

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
AMERICAN DIALECT SOCIETY

# NADS 26.2

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Vol. 26, No. 2

May 1994

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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

## NWAV: Stanford, October

23rd Annual Conference on New Ways of Analyzing Variation in language  
Oct 20-23, Stanford Univ.

*July 15* is the deadline for abstracts to NWAV23, Dept of Linguistics, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-2150. They should be submitted in 6 copies, no longer than a page, anonymous, with a separate 3 x 5 card listing title, author's name, surface and e-mail address and phone number.

The program will begin on Thursday, Oct. 20 with four workshops: 12-1.30 p.m., Doing Variable Rule Analysis on the Mainframe Computer (taught by **Norma Mendoza-Denton** and **Tom Veatch**); 1.30-3.00 p.m., Code Switching (**Carol Myers-Scotton**); 3.00-4.30 p.m. Doing Statistical Analysis with MYSTAT (**Frank Anshen**); 4.30-6.00 p.m., Grammaticalization (**Elizabeth Closs Traugott** and **Scott Schwenter**).

The keynote address will be given by **Marcyliena Morgan**, UCLA. There will be two special evening panel discussions: Analyzing Variation Above the Level of Phonology (**William Labov**, **Gillian Sankoff** and **Donald Winford**) and What Can Sociolinguistics Offer the Schools? (**Arnetta Ball**, **Kenji Hakuta**, **Geneva Smitherman**, **Guadalupe Valdes**, and **Walt Wolfram**). There will also be a special session on Variation in the Deaf Community and one on Optimality and Variation (featuring **Paul Kiparsky**, **Whitney Tabor** and **Arto Antilla**).

At one of the evening sessions, musical and dance performances by African American, Chicano, and Japanese American groups will be featured.

For further information, write NWAV23 at the above address, or send e-mail to [nwav23@csl.stanford.edu](mailto:nwav23@csl.stanford.edu).

Next year NWAV is tentatively planned for North Carolina State Univ. in Raleigh, with **Walt Wolfram** the organizer (to correct a statement in the January newsletter).

## ADS at LSA, January 1995

For some time ADS has enjoyed the privilege of sponsoring one or two sessions at the annual meeting of the Linguistic Society of America. This year, so far, we have only one paper taking advantage of that privilege:

- "Continuity and Contact: Patterns of Dialectal Variation in Cajun and Acadian French." **Karen Flikeid**, St. Mary's Univ.

Fortunately, there is still time for more. You can still propose a paper, a whole session, or some other kind of presentation; LSA is very accommodating to our wishes.

But please notify the Executive Secretary (addresses on cover) by *August 1*.

LSA will meet at the delectable Fairmont Hotel in New Orleans Jan. 5-8. For further information write LSA, 1325 18th St. NW Suite 211, Washington DC 20036-6501; (202) 835-1714; e-mail [zzlsa@gallua.gallaudet.edu](mailto:zzlsa@gallua.gallaudet.edu).

## DSNA: Cleveland in '95

Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland will be the site of the 1995 biennial meeting of the Dictionary Society of North America. According to Secretary-Treasurer **Louis Milic**, exact dates have not been set, but it will be in late July or early August.

Host and chair of the program committee will be **P.K. Saha**, English Dept., Case Western Reserve Univ., Cleveland OH 44106.

Meanwhile, DSNA was elected to membership in the American Council of Learned Societies this spring, joining ADS as one of the 53 constituent societies of the consortium that advances the cause of the humanities and social sciences, raises funds for fellowships, and provides mutual support. **Sidney Landau** is DSNA's delegate to ACLS, joining ADS' **Ronald Butters**.

Membership in DSNA is available for \$20 in North America, \$25 elsewhere. Write Milic at DSNA, RT 936/937, Cleveland State Univ., 1983 East 24 St., Cleveland OH 44115-2403; phone (216) 687-4830; fax (216) 687-9366; e-mail [R0097@vmcms.csuohio.edu](mailto:R0097@vmcms.csuohio.edu).



# ANNUAL MEETING 1994

San Diego • December 27–30

## Tentative Program



It has not escaped our notice that *San Diego* is Spanish. And *Coronado*, *La Jolla*, *Del Mar*, and *California*, for that matter. So, not by coincidence, this year's ADS Annual Meeting in San Diego, California (more specifically Coronado) opens with sessions on Spanish and its interrelations with English in the New World.

That's lagniappe for our customary sessions on all aspects of American English, and:

—Words of the Year 1994. Is this the year for *dis*, when even solemn columnists employ it in place of *criticize*? You can send your favorite '94 words in advance to **John Algeo**, PO Box 270, Wheaton IL 60189-0270 or **David Barnhart**, PO Box 247, Cold Spring NY 10516.

—Bring-Your-Own-Book Exhibit.

—Annual Luncheon from Le Meridien's California-French menu, with a guest speaker.

To secure a beautiful ringside seat—that is, to reserve your room at our hotel—see the information on the back page. And please don't wait too long. We think we have enough rooms set aside, but last year in Toronto we filled the block and late callers were unable to get our special rate.

### ADS at MLA

#### Differences, Dictionaries, and Corrections

ADS-sponsored session at the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association of America, Dec. 27–30, San Diego.

Day, time, and room to be announced.

• "Gender and Education Differences Among Linguistic Atlas Informants: Non-Verb Items." **Virginia G. McDavid**, Chicago State Univ., emer.

• "But How the Hang Do You Know Where to Look? A Critique of Dialect Phrase Dictionaries." **Terry K. Pratt**, Univ. of Prince Edward Island.

• "Correcting the Placenames of Southern California in the Period of 'Getting Spanish Right.'" **Leonard R.N. Ashley**, Brooklyn Coll., CUNY.

