NEWSLETTER OF THE
AMERICAN DIALECT SOCIETY

NADS 29.2

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REGIONAL MEETINGS, FALL 1997

Rocky Mountain Region

In association with RMMLA, Oct. 16–18; Denver, Executive Towers, hosted by Univ. of Denver.

4:00–5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 16, Adams Room.

1. "Dialect Survey of Utah." **Diane Lillie**, Brigham Young Univ.

2. "Children's Acquisition of the San Luis Dialect of English." **Sharon Utakis**, Adams State Coll.

3. "Early Theatrical African-American English: The Jamaica Connection." **Marianne Cooley**, Univ. of Houston.

4. "Forms of Address in the Commercial Spanish of Five Latin American Cities." **Diane Ringer Uber**, The College of Wooster.

5. "Exploring Methodologies for Investigating 'Sweet Carbonated Beverage' Isoglosses in the United States." **Simonie J. Hodges**, Georgetown Univ.

Chair: **Mary E. Morzinski**, Univ. of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

ADS Regional Secretary 1997–98: **Grant W. Smith**, English Dept., Eastern Washington Univ., Cheney WA 99004; e-mail gsmith@ewu.edu.

Registration is $55 by Oct. 7, $70 thereafter. Membership in RMMLA is $25 regular, $15 student. Write RMMLA Executive Director Charles G. Davis, C-203, Boise State Univ., 1910 University Dr., Boise ID 83725; phone (208) 385-1199 or (800) 824-7017, ext. 1199; e-mail CDavis@quartz.idbsu.edu.

Future meeting: "Still working on a 1998 site. If any of your people have an interest in hosting I can help them make the arrangements."—C. Davis.

FUTURE ADS ANNUAL MEETINGS
with the Linguistic Society of America

• 1999, Jan. 7–10: Los Angeles, Bonaventure.

• 2000, Jan. 6–9: Chicago, Palmer House.

South Central Region

In association with SCMLA, Oct. 30–Nov. 1; Dallas, Adam's Mark Hotel (formerly Harvey).

5:45–7:15 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 30.

1. "Black English and Biblical Exegesis in William Faulkner's *Sound and the Fury*." **Philip Dubuisson Castille**, Louisiana Tech Univ.

2. "Hairdos and Medical Advice: An Analysis of Discourse Events at Dolly's Beauty Shop." **Patricia Cukor-Avila**, Univ. of North Texas.

3. "The Nationalization of a Southernism (Y'all)." **Guy Bailey**, Univ. of Nevada Las Vegas; **Jan Tillery**, UNLV; **Tom Wikle**, Oklahoma State Univ.

4. "Proud to Be 'Puro Tejano': Culture, Identity, and the Public Display of Language." **Dan R. Jones**, Univ. of Houston-Downtown.

Chair: **Michael R.** Dressman, Dean, Coll. of Humanities and Social Sciences, Univ. of Houston-Downtown, One Main St., Houston TX 77002; phone (713) 221-8009.

ADS Regional Secretary 1996–97: **Charles B. Martin**, Dept. of English, Univ. of North Texas, P.O. Box 13827, Denton TX 76203-3827; phone (817) 565-2149.

Registration is $35 in advance, $40 on site. Membership in SCMLA is $20 full professors, $15 associate and assistant professors, $10 instructors and students. Write SCMLA, David McWhirter, Executive Director, Dept. of English, Texas A&M Univ., College Station TX 77843-4227; phone (409) 845-7041; e-mail scmla@acs.tamu.edu; http://engserve.tamu.edu/files/scmla/.

Future meetings: 1998 Nov. 12–14 New Orleans; 1999 Memphis.

Annual Meeting 1998 • New York City, Jan. 8 – 10
FINAL CALL FOR PAPERS: AUGUST 15

Next year ADS will again meet with the Linguistic Society of America, this time in New York City, Thursday through Saturday, January 8–10. We'll be housed in the completely remodeled Grand Hyatt Hotel near Grand Central Station. Rooms will be $89 single, $10 for each extra person. Call (800) 233-1234 or (212) 883-1234 for reservations—and mention LSA.

