

NEWSLETTER OF THE
AMERICAN DIALECT SOCIETY

NADS 27.2

Vol. 27, No. 2 **May 1995**

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NADS is sent in January, May and September to all ADS members. Send ADS dues (\$30 per year), queries and news to editor and executive secretary Allan Metcalf, English Department, MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Illinois 62650, phone (217) 479-7049 or (217) 243-3403, fax (217) 245-0405, e-mail AAllan@aol.com

From:

AMERICAN DIALECT SOCIETY
Allan Metcalf, Executive Secretary
English Department
MacMurray College
Jacksonville, Illinois 62650-2590

FIRST CLASS

Forwarding and Address
Correction Requested

Methods IX Plans for 1996: July 29–August 2 in Wales; Dec. 1, 1995 Abstract Deadline

It's settled: the ninth triennial conference on Methods in Dialectology will be held at University of Wales, Bangor, from Monday, July 29, 1996 through Friday, Aug. 2. **Alan Thomas**, the conference organizer, has set *Dec. 1, 1995* as the deadline for abstracts. This summer he will send a mailing to previous Methods participants. To get on the mailing list, write him at Dept. of Linguistics, University of Wales, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG, Wales, U.K.; phone 1248-351-151, ext. 2271; e-mail els030@bangor.ac.uk.

NWAVE Deadline Looms

June 15 is the deadline for abstracts for the 24th annual conference on New Ways of Analyzing Variation, to be held at the University of Pennsylvania Oct. 12–15. Papers are solicited in particular for projected sessions on:

—Historical syntax and the time course of linguistic change;

—Linguistic research in the high school context;

—The linguistic situation of Asian minorities.

Send abstracts to the e-mail address nwave24@babel.ling.upenn.edu. Indicate category: 20-minute paper or poster session.

Invited speakers: Gregory Guy, Anthony Kroch, and Donald Winford.

Coordinator: **William Labov**, Linguistics Dept., Univ. of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia PA 19104.

SECOL 1996

December 5 is the deadline for abstracts for the annual meeting of the Southeastern Conference on Linguistics, to be held at Texas A&M University March 15–16, 1996. All areas of linguistics are welcome. For information and abstract guidelines, contact Joan Weatherly, English, Univ. of Memphis, Memphis TN 38152.

e-as-y Does It

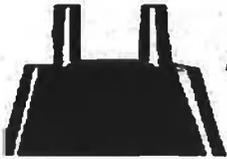
At the suggestion of more than one member, the directory of ADS members in the September issue of this newsletter will include e-mail addresses. To make sure yours is included, send it by e-mail to the Executive Secretary at AAllan@aol.com.

ADS members are especially welcome to join the ADS-L discussion list, which brings to your e-mail box on the average several messages a day pertaining to matters of dialect, slang, usage, and neologism. There are discussions of textbooks and teaching, and help with bibliographical references. It's a civilized list. Last October Wayne Glowka (wglowka@mail.gac.peachnet.edu) characterized it thus:

"This and Arthurnet are two very friendly lists. Those of you who have been on Chaucernet and Medtextl, as I have been, know that some people on some lists are downright foul and nasty, telling students to go somewhere else to ask questions, telling fellow scholars to go to the library and do their own work, and telling everyone to go to hell for merely existing. No one here seems to mind questions about common knowledge, and the system itself does not send you an insulting list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) the way a certain long-winded medieval English list does.

"No, the ADS is, unlike other professional organizations and groups, composed of self-actuated, friendly folks, trained to discuss theory and to discuss 'funny words used around here for various things.' Here's to one of the few professional societies with a sense of humanity and a sense of humor. No need to apologize here."

To subscribe to ADS-L, address to listserv@uga.cc.uga.edu the message: sub ads-l Your Name. To get a directory of ADS-L subscribers, send to the same address the message: review ads-l. Any questions? Ask list owner Natalie Maynor at Maynor@ra.msstate.edu.



ANNUAL MEETING 1995

Chicago • December 27–30



A dozen presentations on endangered dialects—in the United States, Canada, and even across the Atlantic—will be the special focus of this year's ADS Annual Meeting.

For the first time, ADS will also sponsor a session or two jointly with our hotel mates, the American Name Society. There is still opportunity to propose an ADS-ANS paper: *September 1* is the deadline for proposals to be received by ADS Executive Secretary Allan Metcalf.

Other features, in addition to our regular sessions:

—New Words of 1995 (*Hello?* Please send nominations in advance to **John Algeo**, PO Box 270, Wheaton IL 60189-0270, e-mail algeo@ix.netcom.com, or **David Barnhart**, PO Box 247, Cold Spring NY 10516, e-mail Lexik@highlands.com.)

—Panel on uses of the *Dictionary of American Regional English*.

—Bring-Your-Own-Book Exhibit; Annual Luncheon; session on book contracts.

Hotel: The luxurious, comfortable, quiet, totally remodeled (for \$5 million, at this very moment) Barclay Suites Hotel, soon to be Summerfield Suites. Don't worry about the name change: it's still at 166 East Superior in Chicago, and our deal is still just \$79 a night for a suite (it's all-suites), single or double occupancy, including full breakfast buffet. For a brochure on the hotel, ask the Executive Secretary. And for those reservations phone (800) 833-4353 or (312) 787-6000; ask for the American Dialect Society rate. Reserve now so you won't miss out!

Registration: For the first time in ADS history: \$20, students \$10.

Tentative Program

ADS at MLA

Language and Identity

ADS-sponsored session at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association of America, Chicago, Dec. 27–30. Day, time, and location to be announced.

Chair: William A. Kretzschmar, Jr., Univ. of Georgia.

- "Our Language, Our Selves." **Sonja Lanehart**, Univ. of Georgia.

- "The Pronunciation of Raven I. McDavid, Jr." **Bruce Southard**, East Carolina Univ.

- "Mapping with Numbers." **Deanna Light**, Univ. of Georgia.

MLA registration is required to attend. Write MLA Convention Office, 10 Astor Place, New York NY 10003-6981; phone (212) 614-6372; e-mail moad@cuvmb.cc.columbia.edu.

Thursday, December 28

Barclay Suites Hotel

10:00–11:00 a.m.: New Words Committee. Review of new words of 1995; nominations for Word of the Year.

11:00 a.m.: Book contracts: terms and negotiation. **Christine Ammer**, Lexington, Mass.