*Session Chair:* **Lawrence M. Davis**, Wichita State Univ.

MLA registration is required to attend. For information on registration and membership, write MLA, 10 Astor Place, New York NY 10003-6981; phone (212) 614-6378; e-mail mlaod@cuvmb.cc.columbia.edu.

### Independent Sessions

#### Thursday, December 29

##### Le Meridien

Morning (time to be announced): ADS Executive Council. Open meeting; all members welcome.

**1:30–4:00 P.M.: SPANISH AND ENGLISH**

Chair: ADS President **John Baugh**.  
Speakers:

• "American Spanish Dialectology." **Ellen Johnson**, Univ. of Georgia.

• "Lexical Exchange Between English and Hispanic Languages During the Colonial Period." **Brian F. Head**, State Univ. of New York, Albany.

• "The Historical Basis for Dialect Variation in the Spanish of New Mexico and Southern Colorado." **Garland Bills** and **Neddy Vigil**, Univ. of New Mexico.

• "First Language Loss vs. Second Language Acquisition in the Syntactic Structures of Spoken Spanish in the United States." **Elizabeth A. Martínez**, College of Charleston.

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## Thursday, December 29 (Cont.)

• "Caught in the Middle: The Case of Pocho and the Mixed Language Continuum." **Fred Field**, Univ. of Southern California.

• "Dialect Coaching Along the Spanish/English Axis." **Allyn Partin** and **Robert Easton**, Hollywood.

4:30 p.m.: Interlude

• "Applied Political Correctness: Politically Correct Terms Embedded in Prose—A Light-Hearted Cross-Cultural Study." **Allyn Partin** and **Robert Easton**, Hollywood.

5:00–6:00 p.m.: New Words of 1994

6:00–7:00 p.m.: Bring-Your-Own-Book Exhibit and Reception

## ANS: Coronado Neighbors

Our colleagues (and sometimes alter egos) the American Name Society will share our Eden with us for their annual meeting Dec. 27–30. Like us, they will have most of their meetings at Le Meridien, with a session or two across the bay at MLA.

*Annual dinner:* Wednesday, Dec. 28, at the Chart House, 1701 Strand Way, Coronado, a mile or so from Le Meridien (see map on back page). It's an 1887 boathouse with antiques and a view of Glorieta Bay. Cash bar 7 p.m., dinner 8 p.m., presidential address 9 p.m. Reservations available for \$40 (including tip and tax) to ANS Executive Secretary Wayne H. Finke, Dept. of Modern Languages, Box 340 Baruch College CUNY, 17 Lexington Ave., New York NY 10010; phone (212) 387-1570.

## APLA, October: Dialect in Syntax

Atlantic Provinces Linguistic Association

Oct. 28–29, St. John, Univ. of New Brunswick

Theme: Micro-Parametric Syntax (Dialect Variation in Syntax).

*August 15* is the deadline for abstracts to Dr. Virginia Motapanyane, APLA 18 Organizing Committee, Dept. of Humanities and Languages, Univ. of New Brunswick, Saint John, New Brunswick E2L 4L5, Canada; e-mail mota@unbsj.ca.

## Friday, December 30

### Le Meridien

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

9:00 a.m.–12:00 noon: Independent Session

• "Disagreement with Indefinites." **Charlotte C. Crittenden**, Georgia Southern Univ.

• "Terms Used in Children's Games."

**Luanne von Schneidmesser**, *DARE*.

• "Is *Informal* Still a Meaningful Label?"

**Victoria Neufeldt**, Merriam-Webster.

• "Her Own Words: Prostitute's Slang."

**Christine Capra**, Univ. of Minnesota.

• "Why Dialectology?" **William A.**

**Kretzschmar, Jr.**, Univ. of Georgia.

• "Allen Walker Read: American Scholar."

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

12:15–1:30 p.m. Annual Luncheon.

## LASSO XXIII: Houston, October

23rd Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Association of the Southwest

October 21–23, 1994; Houston, Texas

Theme: Minority Languages and Contact Varieties.

*June 15* is the deadline for proposals.

For abstract specifications and further information, send e-mail to [huttar@sil.org](mailto:huttar@sil.org) or write George Huttar, S. I. L., 7500 W. Camp Wisdom Rd., Dallas, TX 75236.

## PC at NCTE, November

### Political Correctness and the Classroom

ADS-sponsored Session C.20 at the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English

Nov. 18–21; Orlando, Florida

2:30–3:45 p.m. Friday, Nov. 18. Speakers:

• **Harvey (Smockey) Daniels**, National-Louis Univ.

• **Vivian Davis**, Eastfield Coll.

• **Dennis Baron**, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana.

*Session chair:* **Dennis Baron**.

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

# REGIONAL MEETING PROGRAMS, FALL 1994

## Rocky Mountain Region

In association with RMMLA, Oct. 27–29  
Colorado Springs, Antlers Doubletree

1:45 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 29; Jackson Room.

- “The Use of *Thank you* in a Missoula Public Address System: Necessity or Nicety?” **Felice N. Coles**, Univ. of Mississippi.

- “Syntactic Analysis of Ozark English Modal Inflection.” **Ken Kneedler**, Univ. of Montana.

- “Dialect Features in Polonia, Wisconsin.” **Mary Morzinski**, Berry Coll.

- “School Team Names in Washington State.” **Grant W. Smith**, Eastern Washington Univ.

*Meeting chair:* **Felice Coles**.

*ADS Regional Secretary 1993–94:* **Grant W. Smith**, English #25, Eastern Washington Univ., Cheney WA 99004.