August 15 is the deadline for proposals. You are encouraged to make a proposal even if you do not have a paper fully developed. With your proposal, please specify whether you want your paper considered for the special session (below) and whether you will need audio-visual equipment.

Format: Our abstracts will be printed in the LSA program, so we ask that you follow LSA guidelines: Use 10 point Times Roman or equivalent, single spaced, in black ink, within a rectangle 3 inches high and 7.5 inches wide. Outside this rectangle, write the title and your name, affiliation, and address; and specify any audio-visual equipment you will need. Send the abstract to Executive Secretary Allan Metcalf (address on cover). If convenient, please also send your abstract by e-mail to AAllan@aol.com, for publication in our own newsletter. But this e-version is not required.

Annual Luncheon: **William Labov**, Univ. of Pennsylvania, will speak on the relationship between dialect geography and sociolinguistics.

Words of the Year: It's not too early to start sending your nominations for the words of 1997 to New Words Committee Chair **Wayne Glowka**, Dept. of English and Speech, Georgia College and State University, Milledgeville GA 31061, wglowka@mail.gac.peachnet.edu.; or to **David Barnhart**, PO Box 247, Cold Spring NY 10516, e-mail Barnhart@highlands.com. As usual, nominations will be winnowed and winners voted on during the Annual Meeting. Is 1997 a slow year for new and distinctive vocabulary, or are we just not noticing?

SPECIAL SESSION: RECONFIGURING REGIONAL DIALECTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Papers are particularly welcome on 1) the (potentially) endangered dialect isolate, i.e., enclaves such as the North Carolina Outer Banks and (perhaps?) the Minnesota Iron Range; 2) the effects on regional dialects of transplant dialects in rapidly growing areas such as the North Carolina Research Triangle; 3) new ethnic dialects such as Vietnamese (reconfigured like Hispanic English, etc.); 4) shifts and meltings at major dialect boundaries; 5) the possible effect of the growing African-American middle class on AAVE.

Already accepted for the special session:

• "Dynamic Boundaries in African American Vernacular English: The Role of Local Dialect in the History of AAVE." **Walt Wolfram**, **Erik Thomas** and **Elaine Green**, North Carolina State Univ.

• "Redrawing Ethnic Dialect Lines: A Synchronic and Diachronic Analysis of /ay/ in Lumbee Native American Vernacular English." **Natalie Schilling-Estes**, Stanford Univ.

Already accepted for the general program:

• "African-American Stereotypes in Early Twentieth-Century English." **Richard W. Bailey**, Univ. of Michigan.

• "Rising Glides in Chicano English." **Amanda Doran**, Univ. of Texas, Austin.

• "*Was/were* Variation in English: Primitive, Remnant, Syntactic Restructuring or Act of Identity? Evidence from Inter-variety Comparison." **Sali Tagliamonte** and **Jennifer Smith**, Univ. of York, England.

Honor a Student

Nominations are still welcome for next year's three Presidential Honorary Memberships. The four-year complimentary memberships are intended to encourage interest and participation in our field by outstanding students, graduate or undergraduate.

All that is needed is a letter of recommendation, although supporting material is also welcome. Send nominations to President **Walt Wolfram** at Dept. of English, North Carolina State Univ., Box 8105, Raleigh NC 27695-8105, wolfram@social.chass.ncsu.edu.

Elevate a Colleague

Who keeps ADS on its steady course? Why, all of us who pay our dues, not just in cash but in the study of American English that is the raisin of being for ADS. (Few sour grapes, thank goodness.)

But there are also some who take a little time out from their own work to help steer the ship of state. That includes members of the ADS Executive Council.

Each year one person needs to be elected to a four-year term on the Council. The most important mental qualification for the Council is sensitivity to the concerns of our field and our society; the most important physical qualification is regular attendance at the Annual Meeting (and regrettably, our budget provides no travel subsidies).

If you know of someone who would be a good candidate for the Council term 1998 through 2001, now is a good time to notify a member of the Nominating Committee: **John Baugh** (School of Education, Stanford Univ., Stanford CA 94305-3096), chair; **Lawrence Davis** (Wichita State Univ.) and **William A. Kretzschmar, Jr.** (Univ. of Georgia), members. The committee must make its nomination by the end of August.