Afternoon: ADS-ANS Joint Meeting (program to be determined; send proposals to the ADS Executive Secretary by Sept. 1).

Friday, December 29

Barclay Suites Hotel

8:00 a.m.: ADS Executive Council.

1:00–5:30 p.m.: **Dialect obsolescence and endangered dialects**

- **Introduction:** On Dialect Obsolescence: Description, Theory, and Action. **Walt Wolfram**, North Carolina State Univ.

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Endangered Dialects, New Words: ADS Annual Meeting, Dec. 29–30

(Continued from Page 3)

- The South: **Guy Bailey**, Memphis State Univ.

- Rural African-American Vernacular English in the South: **Patricia Cukor-Avila**, Univ. of North Texas.

- Gullah: **Salikoko Mufwene**, Univ. of Chicago.

- The Outer Banks: **Natalie Schilling-Estes** and **Walt Wolfram**, North Carolina State Univ.

- Pennsylvania German: **Silke Van Ness**, State Univ. of New York, Albany.

- South Midland in the Midwest: **Timothy C. Frazer**, Western Illinois Univ.

- Spanish dialects in the Southwest: **Garland Bills**, Univ. of New Mexico.

- African Nova Scotian English: **Sali Tagliamonte** and **Shana Poplack**, Univ. of Ottawa.

- Ulster Scots (Scots-Irish): **John M. Kirk**, Queen's Univ., Belfast.

- Minority "dialects" in Galicia (Spain), Portugal and Brazil: **Brian F. Head**, State Univ. of New York, Albany, and **António Alves**, Univ. de Minho.

5:30–6:30 p.m.: New Words of 1995.

6:30–7:30 p.m.: Bring-Your-Own-Book Exhibit and Reception.

Saturday, December 30

Barclay Suites Hotel

8:00–9:00 a.m.: Annual Business Meeting.

9:00–11:30 a.m.: Independent Session

- Panel on the uses of *DARE* in research and teaching. Chaired by **Joan Houston Hall**, *DARE*.

- "Soda or Pop?" **Luanne von Schneidmesser**, *DARE*.

- "Y'all: Questions and Some Tentative Answers." **Natalie Maynor**, Mississippi State Univ.

- "Greazy, Yes, but How Much So and When?" **Marvin K.L. Ching**, Univ. of Memphis.

- "The Northern-Midland Boundary in Iowa Again? A Global Approach to Dialect Analysis." **Vera Horvath** and **Charles L. Houck**, Ball State Univ.

- " 'I Might Could Be Polylectal': Reports from the American Field." **Beverly Olson Flanigan**, Ohio Univ.

Noon–1:00 p.m.: Annual Luncheon.

Name Society at MLA

Sessions sponsored by the American Name Society at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association of America, Chicago, Dec. 27–30. Day, time, and location to be announced. (Except for these, all ANS sessions will be at the Barclay, where ADS meets.)

Session 1. Chair, **Wayne Finke**, Baruch Coll. CUNY.

- "On a first name basis: The title as a device of literary onomastics." **Leonard Ashley**, Brooklyn Coll. CUNY.

- "Aponyms used for characterization and plot development in Evelyn Waugh's satires." **Don Nilsen**, Arizona State Univ.

- "Names in selected novels of Louisa May Alcott." **Patricia Cearley**, South Plains Coll.

- "Names in *The Name of the Rose*." **Zacharias Thundy**, Northern Michigan U.

Session 2. Chair, **Lurline Coltharp**, Univ. of Texas, El Paso.

- "Jubela, Jubelo, and Jubelum: The three Masonic assassins." **Paul Rich** and **Guillermo de los Reyes**, Univ. de las Américas.

- "Picking the winners in business and politics: Phonemic patterns in naming." **Grant Smith**, Eastern Washington Univ.

- "Place name eponyms from literature." **Alleen Pace Nilsen**, Arizona State Univ.

- "Spanish Language place names in the Yucatan peninsula, Mexico." **Wayne Finke**.

Annual banquet: Thursday, Dec. 28. The Saloon, 200 East Chestnut St., within walking distance of the Barclay.

The Dictionary Society, Cleveland, July 20–22: Our Summer Meeting

There's a scholarly group our size—the Dictionary Society of North America—with our sort of interests and our sort of people. When they meet, we pay attention. In fact, for more years than the fingers on your hands, whenever DSNA holds its biennial meeting, we endorse it as the ADS summer meeting. So it is for 1995 at Cleveland State University, July 20–22. We love it!

Registration is \$35, the Friday evening banquet another \$35. July 1 is the deadline.

Housing is available in dormitories on campus (about \$15 a night); at Glidden House, a bed-and-breakfast inn on campus (\$88 single, \$98 double); and at the Alcazar Hotel, two miles away (\$61–\$84).

For information and registration forms, write Secretary-Treasurer Louis T. Milic, DSNA, RT-937, Cleveland State Univ., 1983 East 24 St., Cleveland OH 44115-2403; phone (216) 687-3953; fax (216) 687-9366; e-mail R0097@vmcms.csuohio.edu.

Meeting chair, **P.K. Saha**, Case Western Reserve Univ. Tentative program:

Thursday, July 20

Case Western Reserve University, Thwing Center Ballroom

8:30 a.m., Welcome

8:45–10:15 a.m., Session 1: Amerindian Panel

Chair: **William Frawley**, U. of Delaware

- The Hopi Dictionary. **Kenneth Hill**, Univ. of Arizona.

- Alaskan Athabaskan lexicography. **James Kari**, Univ. of Alaska.

- Making a Zapotec dictionary. **Pamela Munro**, UCLA.

- Ethnographies, dictionaries, encyclopedias. **Oswald Werner**, Northwestern Univ.

10:30–noon, Session 2

Chair: **Sidney Landau**, Cambridge Univ. Press.

- British English, American English, and the dictionaries. **Frank Abate**, Dictionary and Reference Specialists, Old Saybrook, CT.

- Can a printed dictionary adequately cover more than one English? **Paul Heacock**, Cambridge Univ. Press.

- English etymology in English dictionaries. **Anatoly Liberman**, Univ. of Minnesota. 1:30–3:00 p.m., Session 3

Chair: **Mike Agnes**, Webster's New World.

- Extending the treatment of pronunciation entries in general dictionaries. **Arthur Bronstein**, Univ. of California, Berkeley.

- *Flirt* and *date* in modern dictionaries. **Jesse Sheidlower**, Random House.