*Membership* in RMMLA is \$20 regular, \$10 student. Write RMMLA Executive Director Charles G. Davis, Interdisciplinary Humanities, Boise State Univ., Boise ID 83725; phone (800) 824-7017 ext 1199 or (208) 385-1199, fax (208) 385-1247.

*Future meetings:* 1995 Oct. 19–21 Spokane, Eastern Washington Univ.; 1996 Oct. 24–26, Albuquerque.

## South Central Region

In association with SCMLA, Nov. 10–12  
New Orleans, Clarion Hotel

5:45–7:15 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10.

- “Pronunciation Change in Eastern North Carolina: Markers of Race and Gender.” **Bruce Southard**, East Carolina Univ.

- “Dialect Identity and Gender.” **Nicole Pepinster Greene**, Univ. of Southwestern Louisiana.

- “New Orleans Dialect.” **David Sabrio**, Texas A&M Univ., Kingsville.

—Business meeting.

- “Yeah You Rite!” Video about the language of New Orleans by **Louis Alvarez** and **Andrew Kolker**.

*Meeting chair:* **Delma McLeod-Porter**, Dept. of Languages, McNeese State Univ., Lake Charles, LA 70609-2655; phone (318) 475-5326.

*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.

*Membership* in SCMLA is \$20 full professors, \$15 associate and assistant professors, \$10 instructors and students. Write SCMLA, Dept. of English, Texas A&M Univ., College Station TX 77843-4227; phone (409) 845-7041; e-mail scmla@venus.tamu.edu.

*Future meetings:* 1995 Oct. 26–28 Houston, Wyndham Warwick; 1996 end of October, San Antonio.

## Midwest Region

In association with MMLA, Nov. 11–13  
Chicago, Palmer House Hilton

- “Gender and Education Differences among Linguistic Atlas Informants: Noun Forms.” **Virginia McDavid**, Chicago State University, emerita.

- “This Paper Needs Done: *needs* + p.p. in American English.” **Tim Frazer**, Western Illinois University; **Tom Murray**, Kansas State University; and **Beth Lee Simon**, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

- “Self-Identification for the Assessment of Social Class in a Study of Linguistic Variation.” **Vera Horvath**, Ball State University.

- “What Determines a Dialect Area?: Evidence from *The Linguistic Atlas of the Upper Midwest*.” **Lawrence M. Davis**, Wichita State University and **Charles L. Houck**, Ball State University. Discussant: **Alvin L. Gregg**, Wichita State University.

*Supper* at the nearby Italian Village

*Meeting chair:* **Joan Livingston-Webber**, Department of English, 60th and Dodge, University of Nebraska, Omaha NE 68182. E-mail webber@unomaha.edu.

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(Midwest Meeting—from preceding page)

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: 1995 Nov. 2-4 St. Louis, Marriott Pavilion; 1996 Nov. 7-9 Minneapolis, Marriott City Center.

## South Atlantic Region

In association with SAMLA, Nov. 11-13  
Baltimore, Omni Inner Harbor

4:30-6:05 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11; Pratt B.

- "The Language of Irish Indian Traders in Colonial North America." (20 min.) **Michael Montgomery**, Univ. of South Carolina.

- "An Overview of Baltimore Dialects." (25 min.) **Stefan Martin**, St. Mary's Coll.

- "The Acquisition of Linguistic Variation by Philadelphia Children." (25 min.) **Sharon Ash**, Univ. of Pennsylvania, and **Julie Roberts**, Univ. of Vermont.

- "The Pronunciation of *on*: A Marker of Northern/Midland Identity." (25 min.) **Charles Boberg**, Univ. of Pennsylvania.

Meeting chair: **Crawford Feagin**, 2312 North Upton St., Arlington VA 22207; phone (703) 243-4569.

ADS Regional Secretary 1994-95: **Natalie Maynor**, Dept. of English, Mississippi State Univ., Drawer E, Mississippi State MS 39762; e-mail maynor@ra.msstate.edu.

Nominating Committee: **Walt Wolfram**, North Carolina State Univ.; **Ellen Johnson**, Univ. of Georgia; **Bethany K. Dumas**, chair, Univ. of Tennessee.

Membership in SAMLA is \$15 for individuals, \$8 for students. Write SAMLA, Drawer 6109, University Station, Tuscaloosa AL 35486-6109; phone (205) 348-9067.

Future meetings: 1995 Nov. 3-5 Atlanta, Marriott Marquis; 1996 Nov. 8-10 Savannah; 1997 Atlanta.

ADS Annual Meeting next year ('95): Chicago.

## Coming in PADS

By ALLAN METCALF, Editor, PADS

At long last, issue 78 of *Publication of the American Dialect Society* is nearly ready. It should go to the printer this June and to ADS members this fall.

No. 78 is *Centennial Usage Studies*, edited by **Greta D. Little** and **Michael Montgomery** of the University of South Carolina. The Usage Committee gathered these 27 original articles in celebration of the Society's centennial. Topics range from historical to contemporary, from descriptive to prescriptive, from dictionaries to usage handbooks, from the general to particular cases like *between you and I*.

Next year should see publication of No. 79: *The Sounds of American English*, edited by **Arthur J. Bronstein**, papers presented at the 1989 Berkeley conference on the International Phonetic Alphabet.

At the end of 1995 or start of 1996 will come No. 80, **Tom Murray** and **Carmin Ross-Murray's** sequel to their essay in No. 76, *Legal and Ethical Issues in Surreptitious Recordings*. Questions and comments on these matters are invited, but they need them by *July 1* this year. (See the January newsletter, p. 16.) Write Tom Murray at Dept. of English, Kansas State Univ., Manhattan KS 66506-0701; e-mail tem@ksuvm.ksu.edu.



