanced and filled with opportunities to teach about respect, equality, equity and appreciation. The Latin teachers at CUP's summer workshops sought to deepen their understanding of these difficult topics within the framework of the Roman experience and sought to develop their ability to teach these topics to their students within and beyond the constructs of both ancient and modern society. I truly applaud the work that we are all putting in to discern our responsibilities toward the students - and toward the mission of keeping the Romans alive in our minds - in the ever-changing society of the modern world. This most impressive result of hosting fifty Latin teachers on an all-day Zoom brought a smile to my face and warmth to my heart. There is no better feeling than being part of a group of educators who are as dedicated to learning for themselves as they are for teaching young people. Thank you to Cambridge University Press, Martha, Ginny, **Samantha Radovich**, **Zinta Williams**, and all the Latin teachers who came together this summer to grow together.

Countering Racism in the Classics Classroom

Stan Farrow

The American Classical League Institute for 2020 included two relevant workshops on its announced program, before either the COVID-19 crisis or the Black Lives Matter protests became headline items in the news. **Thomas Di Giulio**, a high school teacher from the Philadelphia area, assisted by **Dr. Michael Likier**, a psychologist with whom Tom has often worked, and **Marion Biglan**, a leadership coach and facilitator, would be inviting participants to consider “Building Racial Competence for Educators: A 21st Century Skill” on the first day and “Integrating Racial Competence and Anti-Racist Strategies in the Classroom” on the second. When the Institute wisely decided to run a virtual program instead of in-person sessions, about 130 logged on to the first workshop and 200 to the second, proving how eager participants were to engage in those two topics. Ironically, had the Institute been able to run its usual style of program, they probably could not have accommodated those numbers in one meeting room, plus breakout areas. (The total Institute registration was well over 500 - a record!)

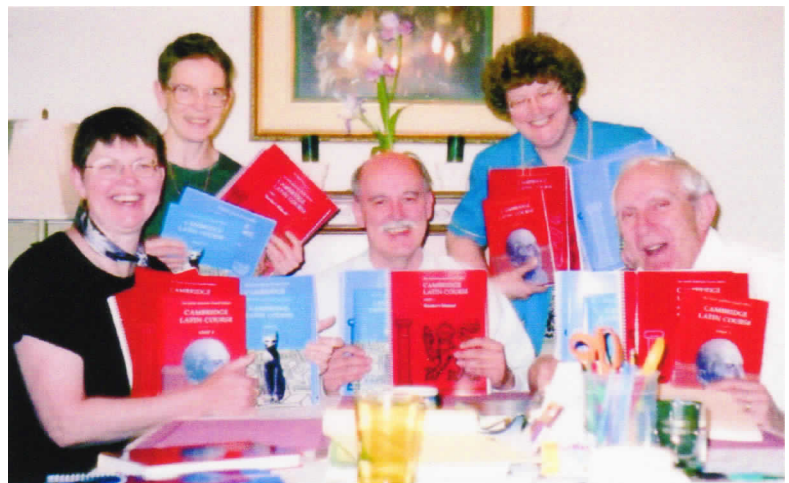
The first workshop was geared towards facing one’s own biases and their origin. What early messages about race did we receive as children and how has that messaging impacted us? The aim was to become more attentive to the racial messages we are communicating to our own classes. The second workshop was about developing racial competence for teachers so that they can in turn help students become racially competent/critical readers. Tom and Marion shared leadership of this session. Breakout rooms in both sessions let smaller groups of participants share their often interesting backgrounds.

Much of the second session was spent examining examples of racism that Tom has found in Latin textbooks. Those examples came exclusively from the *Cambridge Latin Course*, since that is the book Tom uses in his classes. He does not feel the entire series is problematical, but feels students need to be encouraged to read critically so that they can recognize and respond to overt and covert racial messages

Of course, the most obvious example of a racial problem in the Classics classroom was made clear as we scanned the Zoom photos over 7-plus pages on our device screens. Almost all the participants were white! For generations, government education authorities and school administrators have encouraged us to regard Classics as a field of study mainly for “the elite”, a thinly-veiled suggestion that only white students need apply. The result, as expected, has been classrooms dominated by non-Black and non-Indigenous learners producing future teachers with the same limited racial diversity.

Tom has been countering that trend in his own school. The racial mix in his community is about 60% Black. When Tom began teaching there about ten years ago, the Black Classics enrollment was close to 0%. Today, Tom has raised that to 30%, as parents, students and school officials have bought in to his approach. He’s still working to improve that ratio. But we, the audience, were asked to examine the record in our own schools and classes.