- The labels *dialect* and *non-standard* in American college dictionaries. **Virginia McDavid**, Chicago State Univ., emer.

3:30–4:50 p.m., Session 4

Chair: **Victoria Neufeldt**, Merriam-Webster.

- *Interpretatio Romana* as an influence on Old English vocabulary. **Earl R. Anderson**, Cleveland State Univ.

- Syntax in dictionaries. **Luanne von Schneidmesser**, *DARE*.

- Junius's *Etymologicum Anglicum*: Etymology and scholarship in the seventeenth century.

5:00–6:00 p.m., Business meeting

6:00–7:30 p.m., Reception (1914 Lounge)

Friday, July 21

Thwing Center Ballroom

8:30–10 a.m., Session 5: *Century Dictionary*

Chair: **Richard W. Bailey**, Univ. of Michigan.

- Overview: *The Century* after a century. **Richard W. Bailey**.

- Defining. **E. Ward Gilman**, Merriam-Webster.

- Illustrations. **Michael Hancher**, Univ. of Minnesota.

- Typography. **Allan Metcalf**, MacMurray College.

- Aftermath. **Robert Barnhart**, Barnhart Books.

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DSNA July 21–22 in Cleveland: More Lexicomania

(Continued from Page 5)

10:30 a.m.–noon, Session 6.

Chair: **Joan Hall**, *DARE*.

- Rosenberg's alphabetical system for arranging Chinese characters in a dictionary. **John S. Barlow**, Concord, MA.

- Phrasal verbs in bilingual dictionaries. **Morton Benson**, Univ. of Pennsylvania.

- Search for cross-linguistic equivalents—an endless game. **Yoshiaki Otani**, Tokyo.

1:30–3:00 p.m., Session 7

Chair: **David Guralnik**

- Abbreviations listed in dictionaries: Are they up to date? **Robert Wachal**, Univ. of Iowa.

- Hey lady! **Ardith Meier**, Univ. of Northern Iowa.

3:30–5:00 p.m., Session 8

Chair: **P.K. Saha**, Case Western Reserve Univ.

- National lexicographies in turbulent times: Croatian lexicography regaining its identity. **Marija Bratanic**, Zagreb.

- What's new in Russian lexicography in the post-Soviet world. **Donna Farina**, Jersey City, NJ.

- A multilingual etymological learner's dictionary. **Charles Strong**, Minnville, OR.

6:30–9:00 p.m. Cash bar (1914 Lounge) and banquet

Saturday, July 22

Thwing Center Ballroom

9:00–11:00 a.m., Session 9

Chair: **William Chisholm**, Cleveland State Univ.

- A survey of the teaching of lexicography, 1979–1995. **J. Edward Gates**, Indiana State Univ., emer.

- Chauncey A. Goodrich, the Webster heirs and the Merriam brothers. **Edwin A. Miles**, Univ. of Houston, emer.

- Compiling a dictionary of Nigerianisms: some problems and prospects. **Marybeth Geanious**, Urbana, IL.

- Computerized dictionaries for learners of English. **Edward McCorduck**, Homer, NY.

12:30–3:00 p.m., Neology

Chair: **John Algeo**, Univ. of Georgia, emer. Panel: **Mike Agnes**, Webster's New World; **David Barnhart**, Lexik House; **David Jost**, Houghton Mifflin; **Sidney Landau**, Cambridge Univ. Press; **Victoria Neufeldt**, Merriam-Webster; **Jesse Sheidlower**, Random House.

3:30–5:00 p.m. Reception at Webster's New World Dictionary, Citizens Building, Euclid Ave. and 9th St.

ADS at LSA, San Diego, January

ADS-sponsored session at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Jan. 4–7, San Diego, Sheraton Harbor Island.

Spanish and English in Contact in the Border States

Session organized by Robert Bayley

Chair: **Walt Wolfram**, North Carolina State Univ.

- Grammaticalization in Texas Spanish: **MaryEllen Garcia**, Univ. of Texas, San Antonio.

- Another Look at Syntactic Borrowing in the Spanish of Los Angeles: **Carmen Silva-Corvalan**, Univ. of Southern California.

- Subject pronoun variation in Mexican-descent children's oral and written narratives: **Lucinda Pease-Alvarez**, Univ. of California, Santa Cruz, and **Robert Bayley**, Univ. of Texas, San Antonio.

- Language and Identity among California Latina Youth: **Norma Mendoza-Denton**, Stanford Univ.

- Ethnicity and Chicano English: **Otto Santa Ana**, Univ. of New Mexico.

- Chicano Spanish: **Guadalupe Valdes**, Univ. of California, Berkeley.

For information on the LSA meeting write LSA, 1325 18th St. NW Suite 211, Washington DC 20036-6501; phone (202) 835-1714; e-mail zzlsa@gallua.gallaudet.edu.

Theory, Vico, Gullah, Black Talk: Our New Books

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

Jack Chambers. *Sociolinguistic Theory: Language Variation and Its Social Significance.* Cambridge, Mass. and Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell, 1995. 284 pages with 34 figures and 28 tables. A critical synthesis of the core area of sociolinguistics. Three chapters discuss the crucial social variables of social stratification, sex, and age. These are framed by a chapter on the historical and theoretical significance of the linguistic variable, and a final chapter on the social and cultural purposes of linguistic variation. ISBN hardcover 0-631-18325-6, paperback 0-631-18326-4.

Marcel Danesi and **Frank Nuessel**, eds. *The Imaginative Basis of Thought and Culture: Contemporary Perspectives on Giambattista Vico.* CSPI (PO Box 336, Lockport NY 14095; phone 416-929-2774). 146 pages. Paperback \$22.95. State-of-the-art reports by leading experts on the relevance of Vico today to their respective fields. Includes Nuessel's "Vico and Contemporary Views of Language." ISBN 1-55130-048-6.

Miklós Kontra and Csaba Pléh, eds. *Hungarian Sociolinguistics.* International Journal of the Sociology of Language 111. Mouton de Gruyter, 1995.

Michael Montgomery, ed. *The Crucible of Carolina: Essays on the Development of Gullah Language and Culture.* Univ. of Georgia Press, 1994. 256 pages with 10 photographs. Cloth \$50. Furthers and challenges the pioneering work of Lorenzo Dow Turner, considering Caribbean as well as African influences on Gullah. The ten contributors include ADS members **Frederic G. Cassidy**, **Tometro Hopkins**, **Montgomery**, and **Salikoko Mufwene**. ISBN 0-8203-1623-7.