National Arts  
and Humanities  
Month

October

## The Arts & Humanities.

There's something  
in it for you.

This public service ad comes from the National Cultural Alliance, sponsored by (among others) our affiliates the American Council of Learned Societies and the National Humanities Alliance. Its goal is to increase participation in the humanities and arts, especially at the local level. Write NCA, 1225 Eye St. NW Suite 200, Washington DC 20005; phone 202/289-8286.

## The Columbia Collection: More Resources, More Answers

Bigger and busier than ever, this spring the language section of the Western Historical Manuscript Collection at the University of Missouri, Columbia, has

—attracted a large audience for ADS President **John Baugh's** engrossing account of his own linguistic pilgrimage and lessons for education in the annual Tamony Lecture;

—added the papers of dialectologist **Gordon R. Wood** (1913–1993; see the January newsletter, p. 10). A gift from Mrs. Sara Wood, they include 3 linear feet of correspondence, publications and other paper materials; 7 records; 6 audio cassettes, and 136 audio tapes, the latter of speakers from Tennessee and Collinsville-Edwardsville, Illinois. A four-page preliminary inventory of the collection is available.

—used the Tamony and Scott, Foresman collections to answer language questions. Here are four examples of responses by **Randy Roberts** to questions on the ADS-L e-mail discussion list.

(Write him at Western Historical Manuscript Collection, 23 Ellis Library, University of Missouri, Columbia MO 65201; phone 314 / 882-6028; e-mail robertsr@Ext.Missouri.edu.)

### DOCUMENTATION FROM THE WHMC

#### BY RANDY ROBERTS

##### BOONTLING AND OTHER PRIVATE LANGUAGES

About Boontling, try *California Folklore Quarterly* [now *Western Folklore*] vol. 1, no. 1 (January 1942), pp. 96-97. Charles C. Adams, *Boontling: An American Lingo: with a Dictionary of Boontling*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1972. Lynwood Carranco and Wilma Rawles Simmons, "The Boonville Language of Northern California," *American Speech*, 34:4 (December 1964), pp. 278-286. E. N. Anderson, Jr., "The Social Context of a Local Lingo," *Western Folklore*, 29:3 (July 1970), pp. 153-165. Charles C. Adams also wrote a thesis entitled "Boontling: Limited Language of Boonville, California and Its Environs." I think it was at the University of Washington

in 1967 and I believe it is available from University Microfilms.

I have only seen reference to the following item but it sounds interesting: Martha Strum, "A Case of Secret Language: the Benzorian Language," *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages*, vol. 21, (1939) pp. 209-220.

#### HOMOSEXUAL FAMILY

A quick look in the Peter Tamony Collection has produced three cites for "homosexual family." *San Francisco Examiner*, 15 April 1980, p. 1 continued on p. 10. "A Hard Look/Hot controversy for conference: What is a family?" This story revolves around President Carter's White House Conference on Families: "[Alec] Velasquez said he asked those appointing delegates to consider the diversity of California in making their selections 'representative of the socioeconomic and the ethnic population of the state and the broad and distinct types of families, the single-parent families, the unwed families, gay families, intact families, blended families.'"

*California Living Magazine*, part of the *San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle*, 15 June 1980, pp. 20ff. "A Day With Bruno Bettelheim." An essay by Jim Jacobs about Bettelheim's talk at the University of California Extension Center auditorium entitled "Reflections of the Family": "He [Bettelheim] bellows a response to the very first question, put forth by a woman in a quiet, timid voice: 'Would you comment on the homosexual family and . . . ?' 'A homosexual family is not viable,' he shouts."

*San Francisco Examiner*, 6 December 1982, p. B2. An article entitled "Supervisor's idea of a 'family.'" An article about Supervisor Quentin Kopp's resolution celebrating the role of the family in American life: "There are a number of interpersonal relationships in San Francisco that pass for 'families'. Indeed, the Board of Supervisors, to the embarrassment of The City, has passed an ordinance

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offered by gay Supervisor Harry Britt endorsing that concept. It would provide, in The City's administrative code, that unwed 'domestic partners,' both heterosexual and homosexual, could enjoy the same legal benefits as city employees who are pledged to the traditional marriage."

#### MOONING

The earliest use I found is the 27 August 1963 issue of *Look*, p. 18. ". . . a game called mooning. Three or four boys will crouch down in a car, lower their trousers and, at a signal, push their bare bottoms out of every available window. This pastime originated about two years ago in southern California and has crossed the country: it has now turned up in Florida."

See also March 1965 issue of *Holiday*, page 44.

From the January 1966 issue of *Esquire*, page 60, comes ". . . there are even some girls who enjoy throwing a moon now and then, just for the hell of it or maybe to strike a blow for academic freedom . . ."

I found all of the info above in our collection of Scott, Foresman and Company files. The cites were collected by Clarence Barnhart and Ethel Strainchamps.

#### ON THE FRITZ

Most of the materials Peter Tamony collected for *fritz*, etc., suggest a relationship to the Germans during WWI. Note the WWI song "Keep Your Head Down Allemand" which is subtitled "Fritzi Boy." The earliest cite I found, however, comes from the cartoonist TAD (Thomas Aloysius Dorgan) on 15 September 1916, *San Francisco Call and Post*: "What was the mistake?" "Oh, I just told the judge that his joint would go on the fritz if I ever left."

Another cartoon by TAD of 25 November 1920, same newspaper, read: "As Shakespeare said, 'Prices like the Ritz, service on the Fritz.'"