So, as we did in our breakout session, I’ll fill you in on my background, which is decidedly non-typical in 2020! I have been retired for over 25 years, after teaching in the same school for all 35 years of my career. That school is in Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, formerly an eastern suburb of Toronto but now (somewhat unwillingly) amalgamated into the large city. I remember one Indigenous fellow student, and no Black students in my high school, representative of the township’s whole population. For many years after I began teaching, that lack of diversity was still true of the area and, therefore, my school.



Stan Farrow (far right) and fellow CLC North American Fourth Edition Revision Editors unveil Units 1 and 2 in 2001: Pat Bell (Ontario), Anne Shaw (Kansas), Richard Popeck (Virginia) and Stephanie Pope (Chair, Virginia). Richard replaced Randy Thompson (Texas), who had worked on Unit 1. Real people, not an impersonal CUP Board!

(cont. on pages 7-10)

It was pretty standard Ontario practice well into my teaching years for the study of French to begin in Grade 9 (pretty late for a country considered officially bilingual). Students had to continue studying French if they wished to take Latin in Grade 10, and they had to continue in both languages if they wished to add German or Ancient Greek in Grade 11. Latin was therefore a four-year program, and, despite reality, was taught as if all the students would continue through Grade 13 (and even into university). Can you see a narrow elitist slant here?

By the mid-1970s, the number of choices students had on their “option sheets” had multiplied rapidly. The Classics’ reputation as elite came back to bite them, with other seemingly more relevant and accessible choices available. Enrollment suffered seriously. Canadian publishers discontinued production of long-standing grammar-translation textbooks, leaving teachers to nurse out-of-print editions or look elsewhere. The *Cambridge Latin Course* arrived on the scene in North America at just the right time. Ontario teachers chose almost unanimously to adopt it, thrilled by its approach and interest level - and its distinctly non-elitist tone.

So my experiences are in no way typical of what Tom Di Giulio encounters. I rarely faced the necessity of dealing with racial tension in class, but there is obvious racial tension in many of the textbook stories and situations, an opportunity for the teacher to have students consider the problems from a non-white perspective. I have often felt that the study of Classics, languages and cultures far removed in time and space from our own, allows students to form judgements on similar matters that may be of concern today without their necessarily having to voice those judgements if they don’t wish to.

The decision to adopt the *CLC* obviously extended the Classics careers of many middle- and high-school teachers. The approach and content were like a breath of fresh air compared to the more stilted texts we had used previously. The Ontario Classical Association, supported by the province’s Education officials, organized workshops in the early 1970s where we met some of the creators of the *Course* and were persuaded to adopt its “radical” reading approach in our classes. At the first American Classical League Institute that I attended in 1983, a group of fellow Canadians was rather inexcusably smug after discovering that the program and its leaders were all still promoting the older grammar-translation methods.

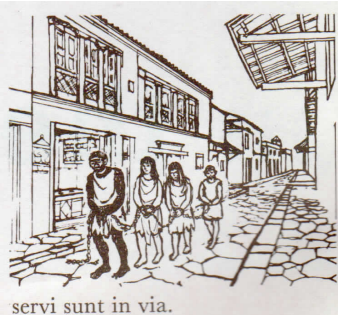
Ed Phinney changed that when he was engaged by Cambridge University Press to promote the *CLC* in North America and to revise the textbooks for use here. He and **Bill Gleason** organized a workshop in Cambridge, UK, plus a tour of Roman Britain, for teachers in the U.S.A. and Canada in 1985. Out of that tour arose the North American Cambridge Classics Project in 1987, supplying Ed with many enthusiastic leaders to work on the textbooks and support materials and to organize workshops and tours. The “gospel” adopted by those pioneers was to teach the *Course* by seeing the language and culture in operation through reading Latin sentences and stories and examining drawings and photographs - and only after doing this should they develop a more formal understanding of how both worked.

I was one of those early disciples and have continued with the NACCP as the editor of this newsletter since 1995. Ed also asked me to be one of five revision editors for the North American Fourth Edition of the *Course* (see the photo on the previous page), a very rewarding project we worked on for about five years at the turn of the century. We tweaked the order of presentation of a number of linguistic features along with their presentation, and we updated or changed some of the cultural notes in English. But the basic story line of this four-part “soap opera” remains unchanged from its first appearance in print in 1970, a work of genius in my opinion, melding linguistic and cultural information into a tale so gripping that during the first summer I worked on Unit 3 (the “green book”) to outline the order of lessons for the coming year, I found I couldn’t put it down and had to keep reading on (for a Latin textbook???)