Michael Montgomery, ed. *Ulster Scots Speech: A Sociolinguistic Study* by Rona K. Kingsmore. Univ. of Alabama Press, 1995.

272 pages. Paper \$26.95. Examines phonological variation in the speech of the inhabitants of Coleraine, a small town in Northern Ireland. Kingsmore concentrates on the social and family networks of this urban working-class community and their influence on the status and stigma of competing nonstandard pronunciations.

Geneva Smitherman. *Black Talk: Words and Phrases from the Hood to the Amen Corner.* Houghton Mifflin, 1994. Cloth \$17.95, paper \$10.95. A dictionary of words, phrases, and sayings used by Black Americans of all ages. With a historical overview of African American English, and cartoons illustrating Black conversations. "Like it bees dat way cause it's a Black Thang": *Black Talk* explains the rule for using *bees* and the meaning of *Black Thang*. ISBN 0-395-67410-7 cloth, 0-395-69992-4 paper.

Not for nothin'

(One example of conversation on the ADS-L e-mail discussion list [see p. 3] is the following comment about "not for nothin'.")

The south central Pennsylvania Dutch equivalent is *makes no nevermind*. In the stoic German Protestant way, it is also a way of denigrating one's own achievements so as not to appear too proud, of letting someone off the hook, and of indicating that you don't have a preference, among others.

It is an appropriate response to all of the following questions:

"That's a lovely barn you've built." (in the sense of "Aw, shucks")

"I'm so sorry I ran over your tulip bed." (in the sense of "That's OK")

"Do you want scrapple or pork roll with your breakfast? (in the sense of "It doesn't matter to me one way or the other")

"I'd like to be an astronaut someday." (in the sense of "It makes no difference what you want, you won't get it")

—Molly Dickmeyer, Medical Editor and former hick (dickmeyer@lippincott.com)

REGIONAL MEETINGS

Rocky Mountain Region

In association with RMMLA, Oct. 19–21; Spokane, Eastern Washington Univ.

- “Black American English: A Cultural Dialect.” **Sandra Watson**, New Mexico State Univ.

- “A Phonological Analysis of African-American Vernacular English in ‘Middletown’: A Test of Divergence Hypothesis.” **Xiaozhao Huang**, Univ. of North Dakota.

- “‘He do the police in different voices’: Poetic Intonation in American Dialects.” **Burns Cooper**, Univ. of Alaska, Fairbanks.

- “Words into Western English.” **Thomas Clark**, Univ. of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Chair: **Mary Morzinski**, Berry Coll.

ADS Regional Secretary 1995–96: **Grant W. Smith**, English Dept., Eastern Washington Univ., Cheney WA 99004; e-mail gsmith@ewu.edu.

Membership in RMMLA is \$20 regular, \$10 student. Write RMMLA Executive Director Charles G. Davis, Dept. of English, Boise State Univ., Boise ID 83725; phone (208) 385-1199.

Future meeting: 1996 Oct. 24–26 Albuquerque, New Mexico.

South Central Regional Meeting

In association with SCMLA, Oct. 26–28, Houston, Wyndham Warwick Hotel.

5:45–7:15 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 26 (tentative).

- “Rhetoric and the Vernacular in Trinidad and Tobago: A Study of the Dialect in Earl Lovelace’s *Wine of Astonishment*.” **Elsa P. Rogers**, Univ. of Southwestern Louisiana.

- “The Lexicon of the Night: Variations in Vamparin Vocabulary in the Wake of Anne Rice.” **Thomas Dubose**, Louisiana State Univ., Shreveport.

- “Why Can’t Cajun English Be a Creole?” **Sherri L. Condon**, Univ. of Southwestern Louisiana.

Chair: **Nicole Pepinster Greene**, Univ. of Southwest Louisiana.

ADS Regional Secretary 1994–95: **Charles B. Martin**, Dept. of English, Univ. of North Texas, P.O. Box 13827, Denton TX 76203-3827; phone (817) 565-2149.

Preregistration is \$35, registration \$40; rooms \$72. Membership in SCMLA is \$20 full professors, \$15 associate and assistant professors, \$10 instructors and students. Write SCMLA, Katherine E. Kelly, Executive Director, Dept. of English, Texas A&M Univ., College Station TX 77843-4227; phone (409) 845-7041; e-mail scmla@venus.tamu.edu.

Future meetings: 1996 end of October, San Antonio, St. Anthony Hotel; 1997 Dallas-Fort Worth.

Midwest Regional Meeting

In association with MMLA, Nov. 2–4, St. Louis, Marriott Pavilion Hotel.

Midday Friday, Nov. 3 (tentative time).

Focus on the Midland Dialect

- “Neither Northern Nor Southern: Phonological Evidence for the North Midland Region.” **William Labov**, **Sherry Ash**, **Charles Boberg**, Univ. of Pennsylvania.

- “Some Grammatical Correlates to the Midland Dialect.” **Thomas Murray**, Kansas State Univ.

- “Additional Arguments For the Midland Dialect.” **Timothy C. Frazer**, Western Illinois Univ.

- “Evidence For the Location of a North-Midland Boundary: The Pronunciation of *on*.” **Charles Boberg**, Univ. of Pennsylvania.

Chair and discussant: **Beth Lee Simon**, Indiana Univ.-Purdue Univ., Fort Wayne.

ADS Regional Secretary 1995–96: **Beth Lee Simon**, CM 109, Dept. of English and Linguistics, IPFW, Fort Wayne, IN 46805; phone (219) 424-8834; e-mail simon@cvax.ipfw.indiana.edu.

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Midwest Regional Meeting

(Continued from preceding page)

Preregistration is \$30. Membership in MMLA is \$25 full and associate professors, \$20 other faculty, \$15 students. Write MMLA, 302 English/Philosophy Bldg., Univ. of Iowa, Iowa City IA 52242-1408; phone (319) 335-0331.

Future meetings: 1996 Nov. 7-9 Minneapolis, Marriott City Center; 1997 Nov. 6-8 Chicago, Ramada Congress Hotel.

South Atlantic Regional Meeting

In association with SAMLA, Nov. 3-5, Atlanta, Marriott Marquis.

3:15-4:40 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 4.

- "Risks to Reliability in Sociolinguistic Research." **Natalie Maynor**, Mississippi State Univ.

