

Lingua Latina est vita!

THE CONSUL

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Where Rome went Wrong

by Sean McFeely

The CJCL (California Junior Classical League), likes to talk about the “world of today, which is indebted to the ancient civilization in its government and laws, literature, language, and arts.” That’s true, however only to a degree. In case you all hadn’t noticed, the Roman Empire isn’t a country. They existed in a completely different period of time than America, a time that didn’t have things like nuclear missiles, computers, or the United Nations. I guess what I’m trying to say is that, while Rome had a plethora of important contributions to the Western World, it wasn’t the bee’s knees. I think that America, as great as it is, can learn a little bit from looking at some of the places where Rome went wrong and the some of the reasons behind the Empire’s collapse.

1) They over-exerted their military. With an empire stretching from Britain to the Middle East, and from Germany to Northern Africa, they didn’t have enough soldiers to fend off attackers while still expanding deeper into barbarian land. It’s a good thing that America has only 900 military bases in 148 different countries around the world. Oh wait...

2) They overtaxed their people. The emperors had exquisite tastes. In order to

“Labor omnia
vincit”-
Labor
conquers all

Fun Times at the Library

by Nora Conklin

There are few better joys in life than watching Magister Davis in toga teaching young children victorious poses. On a dreary day in October the Orinda Library had a congregation of young hopefuls who quenched their thirst for Latin knowledge. We started the event with each child dawning ancient Roman attire and posing like Roman statues. Then Magister Davis told a yarn about Athena and Arachne. The children were rapt as Magister used a variety of motions to describe the epic weave off and all were disappointed when the tale was over. Then our club president, Clark Pang, taught some basic Latin vocabulary and there was an epic round of Certamen. There were plenty of death stares to go around as the various victors came to the front of the class to collect their booty of jolly ranchers. All in all it was a victorious day in Latin. Lingua Latina est Vita!



pay for them, they raised taxes on average Romans to help pay for fancy palaces and the like. Good thing America isn't about to go over a fiscal cliff that would increase payroll and income taxes. Oh wait...

3) They let their infrastructure decay. Without nice roads going everywhere, trade was stifled. Without trade, the Empire couldn't finance its armies. Good thing all of America's infrastructure is kept in tip top shape (cough cough Orinda). Oh wait...

4) The people became "sheeple" because of Panem et Circenses (bread and circuses). By giving out free bread and by providing entertainment for the masses, the emperors could ensure that the people didn't cause any trouble. It worked a little too well, and many Romans became apathetic to the government or workings of Rome. Good thing America doesn't have reality T.V. or give \$20 billion a year in agricultural subsidies. Oh wait...

5) The economics were bad. A peck of wheat cost $\frac{1}{2}$ a Denarii in 150 AD, 100 Denarii in 200, and 10,000 Denarii in 350. Not only that, but they had a negative balance of trade for things like animals, slaves, silks, and spices. Add on that Rome had huge public welfare expenses from Panem et Circenses, and we see that they had big money troubles. Good thing America hasn't seen prices rising for things like gas, electricity, health care, gold, etc. Good thing America has a trade deficit of over \$40 Billion. Good thing we have Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, which aren't in a massive need of reform. Oh wait...

Draw whatever conclusion you wish--I don't want to tell you what to think. America really isn't that similar to Rome. I mean, Rome had an economy based mainly on slavery, and they put olive oil on their bread instead of butter. But remember, all empires fall. Let's hope America stays around for a long time.

Adventures in Latin

by Tom Helsel

My sister, Megan Helsel graduated from Miramonte in 2008. She took 4 years of Latin and decided she wanted to study Latin and Chemistry in College. She matriculated to Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, PA. Because of her great background in Latin, she was placed in 3rd year (college level) Latin as a freshman. She took classes from the Department Chairman and other high level Latin Professors. They encouraged her to apply for summer programs in Latin and Classics. Her first summer she went on a tour of Greece – and received credit for a class! Her summer between Junior and Senior year she spent in Tuscany, Italy working on an ancient Etruscan archaeological dig at Poggio Colla. I interviewed her about her experiences at the dig.



"Panem et censes"
-Juvenal

POGGIO
COLLA
FIELD
SCHOOL



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1) How did you get the opportunity to participate in a dig in Italy? Could you have done this without a Latin major?

I applied for the program after my professor suggested I apply to the dig. I had previously gone to Greece with the F&M Classics Department and thought it would have been fun. I could have applied without a Latin major but preference is given to Classics majors.

2) What kind of a dig was it? Which civilization? What artifacts?

The dig was an ancient Etruscan Dig. The dig site has three major phases: suspected religious site, possible temple. Major finds include 100 silver coins as an offering.