So when I comment on Tom’s reservations about the text, it is with Full Disclosure that I was part of this editing process. From a “racial” standpoint, our team made an important change in the Stage 5 illustrations for the Model Sentences. Previously, with “*servi sunt in via*”, modeling the plural forms, there had been four slaves, the first one Black. We eliminated the Black slave in an effort to lessen the suggestion that Slavery=Black that we

felt was too prominent in North America. That slave continues to be missing in subsequent editions.

One other illustration we dispensed with was the one that accompanied **tumultus** in Stage 17, showing thugs beating up a shopkeeper. We had heard complaints from teachers, passing along reactions of their students and the students’ parents, that this was too graphically violent. The Fifth Edition has restored it, but in Stage 18 beneath the story **taberna**.

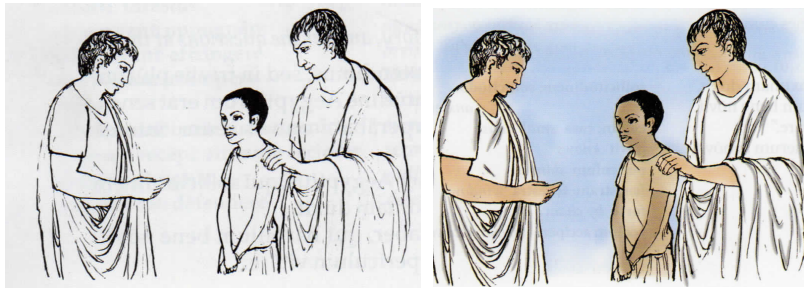


Both these illustrations involve slaves, a feature of the Roman world that was largely missing from earlier grammar-translation texts but that has to be central to the “reading method” textbooks which present the culture in tandem with the language. The *CLC* eases students into the concept in Unit 1 by having the slaves in Caecilius’ household benefit from his kindness as a master. Students love Grumio, whose name as well as his personality is taken from the Greek-based early Roman comedies of Plautus and Terence. But when Felix, a former slave, returns to visit the household (he was freed for saving Quintus’s life) the Teacher’s Manual for the North American Fourth Edition invites students to create a conversation between Felix and Grumio discussing why becoming a freedman is or is not something to be wished for. Students will thus discover the many severe limitations slavery imposed and will be less willing to dismiss the *CLC* stories as typical of North American “happy slave” defenses of the abhorrent system.

Slavery is bound to be an area of Roman culture that can trigger comments on race. Once we leave Pompeii for the wider empire, the view of slavery in the *CLC* is not nearly so pleasant. In Britain, Salvius and his wife, Rufilla, own many slaves. The model sentences for Stage 13 and their illustrations suggest that the slaves who accompanied the family to Britain from Italy had more specific skills than local British slaves such as Bregans, our first indication that there were levels of slavery. Tom Di Giulio has suggested that calling the British slaves “ignavi” in the last model sentence unilaterally colors our opinion of them, the kind of “stereotypical” description that is a mark of racist attitudes. I agree that “ignavi” should have been omitted (and that our revision team failed to do so). “servi fessi sunt. servi laborare nolunt.” would be more in keeping with the *CLC* approach: let the readers decide why the slaves are tired and unwilling to work.

But it may have been too tempting for the original course creators, who were all British, and who, on the next page, have the slaves from Italy complain about the British weather (“iterum pluit! semper pluit!”) not also to make fun of their national predecessors’ work ethic - probably too much of an inside joke for us North Americans. However, we should certainly notice the systemic racism on display through the succeeding pages as we compare Bregans’ treatment with that of his non-British counterparts and comment on how that affects his behavior.

Tom took the rest of his examples from Stage 17, the first Stage set in multi-racial Alexandria in Egypt. The last model sentence, where Barbillus gives Quintus an Egyptian slave, particularly caught his eye. It also caught



mine when I looked at it for the first time in the Fifth Edition. In previous editions the drawings were black and white. There is no difference in the skin coloring of the three characters there. The hair and possibly the lips of the slave boy may suggest he is Black, but the coloring does not. The addition of color to the line drawings in the Fifth Edition makes his appearance more obviously Black, something we were trying to avoid in the Fourth Edition (“Slavery=

Black” in the minds of North American students). So I will criticize whoever decided to color the drawing this way for the unfortunate result. If I were a Black student, I would be very disturbed just looking at the obviously servile appearance of the boy and putting myself in his place. We have been told that the coloring of all the model sentences was very costly. I would agree!

