NEWSLETTER OF THE
AMERICAN DIALECT SOCIETY

NADS
31.2

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NADS is sent in January, May and September to all ADS members. Send news and queries to editor and executive secretary Allan Metcalf, English Department, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Illinois 62650, phone (217) 479-7117 or (217) 243-3403, e-mail AAllan@aol.com. Administrative assistant, Sarah Hitt. See Page 3 for membership information.

ADS Web site (Grant Barrett, webmaster): http://www.americandialect.org/

ADS-L discussion list: To join, send to Listserv@uga.cc.uga.edu the message:
Sub ADS-L Your Name
By Joan Hall

Who owns culture? If information is not free, who should pay for it? If people are sloppy writers of e-mail messages, will they also be careless authors of e-books?

Two days in Philadelphia April 29–May 1 at the annual meeting of the American Council of Learned Societies did not provide answers to these questions, but there was good discussion and, as the diplomats say, “a frank exchange of views.”

Several provocative lectures sparked lively conversations among the delegates. Thomas Trautmann, Director of the Institute for the Humanities at the University of Michigan, gave us a world tour to illustrate varied notions of ownership of culture: the writer of a dictionary of Telegu, for instance, felt that a gift of tax-free land from the East India Company was a better recognition of his scholarship than a simple assurance of copyright (the land, after all, could be passed on to his son); in Melanesia, tradition dictates that songs, dances, and rituals can be traded or even purchased from other tribal groups, resulting in a system of franchises to perform particular rites.

In our own culture, the question of what should be private property and what belongs to the public domain is clearly unresolved as we struggle with balancing the rights of creators and users of cultural materials. A talk by Richard Ekman, secretary of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, addressed some of these contemporary problems with the central question, “How can we ensure that decisions are made based on scholarly and technical considerations as well as simply on the bottom line?”

The public session was devoted to the topic of linkages between “The Humanities and the Sciences,” addressed by a physicist, a historian of science, and a philosopher. We heard about the need of both the poet and the physicist to find felicitous images and exact words; we were told that the scientist, too, must be sensitive to differences in style, presentation of evidence, exact terminology, and effective use of metaphors; and we heard an engaging analysis of the changing self-image of the scientist over the last few centuries. It was quite a leap, for instance, for scientists to acknowledge that an artist’s rendering could be a more effective medical teaching tool than a photograph, even if the photo were a more technically accurate representation.

As usual, a highlight of the meeting was the Haskins Lecture, this year given by Clifford Geertz of the Institute for Advanced Study. Riddled with witty, self-deprecating one-liners, the talk was not only a personal history but a survey of an amazing period in America’s history, “the degreeing of America” made possible by the GI Bill. For Geertz that led to Antioch College, graduate school at Harvard, an ACLS fellowship, fieldwork in Indonesia, and a long career of distinguished teaching and fieldwork. He credited many of his successes to being able to “catch the wave” at crucial points in his career, something he laments is much more difficult in today’s academic world.

For ADS members and other potential recipients of ACLS fellowships, the news from President John D’Arms is good: both the number of fellowships and the amounts offered have been increased. For details, see the ACLS web page at http://www.acls.org.

DSNA Meets in Berkeley

As this issue goes to press, the Dictionary Society of North America is convening at the University of California, Berkeley, for its biennial meeting May 27–29.

For DSNA information see http://polyglot.lss.wisc.edu/dsna/index.html or write Executive Director Luanne von Schneidemesser, 6131 Helen C. White Hall, 600 North Park St., Madison WI 53706.
Call for Chicago in Y2K

August 16 is the deadline for proposals for the ADS annual meeting in the first year beginning with 2; January 6–9, 2000, in Chicago with the Linguistic Society of America.

E-mail is the preferred form for abstracts, and 250 words or less is the preferred length. Send abstracts to Program Chair Dennis Preston, preston@pilot.msu.edu, with a copy to Executive Secretary Allan Metcalf, AAllan@aol.com. If you prefer s-mail, send two copies to Metcalf at the address on the cover of this newsletter.

Words of the Year, Decade, Century, and Millennium: We will have a once-in-a-thousand-years opportunity to discuss and vote on all four. Send nominations and comments to our New Words Committee chair, Wayne Glowka, Dept. of English and Speech, Georgia College and State Univ., Milledgeville GA 31061; wglowka@mail.gcsu.edu. For information on our previous choices, see the January newsletter or http://www.americandialect.org/woty.shtml.