- "Cajun is Dead: Long Live Cajun!" **Sylvie Dubois** and **Megan Melancon**, Louisiana State Univ., Baton Rouge.

- "The Rediscovery of the Ulster Scots Language." **Michael Montgomery**, Univ. of South Carolina.

Chair: **Connie Eble**, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

ADS Regional Secretary 1995-96: **Natalie Maynor**, English Dept., Mississippi State Univ., Drawer E, Mississippi State MS 39762; e-mail maynor@ramsstate.edu.

Nominating Committee: **Crawford Feagin**, Arlington, Virginia; **Walt Wolfram**, North Carolina State Univ.; **Ellen Johnson**, Piedmont College, chair.

Preregistration is \$30, registration \$35. Membership in SAMLA is \$15 for individuals, \$8 for students. Write SAMLA, Georgia State Univ., University Plaza, Atlanta GA 30303-3083; phone (404) 651-2693.

Future meetings: 1996 Nov. 8-10 Savannah; 1997 Atlanta.

Nominate a student for Presidential Honorary Membership! Write ADS President **Lawrence M. Davis**, English Dept., Wichita State Univ., Wichita KS 67260-0014.

NCTE, November: Proper Names

At the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, San Diego, Nov. 16-21.

ADS-sponsored Session C23

Inclusive Language, Political Correctness, and Names of Groups

2:30-3:45 p.m. Friday, Nov. 17

- "Ignorance and Prescriptivism: Group Names in Cross-Cultural Perspective." **M. Lynne Murphy**, Univ. of the Witwatersrand.

- "The Ethnic Cleansing of American English." **John Baugh**, Stanford Univ.

- "Inclusive Language or Censorship? Speech Codes, Feminism, and the Classroom." **Gail Stygall**, Univ. of Washington.

Program chair: **Dennis Baron**, Dept. of English, Univ. of Illinois, 608 South Wright St., Urbana IL 61801, phone (217) 333-2392, fax (217) 333-4321; e-mail debaron@uiuc.edu.

For convention information, write NCTE at 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801-1096; phone (217) 328-3870.

LASSO in Las Cruces, Oct. 6-8

The 24th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Association of the Southwest will be held Oct. 6-8 at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico. Invited speaker: George Lakoff, Univ. of California, Berkeley.

June 15 is the deadline for 250-word abstracts to the e-mail address 74563.641@compuserve.com, or by mail to Carolyn Hartnett, 2027 Bay St., Texas City TX 77590; phone (409) 948-1446. Twenty-minute papers in any area of linguistics will be considered; submissions are particularly encouraged in "Language maintenance and shift" and "Language and computers." Papers by graduate students are especially solicited and will be considered for the \$250 Helmut Esau Prize.

For information on LASSO write Executive Director Garland D. Bills, Dept. of Linguistics, Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131-1196; e-mail gbills@unm.edu.

An Annotated, Computerized Bibliography: Proposal and Request

(Excerpts from a proposal by Jay Robert Reese)

We are all aware of the increasing volume of scholarship in our discipline and the decreasing amount of time we have to keep ourselves current. To help with the problem, I am compiling a computerized, annotated bibliography of American dialectology from 1887 through 1994 to be published either on CD-ROM or on a read-only version of the program Procite.

The annotation will be extensive and will permit searching the database using a large number of key terms and descriptors, even searching for particular types of dialect items when it is impossible to list the actual items discussed. It will be possible to search by any word in the annotation, and the descriptor field will permit rapid search of time period, type of publication, model of study, conception of dialect, principal linguistic subject (phonology, etc.), area of interest (theory, methodology, pedagogy, etc.), type of informant, geographical area, dialect identifier (Appalachian, Black, etc.), importance, and level of reading difficulty.

I think I have worked out most of the difficulties in the form and in the search terms, so

If you would like to help by—

1) supplying a copy of your personal bibliography to make certain your own work is accurately represented,

2) collecting appropriate citations from regional journals, or

3) abstracting articles for the database,

write **Jay Robert Reese**, English Dept., East Tennessee State University, Box 70683, Johnson City TN 37614-0683.

Each person who works on the database will be recognized, and each abstract written by a participant will be identified as such.

now I would like to elicit help from ADS members. At present over 4,000 books and articles have been identified, but I know some, especially in regional journals, have been missed. In addition, each article must be abstracted according to a standard formula. About one-fourth have been annotated so far.

The project has a two-year time period for completion. Should there be sufficient interest, I will request a meeting at various ADS conferences so we can get together and go over details.

SAMPLE ENTRY

Rec#3480. Williams, Cratis D. "Mountaineers Mind Their Manners (VI)." *Mountain Life and Work* 38.2 (1962): 19–25.

Thesis: The dialect of the Mountaineer reflects his concern for manners. "Mountaineers are scrupulously punctilious in observing manners and exchanging civilities" (19). "Simple but for all that extremely rigid, manners in the mountains reflect the highlander's regard for the appropriateness of things and serve as protective devices for his keenly sensitive independence and his old-fashioned individuality" (25).

Description: An article which describes various customs, behavior, and cultural characteristics of Williams' Appalachian Mountaineers, especially how they behave in social situations, family life, church meetings, and inter-generational interaction. Though more an article on folk culture than dialect, Williams does include in his description of day-to-day activities dialogue which he believed appropriate for the situation.

Interpretative Comment: Contains little linguistic information not found in other articles and presents Appalachian Mountaineer in a stereotypical manner. One cannot be certain that the dialogue Williams provides was actually heard or was re-created for the article.

Key Words: [Appalachian/Mountain dialect/English] [Appalachian/Southern mountaineer]

Item Identifiers: [animal names] [church/religious terms] [eating terms] [farming terms] [food terms] [greeting terms] [people names] [physical attributes] [psycho-social attributes] [rhetorical set expressions] [rural terms/expressions] [size/measurement terms] [terms of address]

Key Items: *When possible to include*

Rhetorical Expressions: {Hain't eat enough to keep his stomnick from vavin' in}; {Old woman, fry this man a young pullet. He hain't got no appetite for this common grub.}; {Come and go with me.}; {if he had his druthers}; {I'm not sugar nur salt. A little water won't melt me, I don't reckon.}

Related Works:

Descriptors: 3/POPULAR/FOLKLORIC/-II/Lex/RhetExp/Oral Rhetoric/Rural/NS/South/Appal/(4)L

DARE Seeks Kewsters, Pollyannas, Long-Tailed Family

Thanks to the many readers who answer these Queries. (Some of these queries are certainly queries.) Write Prof. F. G. Cassidy, *Dictionary of American Regional English*, 6125 Helen C. White Hall, 600 North Park St., Madison, WI 53706; e-mail fcassidy@facstaff.wisc.edu.

devil's dice—Children in Charlottesville, VA, are said to use the term for small pebbles, the largest about one inch in diameter. We'd like to know more!

humusy—moist (soil). Reported as in use in southwest NY, northern PA, and among "old time Germans" in Buffalo. Does it ring any bells?