Other examples are *Fritz* defined as one of

the many names applied by British troops to the Germans who oppose them. "Recruit's Primer of Trench Idiom" in *Literary Digest*, 27 October 1917, pp. 64-65.

*On the fritz*, meaning in bad condition, from George Milburn's *The Hobo's Hornbook*, New York, 1930, p. 284.

*To put the fritz on*, meaning to jinx, is used in *Collier's* for 29 August 1931, p. 26.

David Maurer in *American Speech* of February 1935 noted the term *fritzer*, meaning something which is not genuine or will not pay.

### Sources of Slang

You don't have to be connected to ADS-L or visit Columbia, Missouri in order to research the origins of slang. That can be accomplished in the comfort of your own home by the journal *Comments on Etymology*.

Here you'll read the histories of terms like *hot dog*, *the Big Apple*, *yo!*, *charley horse*, *brainstorm*, *concentration camp*, *soak the rich* and even Clinton's nickname *Slick Willie*, for example.

While scholarly, it's accessible to the non-specialist as well; serious but not solemn, and often illustrated with old cartoons.

It's not a coincidence that *Comments on Etymology* also comes from Missouri. Editor **Gerald Cohen** was instrumental in getting the Tamony collection to its Missouri home, and his articles make good use of those files. He and his contributors also peruse old books, magazines, and newspapers for the language of criminals, the blues, and baseball.

Amazingly, Jerry has only about 75 subscribers for a publication that should be in every research library and in the collection of everyone interested in slang. You can redress the neglect by ordering it for yourself (\$12 for six entertaining and enlightening issues) and your library (\$20). It earns him no profit, so this is quite a bargain.

Write Gerald Cohen, Dept. of Applied Arts and Cultural Studies, Univ. of Missouri, Rolla, Missouri 65401.

## Cajun Language and Culture Q & A

Recently a student from the Netherlands wrote to ask about Cajun. In the past, getting satisfactory answers would have taken weeks or even months of correspondence. Now, however, your Executive Secretary simply scanned the letter, posted the questions on ADS-L, and within a day or two found both experts and answers.

The most thorough answers came from **Mike Picone** at the University of Alabama. With his permission, his answers are given here along with Bran Bernard's questions.

BY MIKE PICONE

1. Should Cajun language be labelled as a language or as a dialect?

A dialect, if one considers mutually intelligibility with Metropolitan French to be the criteria. (However, don't most languages end up being called a 'language' for political reasons?) But this is complicated by the fact that a continuum exists such that some would include Louisiana Creole in the realm of Louisiana French.

2. Is Cajun language a composition of several languages, and if so, which languages?

Louisiana French is owing to the combination of elements from 'Colonial French,' Acadian French, Creole and lexical contributions from Spanish, Choctaw, African languages and other Native American languages. But it is not homogeneous, and different varieties will exhibit greater or lesser commonality with Colonial or Creole. In almost all cases, however, the Acadian element is dominant.

English was also a source for true borrowings into Cajun French (but, as stated, this has been largely superseded by switching and what I call 'intercode' phenomena).

3. Is Cajun language still spoken on a large scale in Louisiana? Is it still being used in, for instance, local newspapers, local radio and TV stations, etc.?

Estimates vary, but there remain several hundred thousand speakers of Cajun French

in Louisiana and Southeastern Texas. Fluent speakers are generally over 55 years old. This is due to transmission failure because of the official policy of stigmatization pursued in Louisiana until 1968. There are only a couple 'newspapers' in French (one by CODFIL=Council for the Development of French in Louisiana, *La Gazette de Louisiane*) but very few read them because Cajun French speakers are typically illiterate in French. On the other hand, some local news programs and religious broadcasts on TV set aside a few minutes for French each day. There are a few radio programs and even a couple of radio stations that broadcast predominantly or exclusively in French.

4. Is Cajun language spoken by several population groups or just one group of the population?

There is a mosaic that includes whites, African Americans and Native Americans. Some African Americans speak Creole varieties, others are indistinguishable from the white Cajun majority. The whites include the descendants of the Acadian immigrants, descendants of other French colonists arriving both before and after the Acadian immigrations (1765- 1785), and immigrants of many other nationalities that assimilated to the dominant Acadian>Cajun code. Germans are especially well represented.

[Message from Mary Ojibway: I am not a linguist but I have visited relatives along the Grand Caillou bayou many times. They speak Cajun but are not related to those who came down from Acadia. My brother-in-law and his family are Houma Indians. . . . (He) spent one semester as an exchange student in Paris. Everyone understood his French but he heard frequent comments about how horrible his grammar was.]

As Mary Ojibway indicated, there is a sizable group of Houma in Louisiana, many of whom speak Cajun French. The group is

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about 11,000 strong, by far the largest Native American group in Louisiana. They reside mainly in Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes. I don't know what percentage speak Cajun. Perhaps because of greater group cohesion and/or isolation, this group is one of the very few where children are still found speaking Cajun French. As far as I know the Houma language was entirely superseded by French and is now extinct.

A few aged Coushatta (Koasati) speak Cajun French as well. I had the unique opportunity of meeting and recording one of them in the summer of '92. His French was identical to that of other Prairie Cajuns in St. Landry Parish and west. There are only about 350 Coushatta on the tribal lands in Allen Parish. The Coushatta tongue is still spoken there, but I would guess that its situation is precarious.

There are also about 500 Chitimacha in St. Mary Parish. Although I know that the language is extinct, I don't know how many are French speakers today. Ditto for the Tunica-Biloxi in Avoyelles Parish (about 250). There are some Choctaw groups in Anglophone Louisiana, only one of which, the Jena group, still retains use of Choctaw to any degree.