Hotel: Palmer House Hilton in the Loop of downtown Chicago. Ask for LSA rates of $83 single or double ($25 each additional person). Phone 1-800-hiltons or (312) 726-7500, or write The Palmer House, 17 East Monroe Street, Chicago IL 60603-5605.

Registration: As guests of LSA, we are expected to register with them, at the LSA members' rate. In return, we get the LSA Meeting Handbook and admission to LSA sessions. Dec. 6 is the deadline for preregistration by check ($60; $25 for students and unemployed) to LSA Secretariat–Annual Meeting, 1325 18th St. NW Suite 211, Washington DC 20036-6501. For more information, see www.lsadc.org.


ADS at MLA

At the Modern Language Association convention Dec. 27–30, also in Chicago, ADS is sponsoring two sessions:

• Engendered Language. Chair: Michael Adams, Albright Coll.
  2. “Insidious Humor and the Construction of Masculinity.” Peter F. Murphy, Murray State U.

• Words of the Century and Millennium. Chair: Allan Metcalf, MacMurray Coll.

Future MLA meeting: 2000 Washington, D.C.

For information see www.mla.org or write MLA, 10 Astor Place, New York NY 10003.

Journals at Home at Duke

The move from Tuscaloosa to Durham is complete. From now on all back issues of American Speech and PADS, as well as all forward ones, will emanate from Duke University Press. So will the dues notices, so if you haven't paid for 1999 or have a question or a claim, address: Marsha Emmons, Journals Fulfillment, Duke University Press, Box 90660, Durham, NC 27708-0660; phone 1-888-387-5687 or 919-687-3617; fax 1-919-688-2615; mwe326@duke.edu.

Duke accepts Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and bank wire transfers.

Anything sent to the ADS office in Illinois, however, won't be lost; it will be promptly forwarded to Duke. And if you have a membership problem Duke can't resolve, let the executive secretary know.
Methods X to Be Found in Newfoundland in August

The triennial conferences on Methods in Dialectology are always milestones in our field, as well as occasions for leisurely collegiality in idyllic environs. Methods X, August 1–6, 1999, will be held at Memorial University, St. John’s, Newfoundland, not too far from where the first conference was held, at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, July 19–26, 1972. Since then it has been to Wales and Germany as well as more westerly in Canada.

This year’s theme is “Historical connections: transported varieties and their origins.” Full information about the program, registration, accommodation, travel, and other matters, along with abstracts of the papers, is at http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~methodsx/.

For information the old-fashioned way write Methods X Organizing Committee, Linguistics Department, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John’s, Newfoundland A1B 3X9, Canada, or e-mail methodsx@mun.ca.

Here is a small sampling of what you’ll find on the website and at the conference. In all, there will be more than 100 presentations.

**MONDAY, AUGUST 2**

“The Demographics of Accommodation to the Northern Cities Shift in Michigan.” Dennis R. Preston, Betsy E. Evans, Rika Ito and Jamila Jones.


“Chance as Cause of Language Variation and Change.” Ron Butters, Duke U.


“From Mississippi in America to Mississippi in Africa: The Search for Historical African American English.” John Singler, New York U.


**TUESDAY, AUGUST 3**

“Accountability in Reconstructing Verbal -S.” Michael Montgomery, U. of South Carolina.

“Settlement History in the United States as Reflected in DARE: The Example of German.” Luanne von Schneidemesser, DARE.


**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4**


**THURSDAY, AUGUST 5**


“Y’all/You All: Regional and Social Distribution.” Natalie Maynor, Mississippi State U.


“Reconsidering Rural Dialects: A Historic and Ethnographic Approach.” Natalie Schilling-Estes, Old Dominion U.


**FRIDAY, AUGUST 6**


If you have recently published a book, send pertinent information to Executive Secretary Allan Metcalf (address on cover), and we'll mention it here.


Edward Finegan. Language Its Structure and Use, 3rd ed. Paul Frommer and Edward Finegan, Looking at Languages: A Workbook in Elementary Linguistics, 2nd ed. Harcourt Brace, 1999. Both are thorough revisions of the earlier textbook and workbook, respectively. The textbook has separate chapters on dialects, registers, and the history of English, as well as the expected fare. Each chapter now also has a discussion of “Computers and . . .”—dialects, morphology, syntax, etc. And each chapter has a guide to appropriate Internet links.