Johnny Appleseed weed—Anthemis cotula or chamomile. Does it wander about planting seeds? It's not in our botany books.

kewster (or **cuester**?)—A mischievous child. We have a single example (1963) from an old, educated, white woman informant (Tennessee) who says it's old fashioned.

kick through—To pay up. From seven informants: California, Oregon, Washington. Clearly a northwest phrase, similar to, but not the same as, *to kick in*.

lander—Does anyone know this as a roof gutter and/or downspout? We have two citations from northern England but our only U.S. example is from Wisconsin.

long-tailed family—One Iowa example from 1941: a family with "seven daughters and three or four sons." Is this known elsewhere? Still current?

long-way-round kinfolks—Distant relatives. We have only one instance of this, but the basic idea is the same as the preceding, and as "shirt-tail relatives."

maintainer—One who keeps roads in good condition. Upper Mississippi Valley, Iowa, Missouri. We'd like written examples. Is it (semi-) official?

nasty man—Said to mean a greasy spoon. Could this be the name of an unpretentious restaurant or lunchroom?

nation ball—From one informant, California, who says it's "dodge ball when played in teams." Further explanation requested, and where else is it played?

nose-to-nose—From central-eastern PA, meaning "at odds," as in "those two are nose to nose." Where else is this known?

(not) to fit too quick or too soon—An inexact fit, too loose or too tight. We'd like more evidence.

to note up for—Does anyone know this phrase meaning 'to indicate,' as in "The clouds note up for rain"? Where? When?

noway and/or **noways**, adverb.—We are interested in examples in which the meaning is unequivocally "anyway; anyhow; in any case."

oak petal—In a 1961 quote from Arizona. William O. Douglas uses the term for an Arizona plant, about a foot high, bearing flowers in crowded clusters with white petals lobed like oak leaves. Can anyone label it with a scientific name or provide further information?

oat(s) bugs (or **fly** or **midget**, etc.)—Sixteen informants, mostly from the North and West Midland areas. This has been identified as the cereal thrips (*Limothrips cerealium*). One Pennsylvania informant, however, responded with *oats bug* to a question about other creatures that make a clicking or shrilling or chirping sound. Is the term used for insects other than the cereal thrips, or perhaps for the harvest mite?

ocote—A pinyon (*Pinus cembroides*) or other resinous pine used for torches in NM, CO, Mexico. Is this fully American, said naturally in American English context?

pollyanna—A member of a women's social group whose name one draws, and to whom one is expected to give a small gift. Said to be common in Philadelphia, New Jersey, and Delaware Valley from 1940 on. We'd like more evidence.

D is for the Definitions it gives us,
A is for its Accuracy, and Absence of rancor;
R is its Response to all our questions,
E is for our Eagerness for more. . . .

The Trouble with *DARE*

is that it's running out of money. Yes, our *Dictionary of American Regional English*—the American Dialect Society's great project now coming into fruition at the University of Wisconsin after a century of hopes, plans, and hard work—needs our help to continue. Thanks to the eleemosynary exertions of Chief Editor Fred Cassidy, *DARE* has never cost the American Dialect Society a cent, even though it is our chief project. But now it needs help from ADS members.

Bad news: The National Endowment for the Humanities has just awarded *DARE* \$400,000 in outright funds and \$300,000 in matching funds over a three-year period. How can this be bad? Associate Editor Joan Hall:

Matchless: "The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which has been our primary source of private funding for seventeen years (contrary to their usual policy of not providing support for more than a decade), has had to switch their funds to other worthy projects. That means that if we are to obtain matching funds from NEH, we have to find other private sources of funds. Gifts from interested individuals will be very welcome. In addition, if others have suggestions of foundations that might be willing to entertain a funding proposal from *DARE*, we would be delighted to hear about them also.

Money: "Checks may be made payable to the University of Wisconsin Foundation, with *DARE* on the memo line. They can be sent to Associate Editor Joan Hall at *DARE*, 6125 Helen White Hall, 600 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706. Or they may be sent directly to the University of Wisconsin Foundation at 1848 University Ave., Madison, WI 53705.

Testimony: "I asked a Program Officer at NEH whether letters testifying to the value and utility of *DARE* would help our case at NEH, since they are always looking for proof that projects they support have 'ripple benefits' in education and contribute to humanities scholarship in general. She felt that, since the very existence of NEH is threatened in Congress, a better idea would be to have supporters write their own Senators and Representatives, urging continued funding for NEH and mentioning *DARE* as a specific example of an NEH project that has helped them in their own work.

"So if *DARE* has been useful to you, whether as a research tool, a teaching tool, or simply as evidence of the continuing exuberance and diversity of American English, please tell your Congress people, and send a copy of your letter to Dr. Martha Chomiak, Program Officer, Division of Research Programs, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20506."

New Editor and Teaching Committee Chair

With this issue, Alan Manning, the new chair of the ADS Committee on Teaching, will assume the editorship of the *ADS Teaching Newsletter*. ADS members interested in serving on the Teaching Committee are invited to contact Alan at Dept. of Linguistics, 2129 JKHB, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602, phone (801)-378-2974, e-mail alan_manning@byu.edu. Members are also invited to contribute reviews, short articles, or other items to the *Teaching Newsletter*.

On Testing Students' Knowledge of Language Variation and Usage

Thomas E. Murray
Kansas State University

One pedagogical topic absent from Glowka and Lance's *Language Variation in North American English* (New York: MLA, 1993) is how to test students' mastery of the principles of language variation and usage. The omission is surprising, not least because tests are a necessary evil in most undergraduate curricula, including courses on language variation and usage. The question, then, is this: How can we best examine the students in such courses to determine what they have gained from class discussions, lectures, field research, and assigned readings? An objective test, perhaps, with true/false, fill-in-the-blank, matching, and/or multiple-choice questions? Or an essay test that requires students to fill their bluebooks with inspired prose? Or maybe something between these two extremes—say, a test with "short answer" questions?