But Tom also suggests that the *CLC* writers are racist in calling Barbillus a “vir benignus” in the last part of the text accompanying the drawing. It is actually Quintus who makes this comment. In a welcome but sometimes confusing change in the stories’ point of view, Quintus is the narrator throughout the Egyptian section, as he tells Cogidubnus tales of his adventures there. We can criticize Quintus for thinking Barbillus is kind - although he has grown up accepting slavery in his own household, so why wouldn’t he? Teachers should certainly get students to discuss his attitude, but not label the writers as racist for including it. In fact, Quintus, who comes off as one of the few “good guys” in Units 2, 3 and 4. doesn’t acquit himself particularly well in Stage 17. He ignores the slave’s warning about angry Egyptians and in doing so becomes the major cause of the boy’s death.

Those angry Egyptians are the topic of Tom’s final example of *CLC* racism. He feels that in portraying the Egyptians as an unruly mob while making no effort to explain why they are angry, the textbook writers are suggesting that this behavior is typical of the whole race (and their modern descendants?). First, we have to remember that it is Quintus telling the story and that he may very well have come to that conclusion. But a little digging by the teacher would likely lead to a number of conclusions by the students as to why the Egyptians

would behave this way under the circumstances. Obvious modern parallels in the recent marches and protests by Blacks and Indigenous peoples would certainly come to mind.

Caroline Bristow, Director of the Cambridge Schools Classics Project, which has been the guardian and inspiration for the *CLC* since its inception, has told me that there are many “controversial” elements in the stories and illustrations in the series, meant to solicit discussion, perhaps even debate, amongst students, guided by the teacher. Tom has told me that too many teachers simply read the stories without attempting to dig deeper, enjoying the story line but not prepared to question the culture it reveals. Accepting both statements, I would say it is clear that if we want to counter the racism that Tom finds in the textbook we need to observe Caroline’s views on the way the *Course* needs to be taught. When we see a whole group of nouns ending in “m” that used to end in something else, we can examine how they behave in the sentence and discover something new about the language. Similarly, when we see a young Roman accepting a no-name Egyptian slave boy from his father’s friend and calling the friend kind, we can examine this behavior and discover something new (that we might have preferred not to discover) about Roman culture.

That is, after all, how the *CLC* was meant to function.

As a postscript, I would like to acknowledge the suggestion of my fellow story writer, **Kyle Smith-Laird**, that I run this article by a person of color, to solicit his or her comments. As it happens, I was privileged to teach all three children from the **Mounsey** family who graduated from my high school in the 1980s. The two girls, **Cheryl** and **Roslyn**, are now lawyers, and their brother, **Robert**, is a doctor and university professor. Roslyn and Robert were both named valedictorians for their graduating classes at my school.

After checking in with her siblings, Roslyn wrote a very thorough and thoughtful response. First, she suggested that the classroom setting is not the place where Blacks experience the most debilitating effects of racism. Classrooms, she feels, are a fairly structured environment, in which there is typically a prescribed course of study and instruction with fairly readily discernible benchmarks for achieving success. In her experience, the pursuit of education and knowledge has rarely been a barrier to the advancement of people of color. It is in the much less structured acts of daily living and survival that pernicious racism, with unwritten norms and hidden agendas, is able to thrive.

Roslyn enjoyed and excelled in the *Cambridge Latin* program, making Pompeii and the Colosseum among the first destinations she had to visit when she had the opportunity to travel. But two bothersome memories also remain. One was linguistic (she was upset at meeting the word *niger* and wondering about its sad development into the “n-word” in English). The other was cultural (why was there so little discourse around slavery or the role of people of color in ancient society?)

In that respect she questioned our elimination of the black slave in the Stage 5 model sentence illustrations and my objections to the “black” coloring of the boy slave whom Barbillus gives to Quintus in Stage 17. Removal of those two examples would mean the elimination of Blacks from key points in the series. Roslyn would not be able to see the ancient equivalent of herself in action anywhere in the *Course*. One of her suggestions was to create a section that looked at slavery in ancient Greece and Rome and in modern times (from the African American/Canadian experience to modern human trafficking). Not being an expert on the history of people of African descent and the African diaspora, she urged us to consult with those who are in making the cultural background of the *Course* more complete and relevant.