MEETINGS

REGIONAL MEETING PROGRAMS, FALL 1999

Rocky Mountain

In association with RMMLA, Oct. 14–16; Santa Fe, NM, DoubleTree Hotel.


2. “Problems of Mexican-American Representation in the Chicano Tradition.” Lorelei Ortiz, New Mexico State Univ.


Chair: Mary E. Morzinski, Dept. of English, Univ. of Wisconsin-La Crosse, La Crosse, WI 54601; phone (608) 785-8300, fax (608) 785-8301, morzinsk@mail.uwlax.edu.

Membership in RMMLA is $30 individual, $20 student. Write RMMLA, Washington State Univ., P.O. Box 642610, Pullman, WA 99164-2610; rmmla@rmmla.wsu.edu; http://rmmla.wsu.edu/rmmla/guest/aboutrmmla.asp; phone (509) 335-4198, fax (509) 335-6635 ext. 54198.


South Central

In association with SCMLA, Oct. 28-30; Memphis, Crown Plaza Hotel.

1. “Reconsidering the Tradition: How Huckleberry Finn Subverts/Deconstructs a Dialect Pattern.” Derek Foster, independent scholar.


3. “Spanish Borrowings in Contemporary English.” Michael Dressman and Dan Jones, Univ. of Houston-Downtown.

4. “A Linguistic Look at One Family’s Folklore: North Louisiana Dialect in an Urban Setting.” Rebecca Farabough, Univ. of Memphis.

Chair: Lisa Abney, Louisiana Folklife Center, Northwestern State Univ., Natchitoches, LA 71497; phone (318) 357-4332; fax (318) 357-4331; e-mail abney@alpha.nsula.edu.

Membership in SCMLA is $20 full professors, $15 associate and assistant professors, $10 instructors and students. Write Jo Hebert, SCMLA, Dept. of English, Texas A&M Univ., College Station, TX 77843-4227; phone (409) 845-7041; fax (409) 862-2292; http://www-english.tamu.edu/scmla/; scmla@acs.tamu.edu.


Midwest

In association with MMLA, Nov. 4-6; Minneapolis, Marriott City Center.

1. “Puerto Rican Literature in Georgia: The Intersections of Language, Place, and Gender in Judith Ortiz Cofer.” Darlene M. Pagan, Univ. of Texas at Dallas.

2. “Is Linguistic Anglocentrism Resurgent?” Thomas Chase, Univ. of Regina, Canada.

3. “Linguistic Variation and Shift in the Adoption of an Emerging Standard.” Bruce Spencer, Univ. of Michigan.

Chair: Beth Simon, CM 109, Dept. of English and Linguistics, IPFW, Fort Wayne, IN 46805; fax (219) 481-6985; e-mail simon@ipfw.edu.

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Membership in MMLA is $25 full and associate professors, $20 other faculty, $15 students. Write MMLA, 302 English-Philosophy Bldg., U. of Iowa, Iowa City IA 52242-1408; phone (319) 335-0331; mmla@uiowa.edu; http://www.uiowa.edu/~mmla/.

Future meetings: 2000 Nov. 2–4 Kansas City, Missouri, Hyatt Regency Crown Center; 2001 Nov. 1–3 Cleveland, Sheraton City Centre Hotel.

South Atlantic

In association with SAMLA, Nov. 4–6; Atlanta, Hyatt Regency.

1. “Community Unity and African American Discourse.” Deborah Zeringue, Georgia State Univ.


5. “Error Gravity in the Corporate World: Are There Regional Differences?” Larry Beason, Univ. of South Alabama.

Chair: Guy Bailey, Univ. of Texas at San Antonio, 6900 N. Loop 1604 W., San Antonio TX 78249; gbailey@utsa.edu.

ADS Regional Secretary 1999–2000: Michael Picone, Dept. of Romance Languages and Classics, Univ. of Alabama, Box 870246, Tuscaloosa AL 35406-0246; micone@ua1vm.ua.edu.

Membership in SAMLA is $35 individual, $25 student. Write SAMLA, Georgia State Univ., University Plaza, Atlanta GA 30303-3083; phone (404) 651-2693; www.samla.org.


Nwave Invites Proposals

June 15 is the deadline for abstracts for Nwave 28, the annual conference on New Ways of Analyzing Variation, to be held in Toronto Oct. 14–17. York University and the University of Toronto are the hosts.