What I would like to suggest here is that the format of the test is less important than that the test examine students' "functional knowledge" of the course material. It may be impressive for a student to recount the facts of Labov's investigation of the English spoken in New York City, for example, but such knowledge is meaningless unless the student can also explain why it would be difficult to hear the difference in the pronunciation of /r/ between a lower-class speaker using the "minimal pairs" speech style and an upper-middle-class speaker using the "careful" speech style.

The obvious analogy is to mathematics. We all memorized our multiplication tables at an early age, but what good would that knowledge be if we could not multiply, say, 43 by 92? Or consider the subject of

literature: What good is knowing the meaning of *protagonist*, *meter*, and *synecdoche* unless we can use that knowledge to better understand poems, plays, and fiction? Or, again, how thoroughly has a student mastered the IPA if he or she cannot transcribe? The point is that to "know about" language variation and usage ought to entail the ability to "use" that knowledge, not merely to recite it.

Let's say we wish to test our students' mastery of two principles—that everyone speaks a dialect and that there is no one standard dialect in the U.S. We could have the students write essays, adducing numerous illustrations (which the students would recount from class lectures and assigned readings); or we could have the students define terms such as *dialect*, *standard*, and *prestige dialect*; or we could have the students answer any number of objective questions. Just as easily, however, we could give the students questions such as Q1 and Q2—which, however elementary, are unanswerable if the students do not have a working knowledge of the principles in question (in Q2 and many of the other questions given here, I use *American Tongues* as a springboard, but similar questions can be written without referring to the film):

Q1. Before Margaret Thatcher, the former Prime Minister of England, assumed office, she had to hire a speech therapist to help her sharpen her mastery of Received Pronunciation (the standard British dialect). Yet in the U.S., a number of dialectally diverse men have been president; compare, e.g., the pronunciation accents of Kennedy, Johnson, Ford, Carter, and Clinton, to name just a few. Comment. Is it likely that anyone elected president of the U.S. would ever have to hire a speech therapist before taking office? If you believe not, then why might some presidents have done so anyway (Bush, Carter, and Clinton did; so did probably many others as well)? Note: Your answering this question correctly does not depend on your having heard any of the presidents listed earlier speak.

Q2. One of the people featured in *American Tongues* remarked that "Here in Ohio, we talk bland. No accent, no uniqueness, nothing. We're just right out of the dictionary." In the same film, the woman whose voice is used by Directory Assistance said that she was chosen for that role because she has "a voice from nowhere"—i.e., because she uses "generic speech, what a lot of people call homogenized English." Also in the same film,

however, the narrator made the point that "everyone speaks with an accent." Comment on the disparity between these three statements. Why do the Ohioan and the woman from Directory Assistance believe what they said to be true? To what extent, if any, are those statements true?

Or consider Q3, which is designed to test students' basic knowledge of the principles that there are no single-style speakers and that all language is context-based:

Q3. A friend claims that her business associate "always sounds so formal when she talks; there's just no stylistic variation whatsoever." How do you respond? If you think she is wrong, speculate on why she may have drawn such a conclusion.

Though the question can easily be made more difficult for advanced classes, in each of its various forms it will ascertain whether students have mastered the basic principles in question, and to some extent whether students can reason logically and analytically. Granted, testing this latter skill may seem unfair, since some students are naturally more "left-brain-oriented" than others, but logic and reasoning are as fundamental to linguistics as creativity and holistic spacial orientation, both traditionally "right-brain" activities, are to fields like music and architecture.

My students call questions such as Q1, Q2, and Q3 "problems," and the pun is well-taken; in fact, such questions are problems in the sense of being problematic just because they are problems in the sense of requiring original thought. Most students do not like to think logically or analytically, and not just because such thinking is hard work. The sad truth is that many of us have lapsed into the bad habit of requiring students to memorize information rather than think about it—and the conditioning has been so thorough that when students confront material for which memory alone will not suffice, they panic and rebel. Now consider Q4 and Q5:

Q4. You overhear an African American teen-ager say, "My [brəvə], he done took [dæt] [klæ:s], and it ain't no way he be [tekIn] it again." Then you overhear someone else mutter, "Just listen to the way that stupid kid chews up the language!" First provide a colloquial translation of the teen-ager's sentence, then address the point made by the second speaker.

Q5. In *American Tongues*, one African American man said, "I don't mean anything against white males, but I don't want my boys to sound like white males." Discuss, noting especially that the teachers of the boys are probably white and middle-class.

To answer Q4, students must know and understand not only some of the features of Black English, but the basic truth that the use of those features does not result from a speaker's poor attempt at a more prestigious variety of the language. To answer Q5, students must again confront the fact that Black English is often used as the result of a conscious choice—that it may even be prescribed—and then must explain what that choice or prescription implies about the larger social milieu in which it occurs. The opportunity thus occurs for students to address the complex relationship between ethnic pride, linguistic conformity, and linguistic choice; the question may also spark discussions of linguistic convergence/divergence, code- or style-shifting, bidialectalism, and so forth.

Again depending on the level of the students being tested, some of these issues can of course be treated in more or less subtle ways. Q6, for example, also gives students the opportunity to discuss linguistic convergence/divergence, but with no explicit prompt to address them with regard to ethnic diversity:

Q6. In *American Tongues*, the narrator opines that while the dialects of American English are constantly changing, and although they are influenced by radio and television, "we'll never all speak the same way." Why is this a true statement?

On the other hand, Q7 specifically draws attention to the conflict between linguistic choice and linguistic conformity:

Q7. In *American Tongues*, one young woman lamented that while she's sometimes penalized by mainstream society for using slang, she's also sometimes penalized by her slang-using friends for using a more mainstream variety of English. Comment.

Q8 asks students to address the problem of ethnic diversity and linguistic usage from yet a different angle:

Q8. Many states have passed laws declaring English to be their "official" language; some people have even proposed such an amendment to the U.S.

Constitution. Discuss such legislation in the light of *Lau v. Nichols* and *King v. Board of Education*.

