

EDITORIAL

Benefits derived from Classics are benefits for all, not only for a few. Fortunately this statement is becoming increasingly valid in South Africa.

To illustrate this point I would like to focus on three examples: projects recently undertaken for the "benefit of all". These examples are inclusive not only in the sense that the community at large is targeted in a general way but also that age is no longer a restricting factor.

The projects which have been launched focus on (a) primary schools, (b) secondary schools and (c) adult education. It seems that the universities have taken the initiative in all three areas. This is only to be expected since the Universities depend on the schools and the community for their supply of students.

The aim of any outreach program for Classics on primary school level is to combat that very ordinary problem: *ignoti nulla cupido* or the Afrikaans version "onbekend maak onbeminde". Any program which brings primary school children into contact with the Greco-Roman world in a meaningful way would overcome this problem. The obvious advantage is of course that while Latin as a language and Classics as a subject are becoming a familiar reality, children are also exposed to a much larger world in an easily understandable way. Gains for geography, history, vocabulary and even concept-forming are obvious.¹ There is only one way in which such programs can reach their target audience. People who believe in the obvious advantages of exposure to the Classics go to the primary schools where they then teach such introductory courses and create enthusiasm for their subject.

Enthusiasm is also the key to success amongst the high school pupils exposed to a language development program based on Latin roots. The target audience in this case is the older high school pupil, who will not have the opportunity of taking Latin as a subject in high school, but who might benefit very substantially from a knowledge of some Latin. These pupils are willing to come to the University on a Saturday morning for help in various subjects taught by University staff. We therefore have a volunteer "captive audience" of whom we have the greatest expectations.

Another volunteer audience (other than the normal student body) served by the University community in the Western Cape is of course the interested adult population at large. Apart from the various summer/winter/spring/autumn schools which offer courses for adult education, there has also been a shift recently towards restructuring normal university courses in such a way as to cater for the needs of the (working/retrrenched/retired) population, who had graduated some time previously. A person interested in Classics, for instance, is now able to further that interest in a systematic way by enrolling for a postgraduate structured degree in Classics which is taught after hours. The University gains tremendously by having the older more experienced members of the population return to give their input and test our "product". The community at large gains by a growing perception that study is an ongoing, life-long activity -- not only for the young.

In all three target groups Classics have been welcomed as a long lost friend. It is obvious that classicists themselves will have to keep up the good work. What might not be so obvious is how to reconcile basic "missionary" work with research!

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¹ People interested in further details about such programs can contact their nearest University or Mrs. Corrie Schumann of the University of Pretoria who has run such outreach programs most successfully for a number of years.