(E in the acronym used to stand for “in English,” but nowadays the conference does not limit itself to variation in the English language.)

Plenary speakers will be Deborah Cameron, Strathclyde U.; William Labov, U. of Pennsylvania, and David Sankoff, U. de Montréal. There will be symposia on language change in real time, language variation and formal theory, language variation and second language acquisition, language and sexuality, and public access databases.

Abstracts are invited in all areas of linguistic variation theory. They should be e-mailed without attachments to newwave@yorku.ca. The e-mail should include the title and an abstract of no more than 500 words including bibliography, followed by the title and the author(s) name, address, e-mail, fax, and phone numbers. Indicate whether the abstract is for a 20-minute presentation or a poster or either. The author(s) name should not appear in abstract or title.

If you cannot e-mail, fax a fully-formatted hard copy of the abstract and one copy of a separate identification page to: 416-736-5483 (attn Ruth King), and mail two copies to: NWAVE, c/o DLLL, South 561 Ross Building, 4700 Keele Street, York University, Toronto, Ontario M3J 1P3, Canada.


Sessions will be held at the Toronto Colony Hotel, Chestnut Street at City Hall. Rooms at Cdn $139 single or double may be reserved by calling 1-800-387-8687 or (416) 977-0707, fax (416) 585-3157, www.toronto-colony.com, TORDOH@ATTMail.com.
DARE QUERIES

DARE Pestles Around for Perjinkety Words

If you can help with any of the following words, please send your information (including date and place of use) to DARE Associate Editor Joan Hall at 6125 Helen White Hall, 600 N. Park St., Madison WI 53706, or by e-mail at jdhall@facstaff.wisc.edu.

penny berry—from a recent Pennsylvania word list, where it is defined as “a small ground plant with edible berry.”

pent road and pentway—“A minor road that may be closed off by gates.” This used to be common in New England, especially Vermont; we would like to know if it is still known.

percolator—Apparently at one time a name for a “(house)-rent party” in Chicago. If you know this, do you know why it is so called?

perjinkety—This British dialect word for “persnickety” turns up in a 1930 novel set in South Carolina.

pcrestle around—“Putter around.” We have three examples, all from Vermont.

red-man—“To inflict summary justice on.” We have a single example from the southern Appalachians: “They red-manned [him] because he was allus beatin’ his wife.”

reef—“To tug, a tug.” We have a scattering of examples, but not enough to establish any regional pattern.

red-top cane—Two Texas informants gave this, one in response to the question about kinds of grass grown for hay, one in response to the question about other plants grown for hay.

rock bait, sandstoodle—Both terms were elicited from a Georgia informant by the question about kinds of worms used for bait. We suspect that both refer to the larva of a caddisfly, which surrounds itself with a shell of sand grains or other small objects, but we have no further evidence.

rock sallet—One Kentucky informant describes this as a wild green that comes up early in the spring and has a purple flower.

DARE Pestles Around for Perjinkety Words

run (a net, trotline, or trapline)—“To go along (a net, trotline, or trapline) checking for captured fish or animals, rebaiting, etc.” We have a fair amount of evidence for this sense—which is surprisingly absent from standard dictionaries—but not enough to establish any regional pattern. Earlier printed examples would also be welcome, especially for run a trapline.

scoggin(s)—“Fool, butt of ridicule.” We have a Massachusetts example from 1890 and a Georgia example from 1938. (This is interesting not only in itself, but also as a possible source of scoggin as a name for various long-legged wading birds.)

scotch—“To help, second, assist” and “Of a horse: ?to splay out the legs.” For the first sense (and the corresponding agent noun scotcher) we have a scattering of examples beginning in 1860, but only one later than 1915. The second is used several times in a memoir of Texas cow-country as if everybody would know what it means—but we don’t!

scratchback—“A type of corn pone.” We have a number of examples, but it is not clear what the essential feature is that distinguishes this from other types.

Nominations Invited

Propose a student for a four-year complimentary Presidential Honorary Membership with a letter of recommendation to ADS President Ronald Butters, English Dept., Duke Univ., Box 90018, Durham NC 27708-0018; RonButters@aol.com.

Propose a colleague or yourself for a four-year term on the ADS Executive Council with a message to Nominating Committee Chair Lawrence M. Davis, Dept. of English, Wichita State Univ., Wichita KS 67260-0014, davis@wsuhub.uc.twsu.edu.

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