5. Could you give some examples of typical Cajun words or sayings?

The two classic phrases are *Laissez les bons temps rouler* 'Let the good times roll' and *Lâche pas la patate* 'Hang in there' (lit. don't drop the potato).

6. Has Cajun language undergone any major developments since the 18th century or has it more or less remained the same?

It's hard to say since there are few written records of earlier forms of Cajun French. Clearly, however, there has been change. The vocabulary has been enriched in past periods, but with growing bilingualism and English dominance, code-switching and other 'intercode' phenomena have replaced French-sourced productivity.

7. Is Cajun language also spoken in schools in Louisiana?

There are some immersion programs in Louisiana public schools to promote French among the young. In most cases it is not Cajun French that is being taught, though teachers (who are usually from France, Quebec or Belgium) do get some orientation concerning local French. From the turn of the century until the policy reversal in 1968, French in school was greatly discouraged and, for a time, even against the law.

8. Also, if there is some sort of Cajun (cultural) institution, could you send me the name and the address of this institution?

Univ. of Southwestern Louisiana, Center for Acadian and Creole Folklore, Lafayette, Louisiana 70504.

CODOFIL, 217 West Main St., Lafayette, Louisiana 70501-6843.

For a very readable overview of Cajun culture: *Cajun Country* by Ancelet et al., University Press of Mississippi, 1991. It also contains some transcriptions of Cajun French stories, jokes and songs with translations.

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## Our Books: Sports, Clichés

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

**Christine Ammer.** *Southpaws & Sunday Punches and Other Sporting Expressions.* New York: Dutton, 1993. 262 pages. \$20 hardcover. 500 words and phrases originating in sports that have been transferred into common speech: *a ringside seat that hits the mark*, and that's no *fish story!* ISBN 0-525-93647-5.

Now in paperback, two 1992 books:

**Christine Ammer.** *Have a Nice Day—No Problem! A Dictionary of Clichés.* New York: Plume, 1993. 454 pages. \$12 paperback. ALA Outstanding Reference Source of 1993. ISBN 0-452-27004-9.

(Continued on next page)

## Our Books (Cont.): Repair, Canada, War, Wellerisms, False Friends

**Christine Ammer.** *Seeing Red or Tickled Pink: Color Terms in Everyday Language.* New York: Plume, 1993. 215 pages. \$10 paperback. 750 color-related idioms and phrases from *blue Monday* and *brown cow* to *white lies* and *yellow ribbons*. ISBN 0-452-27040-5.

**Dennis Baron.** *Guide to Home Language Repair.* Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1994. viii + 165 pages. \$16.95. Baron answers the questions he's most frequently been asked: Is there a difference between *who* and *whom*? Is there a language police? (And if so, should people be hanged or hung?) Is plagiarism a crime? Are spelling bees harmful to our health? Is there a politically correct term for the president's spouse? What will replace English as a world language when it is time for English to go the way of French, Latin, and Greek? Will NASA succeed in its attempt to communicate with aliens? Can a doll write like a person? Is a factoid something true, or something false, or can it mean both? Is there a grammar gene? Is 'Make my day' a cliché? Illustrated by the author without sentence diagrams, the *Guide* is both impractical and educational at the same time. ISBN 0-8141-1942-5.

**Cynthia Goldin Bernstein, ed.** *The Text and Beyond: Essays in Literary Linguistics.* Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 1994. 308 pages. \$29.95. These 15 essays show that linguistic approaches to literature extend beyond the text to those things outside it that contribute to our understanding of language: psychology, history, culture, politics, social context. Bernstein hopes that linguists will come to see literature as an authentic source of linguistic data and that literary scholars will find in linguistics a means of accessing literary texts. ISBN 0-8173-0699-4.

**Sandra Clarke, ed.** *Focus on Canada. Varieties of English Around the World, G11.* Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1993. xii + 296 pp. Cloth \$59. Topics include Canadian lexicography and orthography, sociolinguistic

studies of the English spoken in all major geographical areas of the country, and the relation of Canadian English to American varieties. ISBN 1-55619-442-0.

**Paul Dickson.** *War Slang: Fighting Words and Phrases of Americans from the Civil War to the Gulf War.* New York: Pocket Books, June 1994. 400 pages. Hardcover \$25. Separate glossaries for the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the two world wars, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, and the Cold War. Some entries have just short definitions, but some include explanations, etymologies, and citations. ISBN 0-671-7502-4.

**Wolfgang Mieder and Stewart A. Kingsbury.** *A Dictionary of Wellerisms.* New York: Oxford University Press, Dec. 1993. 240 pages \$24.95. (A 20 percent discount may still be in effect. Write OUP, Orders Dept., 2001 Evans Road, Cary NC 27513; phone 800/451-7556.) A wellerisms consists of a statement (often a proverb), identification of the speaker, and the situation; with a humorous twist, often in the form of a pun: "*Prevention is better than the cure,*" said the pig when it ran away from the butcher. From 15,000 texts, this book is said to collect all of the recorded wellerisms in English. ISBN 0-19-508318-0.

**Rose Nash.** *Illustrated Dictionary of Spanish/English False Friends.* The first book of a new series entitled *Mejore su Ingles / Improve Your English* (1993). Paralexicon Publishing Company, P.O. Box 22535 University Station, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00931. 260 pages. Paperbound \$16.95 postpaid. Presents and explains 500 common lexical errors typical of adult Spanish-speaking ESL students. The examples cover traditional deceptive cognates, morphological mixups, orthographic oddities, phonetic confusions, and accidental creations. Also includes cartoons, etymologies, exercises, bilingual proverbs, and word indexes. Library of Congress Copyright No. TX 3 678 682.