3) What was your role in the dig?

We were used as manual labor; digging, excavating, and sifting dirt. Keeping track of dirt layers. Keeping a field notebook.

4) Who found the most stuff?

Daniel. He was a grad student from Texas who was also blind. He found a bucchero shard that shows what we believe is the oldest depiction of a woman giving birth in the ancient Mediterranean world.

5) How do you protect and preserve the artifacts on the site?

We rebury every trench that is dug. In addition, to preserve the site, some is left buried for future generations to uncover. Artifacts go to conservation to get cleaned and preserved.

6) How did your background in Latin help you with the dig?

It gave me a background in the cultures and geography of the region as well as the literature background since most literature about the Etruscans is in Latin.

7) Have you visited any other Roman archaeological sites?

Pompeii, Rome, Herculaneum, Oplontis, Ravenna, Florence, Orvieto, and Dicomano.

8) What did you like most about your experience?

I enjoyed travelling and experiencing Latin and Italian history in my travels.

9) Do you have any advice for potential Latin majors?

Try to spend as much time abroad as possible. Learn Italian and don't be a Latin monkey. (Know syntax and subjunctives better than the back of your hand!!!)



Above: Archeological dig site in Poggio Colla.

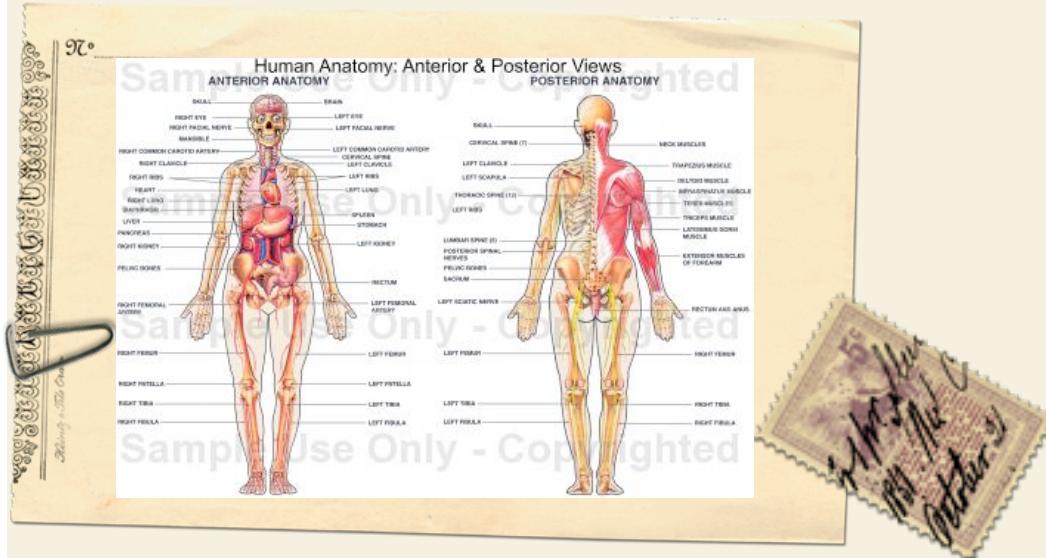
Below: Megan Helsel



For more information on the dig and the program, check out this link:

<http://www.fandm.edu/classics/features/poggio-colla-field-school>

<http://www.smu.edu/poggio/>



Interested in Med School? Latin Helps

by Mali McGuire

From prefixes and suffixes to actual root words, Latin makes up a majority of the technical vocabulary used in the medical field today. Dating back to when medicine was first studied (around 700 BC), the first Greek medical school was founded by Hippocrates in Cnidus. Not only was medicine first being taught and studied at this time, the foundation for medicine was also being established. Medical texts such as the Hippocratic Corpus were written for physicians and laymen, and physicians swore by Hippocratic Oath to practice medicine ethically. Additionally, the words used by the Greeks for studying human anatomy were later translated into Latin. Today, Latin remains in the words that describe parts of the bodies as well as diseases and various studies of medicine. For example, “abdomen”, which names the lower body, is also the Latin word for lower part of the belly. Diseases such as pericarditis

(inflammation around the heart) can be broken down into the prefix, peri-, which means “around”, the root cardi-, which comes from “cor, cardis” which means heart, and the suffix, -itis which means inflammation of. Together Latin prefixes, roots, and suffixes can be combined to create a plethora of words used in the medical field. All in all, without Latin, today’s medical field would be a very disorganized and confusing place.

**Mark your
calenders!**

December 21
Caroling in
Downtown Orinda
@ 5:00

January 11
Magis Due

January 25
Convention Forms
Due