And Q9 gives students the chance to discuss how they would reconcile linguistic diversity in their own classrooms:

Q9. You teach seventh-grade English, and have 150 students that you see for 50 minutes each day. About 40 percent of those students speak Spanish better than English; another 20 percent rely on Black English to communicate. Describe what you will do (and not do) to satisfy both your conscience and the court rulings in *Lau v. Nichols* and *King v Board of Education*.

In pedagogical jargon, problem questions are called "higher-order," as compared to "convergent" questions, which simply ask students to regurgitate information *verbatim*. Most of the teachers I know, both of linguistics and other subjects, agree that higher-order questions are a superior way to actually test the material that students have been taught, but also agree that such questions are more difficult to use. One reason, certainly, is that higher-order questions are not easy to write; indeed, they may require more time to write than to answer, and their creation soon becomes burdensome. (Instructors can recycle questions from one term to the next, but "test files" of instructors' past examinations exist in most dormitories and Greek houses. It's therefore wise for the instructor who wishes to reuse particularly good questions to re-collect tests once students have looked at their grades and noted any errors.) Q10, as one example, effectively tests students' knowledge of some of the principles of sociolinguistic variation, but it took me nearly 30 minutes to conceive and requires only a fraction of that time for students to answer:

Q10. William Labov, in discussing his New York City study, noted that it's often very difficult to tell the difference between a member of one of the lower classes speaking formally and a member of one of the upper classes speaking informally. Why would this be true? Would it be true of non-New Yorkers as well? Why or why not?

Another reason higher-order questions can be difficult to use is that students do not like them, and so complain about tests "that do not allow us to earn the grades we deserve for learning so much material." Such

protests can be quelled fairly easily if higher-order questions have been a regular part of classroom activities, or even if the instructor has announced at the beginning of the course that such mastery of the material will be required of everyone who expects to succeed, but they still do occur. Consider Q11, for example, which I often use to test students' general mastery of many of the principles associated with slang:

Q11. You are 16 years old. Your parents complain that they "just can't understand you anymore"; that your slang and general misuse of language will "keep you from getting ahead"; that you better "clean up your act" fast. "Besides," they continue, "we never sounded like that when we were your age!" How do you respond?

The question is not especially difficult, but flawless performances are rare. The same is true of Q12, which tests students' knowledge of the subjective nature of prescriptions for "correct" usage, including those found in standard desktop dictionaries:

Q12. You are writing a long memo to your boss, and, since you'll soon be up for promotion, you want the memo to be the epitome of grace and style. But your boss is a real stickler on usage: everything has to be "just so" or she loses all patience. Your co-worker advises you to "look everything up in the dictionary" before you submit the memo. How do you proceed?

Unless I reveal that such a question will "probably show up on the next test," those students who do poorly on it complain thunderously.

Still another reason higher-order questions are difficult to use may be that because they usually require more time to answer, tests on which they appear must ask fewer questions overall—which means that each question must be worth more points. (This assumes that the tests are completed in class. Higher-order questions, however, lend themselves very well to take-home examinations.) And of course students do not like "high-point" questions since "slips of the mind" are less forgivable and do more damage. In Q13, for example, I intend students to discuss the necessity of securing informants who are lifelong natives of the region (Manhattan is a college town, and Junction City is dominated by an army post; both are known for the transiency of their populations):

Q13. You are a regional dialectologist who is studying the many minor dialects spoken in Kansas. If you collect data in the Manhattan/Junction City area, what will you have to do to ensure that those data are as "pure" and "untainted" as possible?

This is a useful question, but it can cause problems. More often than I would like, students misunderstand what I am asking (they may, for example, discuss how to set up an urban sociolinguistic project) and receive little or no credit for their answers.

One solution to this problem is for us to write tests that afford students some choice in the questions they answer. I usually require students to "select 10 of the following questions" from a total of 12 or 13, for example. Though this doesn't preclude students from doing poorly on any given question, it does, to a point, allow them to avoid questions which they find particularly vexing.

Finally, higher-order questions can be difficult to grade. Consider Q14, which asks students to address the differences between written and spoken English, the fact that many speakers are unaware of their own usage, and, again, the notion of "standard" English:

Q14. One way American novelists let readers know that a character is working-class is to have the character use pronunciations such as *gonna*, *workin'*, and the like. The method is uniformly successful—i.e., readers always assume such characters really are working-class—even though all Americans use such pronunciations at one time or another. Comment.

Must a correct answer necessarily touch on all the issues to receive full credit here, or should a full discussion of, say, the differences between written and spoken English suffice? Should each of the issues addressed in the answer be worth the same portion of the whole?

Now consider Q15, which is intended to elicit a discussion of language, knowledge, culture, and "intelligence":

Q15. The school district in which you teach has decided to use a standardized test to measure the intelligence-level of all its students. How do you respond to the decision (whatever you say will not affect the status of your job)? Explain your response.

The expected answer is actually implied in the question, so should the entire grade rest on the explanation of that answer? Perhaps the parenthetical comment should simply be omitted from the question, but then some students would accept the decision for fear of losing their jobs (that has happened). In any case, what if a student chooses to accept the decision, explaining that despite the evidence presented in class, he or she still doesn't believe that standardized tests disadvantage certain segments of the population (that has happened, too)? Can a student be penalized for his or her beliefs even if they are factually wrong? Or what if a student offers an intelligent but unexpected answer just to make an ideological point? In response to Q1, for example, a woman once wrote, "of course some president-elect will have to employ a speech therapist before taking office: she will be the first female president, and will have to be instructed how to sound more like a man so that the people who didn't vote for her will take what she says seriously!"

But such problems are endemic in testing, and should not stop us from asking challenging questions that demand original thought—especially when those questions are more than just good testing tools. Let's assume, for example, that as the end of the term approaches, I find myself without enough time to cover all the material I would like—and that, consequently, I must slash a great deal of information from my lectures. One alternative to conceding that the information really wasn't important anyway is to include it on the next test in the form of a higher-order question. Q16 both introduces and requires comments on an important truism of language and perception; it also asks students to juxtapose that truism with a contradictory trend in modern American culture:

Q16. In *American Tongues*, one African American man notes that we all make judgments about people when we hear them speak—judgments about their gender, age, social class, ethnicity, and even about how much we respect them as people. Comment, noting the current two-pronged push in the U.S. toward multiculturalism and the elimination of demographic bias.

Higher-order questions are clearly no panacea to the problem of how best to determine what students have learned, but they do have much to recommend them, for they accomplish the noblest goal any of us teachers could have: they compel our students to think critically about how and why language is used.