**Le Meridien, center left; Coronado ferry landing and shopping center, upper left; Chart House (see ANS, p. 4), lower left (in water); downtown San Diego, upper right (not to scale)**

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# ADS TEACHING NEWSLETTER

May 1994

## Recent Trends in Teaching about Language Variation: A Report on the 1993 ADS Teaching Survey

KATHRYN RILEY

In 1983, the newly formed ADS Committee on Teaching conducted a survey among ADS members on teaching about language variation. The results of that survey were published by Donald Lance in the January 1984 *NADS*. In 1993, the Committee conducted an updated version of the survey, with three purposes in mind:

- to identify recent trends in teaching about language variation;
- to compare the 1993 survey results with those from 1983, by way of discovering continuities and changes in teaching about language variation; and
- to allow ADS members to compare their own teaching methods and materials with those of the membership at large.

In order to allow a comparison between the two surveys, the 1993 survey was modeled largely on the 1983 version. A copy of the survey was included in the January 1993 *NADS*, and an additional reminder to return surveys was included in the September 1993 *NADS*. A total of 51 surveys were returned and tabulated.

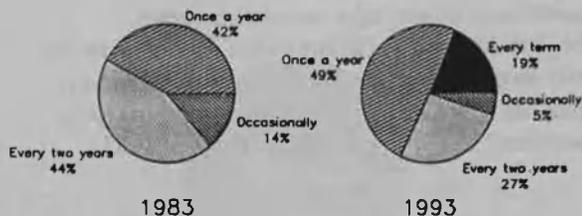
The following report presents findings from the four main areas surveyed: course status; student population; course content and instructor approach; and textbooks.

## Course Status

The first group of questions elicited information about the home department of the course, its frequency of offering, and average enrollment. English was reported as the home department of 41% of the courses (compared to 48% in 1983), with Linguistics as the home department of 32% (compared to 36% in 1983). Other departments reported included Communication; French; Interdisciplinary Studies; Languages, Literature, and Linguistics; and Sociology.

Respondents were asked to identify the frequency of offering of their course: every term, once a year, every two years, or occasionally. Figure 1 compares the 1983 and 1993 responses for this question.

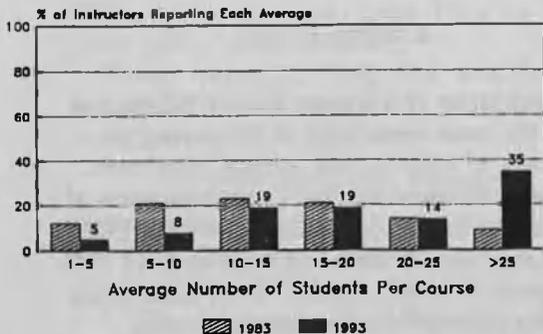
Figure 1  
Frequency of Offering



As Figure 1 shows, language variation courses are being offered more frequently in 1993 than they were in 1983; increases are shown in both the "every term" and "once a year" category.

Finally, respondents were asked to estimate average enrollment. Figure 2 compares the 1983 and 1993 responses for this question.

Figure 2  
Average Enrollment

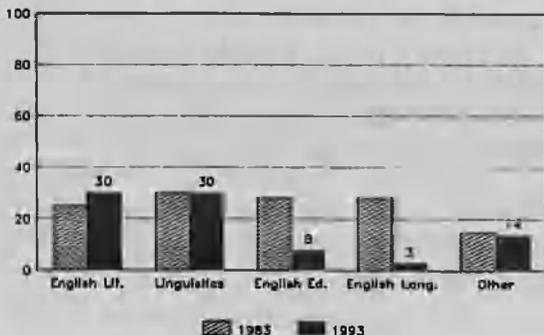


Like frequency of offering, average enrollment appears to have increased since 1983. The rise in courses enrolling more than 25 students is especially dramatic.

### Student Population

The second group of questions elicited information about which students are taking language variation courses and why. Figure 3 lists majors accounting for more than 25% of enrollment in language variation courses. English literature and linguistics majors were the two largest groups reported in the 1993 survey. English education and English language majors, however, declined by over 20% since 1983.

Figure 3  
Majors Comprising >25% of Enrollment



The 1993 survey added a new question to determine why students take language variation courses. Most students (57%) take a language variation course to fulfill an area requirement (i.e., as one of several courses that will fulfill a requirement). The second-largest group (27%) takes the course as an elective, while the smallest group (16%) is required to take a specific language variation course.

### Course Content; Instructor Approach

The third group of questions asked instructors to identify the major topics they cover, the activities they require, and the theoretical approach(es) to language variation that they use.

Respondents were asked to identify those topics to which more than 10% of the course is devoted. The choices given were social class and language variation, gender and language variation, variation theories, Black English, pidgins and creoles, U.S. atlas studies, history of American English, dictionaries, European atlas studies, and the development of standard English. Figures 4 and 5 show the relative standings of these topics for 1983 and 1993.

