*"Libertas Decembri"*: Teaching Cultural Product, Practice, and Perspective during Saturnalia

Saturnalia celebrations are a common December tradition in many secondary Latin classrooms. These festive events often revolve around lessons about the Roman god Saturn and his typical divine attributes, decorating the Latin classroom leading up to winter break, learning the customary Saturnalia greeting—"Io! Saturnalia!"—and gift-giving and dress-up (in keeping with the carnival-like atmosphere of the holiday). Some instructors incorporate more about ancient Roman cultural practice; others focus more on its possible ties to modern Christian rituals in the lead-up to the Christmas holiday.

Comparatively less focus is paid to some of Saturnalia's complicated relationship to the institution of Greco-Roman chattel slavery. The December holiday was associated with a sort of topsy-turvy "role reversal" of masters and enslaved persons, with a number of accounts detailing a banquet provided to slaves by their masters. This focus on a sort of qualified freedom is encapsulated in Horace's memorable description of Saturnalia as the *libertas Decembri* (*Satires* 2.7.4). Importantly, this season of 'good tidings' was explicitly and brutally temporary: The return to the rigid hierarchy of master-slave domination returned every year by the end of Saturnalia.

In this talk, I'll show how Latin instructors can deepen and enrich their teaching of Saturnalia using a powerful practical model for intercultural teaching developed at the University of Minnesota Center for Advanced Research in Language Acquisition (CARLA) in coordination with the ACTFL Standards for Intercultural Communication. The 3P Model helps teachers identify the cultural "product, practice, and perspective" embedded in a lesson detailing a foreign cultural practice. I'll show how to do this using my own adaptation of the 3P model to a lesson

on teaching authentic texts detailing Roman celebrations of the Saturnalia holiday in Catullus 14.15, Horace *Satires* 2.3, 7, Macrobius's *Saturnalia*, Pliny's *Letters* 8.7.1, and Martial 5.84 and 12.81.