Caroline Bristow has asked us to conclude this article with a message from her on behalf of the CSCP:

When I took charge of the Cambridge School Classics Project (the University of Cambridge project which authors the *CLC*) in 2017, I also took on responsibility for its fifty-plus year history. The world has changed dramatically since the *CLC* was first conceived in 1968, since Stan Farrow worked on the 4th Edition more than twenty years ago (as detailed in his article), and even in the short time since the North American 5th Edition was published in 2015. No matter how beloved it is, the *CLC* must also change.

In 2020 the righteous outpouring of pain and anger at the death of George Floyd - and those of many other Black men, women and children - yet again highlighted the ways in which individuals of color are victims of marginalization, discrimination and violence. Racial injustice cannot be ignored or excused. Educational materials such as the *CLC* must promote values of inclusion and racial justice.

In his article “Why students of color don’t take Latin” [John Bracey](#) wrote, “It is easy for even the most well-intentioned Latin teacher to inadvertently alienate students of color”. To this we might add “the most well-intentioned Latin course”. [Tom Di Giulio](#) has also spoken and written at length on the need to embed development of racial competency in the Latin classroom generally, with examples drawn from the *CLC* specifically (as mentioned in Stan’s article). It is only with the critical friendship of individuals like John and Tom, who highlight problems and push us to improve, that we can meet the challenge of CSCP’s original mandate: to ensure that Latin and Classical subjects flourish in schools and are accessible to all students.

The aim of studying Classics should not be to revere the ancient world. The Romans saw no problem with owning slaves, obliterating the indigenous cultures of those they conquered, or young girls being given in marriage to much older men. These are not the actions of a “good” society. They are those of a complex human society, the study of which can still fascinate our students, even as it challenges them, and they it.

The *CLC* tells stories from a Roman point of view, as does much of the authentic Latin literature students will read. Students should, however, be equipped with the critical faculties to interrogate these works and the world views they express, and the *CLC* should be used to develop these skills. Students should not passively accept the view of a slave master regarding his slaves, or a description of the conquered given by their conqueror. They need to question whose view is being given prominence, why this might be, where the power lies, and who is being lost from view or marginalized.

In turn, teachers need to be supported in leading discussions and activities which equip their students with the skills to ask these questions. One of the actions listed in CSCP’s [Black Lives Matter statement](#) of Spring 2020 speaks to this need: the creation and publication of revised Teacher Manuals for the 5th Edition. These will directly address criticisms of the *CLC* and offer concrete examples and clear advice on embedding racial justice in your teaching of the *Course*. We hope to complete this work by early Fall 2020.

Classrooms are places where ideas are challenged and people – students, teachers, and textbook authors! – grow and learn. For more than fifty years the Cambridge School Classics Project has worked to support the teaching of Latin and Classical Subjects. In that time, we have made many mistakes. For these we apologize. From these we will learn. Together we will be better.

AVE ATQUE VALE, DOROTHY ROSSI

In our Spring 2010 Newsletter, we paid tribute to **Dorothy Rossi**, a *CLC* teacher from Rochester, NY and her energetic efforts, in retirement, to teach the *Course* to seniors in her area, through OASIS. Since then, Dorothy continued to reach out to seniors, eventually holding “classes” in her own residence when her physical mobility problems made that necessary. Only COVID-19 had the power to suspend this adventure earlier this year. But we have since learned of Dorothy’s death - and a final farewell to her unique programs.

FELICITATIONES, MARY MCBRIDE



Dorothy was one of the early *CLC* disciples who met in Cambridge, England in 1985 (as mentioned in Stan Farrow’s article). So was **Mary McBride**, who taught for 38 years at Banting Memorial High School in Alliston, ON, an hour and a half north of Toronto. Towards the end of her career there, she won the Prime Minister’s Award for Teaching Excellence in 2004.

Like Dorothy, she has refused to “retire” from teaching the *CLC*, which she loves. Most recently she has commuted down to Toronto to teach the *Course* in the University of Toronto’s School of Continuing Studies. This past year she was honored with the School’s Excellence in Teaching Award in Languages and Translation. Students at the School nominate outstanding teachers for this award. So this indeed is a well-deserved tribute to Mary’s lifelong enthusiasm. Those of you who take part in the annual NJCL Convention may recognize Mary’s photo, since she has continued to be a regular part of those summer events.