Figure 4  
Major Topics Covered in Course (Group 1)

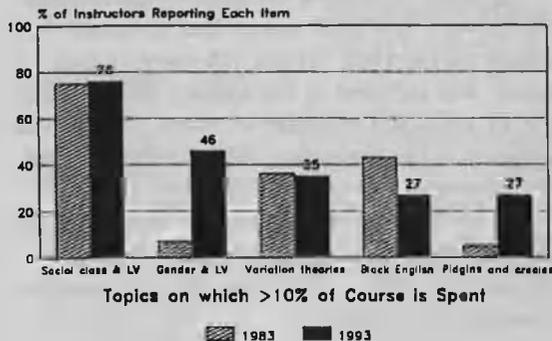
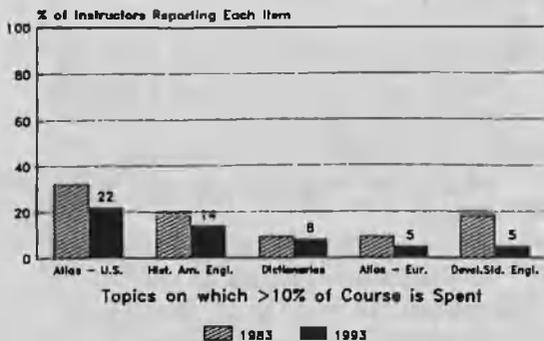


Figure 5  
Major Topics Covered in Course (Group 2)



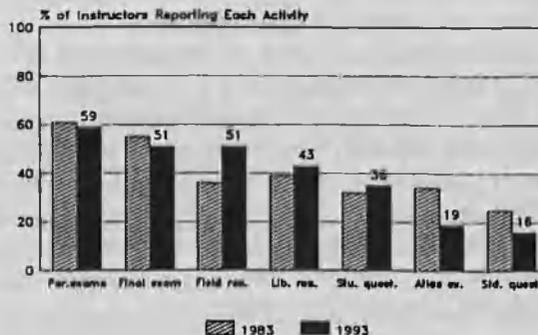
As these figures show, social class and language variation is still the most frequently mentioned topic, as it was in 1983. A strong increase over 1983 was shown in two topics: gender and language variation, and pidgins and creoles. On the other hand, Black English and atlas studies both showed a slight decline compared to 1983. At a discussion of the survey at the 1993 annual meeting, Dennis Preston speculated that these trends may be related, in that the apparent decline in Black English studies may actually reflect a more sophisticated understanding of Black English through the study of pidgins and creoles.

Some respondents wrote in topics not mentioned on the survey list. Among the other topics mentioned by respondents were conversational/discourse analysis; discussion of varieties of English such as Canadian, British, and American Indian; language change; quantitative analysis; and problems related to teaching.

Instructors were also asked to identify required course activities from a list of choices: periodic and final exams, field research, library research, administration of a student

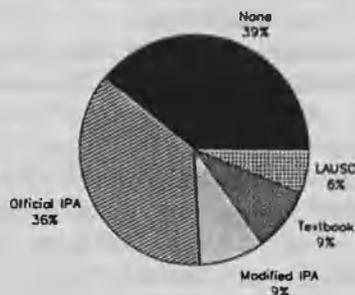
questionnaire, atlas exercises, and administration of a standard questionnaire. Figure 6 shows the ranking of these activities, for both 1983 and 1993.

Figure 6  
Required Activities



Also related to pedagogical approach was a question about which transcription system (if any) the instructor required. Figure 7 shows the results of this question.

Figure 7  
Transcription Systems Required - 1993



Compared to 1983, transcription systems appear to be receiving less emphasis. In 1983, only 14% of the respondents required no transcription systems, compared to 39% in the 1993 survey. Dennis Preston has speculated that this decline may reflect a greater interest in

gender and language variation and in discourse analysis.

Finally, instructors were asked about their theoretical approach to language variation. Nearly half of the 1993 respondents (49%) aligned themselves with no specific theory, compared to 57% in 1983. The two theoretical approaches mentioned most often were Labovian/variationist (22%, down from 32% in 1983) and Kurath/McDavid (5%, down from 7% in 1983). Other theories or theoreticians mentioned included Wardhaugh; social network theory; variation theory a la VARBRUL; lexical diffusion; statistical modeling; Hymesian ethnography of speaking; discourse/conversation analysis; M.J. Gregory; and Sankoff/Cedergren/Guy/Milroy.

### Textbooks

The final piece of information respondents were asked to supply was their textbook. The following 12 textbooks were listed by more than one respondent; the percentage of respondents using each book is listed to the left.

22%	Wardhaugh, <i>Introduction to Sociolinguistics</i> .
16%	Chambers & Trudgill, <i>Dialectology</i> .
15%	Wolfram, <i>Dialects and American English</i> .
5%	Davis, <i>English Dialectology</i> .
5%	Fasold, <i>Sociolinguistics of Society</i> .
5%	Fasold, <i>Sociolinguistics of Language</i> .
5%	Giglioli, <i>Language and Social Contact</i> .
5%	Labov, <i>Sociolinguistic Patterns</i> .
5%	Marckwardt & Dillard, <i>American English</i> .
5%	McCrum et al., <i>Story of English</i> .
5%	Milroy, <i>Observing and Analyzing Natural Language</i> .
5%	Trudgill, <i>Sociolinguistics</i> .

### Conclusion

The following summary lists the major patterns that emerged from the 1993 ADS teaching survey.

- More language variation courses are being taught outside of English and Linguistics departments than in 1983.
- Language variation courses are being taught more frequently than they were in 1983.
- Language variation courses have a higher enrollment than they did in 1983.
- The students who take these courses tend to be English literature or Linguistics students fulfilling an area requirement.
- The relation between socioeconomic status and language variation remains the topic that receives the most attention. Gender and pidgins/creoles are receiving more emphasis compared to 1983, while Black English and atlas studies are receiving slightly less.
- Instructors adhere to no one theoretical approach to language variation.

In closing, the committee would like to thank all of those who took the time to respond to the 1994 survey on teaching.

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### Forthcoming in the Next ADS Teaching Newsletter

The September 1994 ADS Teaching Newsletter will contain, among other items, reviews of *American Dialect Research* and *Functional Syntax*. If you would like to review a textbook or related item, or suggest an item for review, please contact Kathy Riley, Dept. of Composition, Univ. of Minnesota, Duluth, MN 55812.