A year from now the Nominating Committee will have more to propose: candidates for Vice President and Nominating Committee membership. Any suggestions?

Talking the Digital Talk

ADS-sponsored session at the annual convention of the Modern Language Association of America, Toronto, Dec. 27–30.

Chair: **Dennis Baron**, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

"Visualizing Discourse on the World Wide Web." **Gail Hawisher**, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

"Language and the New Technologies of Literacy." **Dennis Baron**.

Those who attend must register for the MLA convention. Write MLA Convention Office, 10 Astor Place, New York NY 10003-6981; phone (212) 614-6372; e-mail convention@mla.org.

Call for Papers Right Now: MLA 1998 in San Francisco

Since moving our Annual Meeting to the Linguistic Society, ADS has had difficulty making a presence at the Modern Language Association meeting we had cohabited for more than a century. We're entitled to two sessions at MLA, but this year we could only muster one.

So perhaps some advance planning is in order. In 1998, MLA holds its Dec. 27–30 annual convention in none other than San Francisco. If you'd like to give a talk or organize a whole ADS session for that meeting, it's not too early to notify Executive Secretary Allan Metcalf, who in turn can seek early official approval if you wish.

There is no restriction on subject matter, but it should be something appropriate to ADS and aimed at an audience consisting largely of critical literati. And those on the program must be members of MLA.

Dues Opportunity

Starting next year, annual ADS dues will be $35 ($20 for students) and Life Membership $700. BUT—If you choose to pay for future years in advance of the September billing, you can use the current rate of $30 a year or $600 for Life.

ADS at ACLS: Investment in the Life of Learning

By Richard W. Bailey

The American Council of Learned Societies (which met on May 2–3 in Philadelphia) has, to judge by the two annual meetings I have attended as your delegate, a political purpose and an intellectual purpose.

The political purpose responds to attacks on NEH and NEA in the Congress and informs us of the likelihood that these agencies will survive the current round of attacks on them. (They will.) At the opening session, Sheldon Hackney, the Chair of NEH, described his attempts to keep our investments in the national and intellectual culture from being abolished, and he did so in a historical context—the balance in American history between individualism (putting self first) and communitarianism (submerging self in the greater good of the community).

The intellectual purpose of the meeting is to place work of learning and teaching in the context of values we wish to assert and maintain. This purpose was manifest in an excellent panel with speeches by two historians and a specialist in Asian literature, all of whom have kept intellectually alive while being university administrators.

ADS gets value for money through our membership in ACLS, and not only through the technical presentations on mailing lists, finance, and meeting organization from which Allan Metcalf learns and to which he provides insight from his long experience as our Executive Secretary. We both heard the annual Haskins lecture ("A Life of Learning") in which a person much smarter than we are gives an autobiography rich in detail and inspiring in vision. (This year it was Natalie Zemon Davis, historian of 16th century France and author of *The Return of Martin Guerre*.)

Just as some listeners listen to the silences effaced or asserted in music, so we, I think, attended to the transitions the lecturer described between one inquiry and the next. We will not have those ideas, but we can think about how we get from one thing to the next to make our lives in learning as rewarding to ourselves as it is to those celebrated as Haskins lecturers.

ADS On Line, Going Strong

After single-handedly wrangling the ADS-L e-mail discussion list since its founding on Nov. 22, 1991, **Natalie Maynor** of Mississippi State Univ. has made her well-deserved escape to Meisei Univ. in Japan from April 1997 to May 1998. If you are electronically active, however, you will have noticed that ADS-L continues unabated, thanks to deft handling by its two new "owners," **Terry Irons** (t.irons@morehead-st.edu) and **Jesse Sheidlower** (jester@panix.com).

ADS-L has grown to 372 subscribers this June, compared with 343 a year ago, 245 in Sept. 1994, and 13 to begin with in Nov. 1991.

Meanwhile, the ADS Web site, also originated by Maynor, now is in the capable hands of **Diane Lillie** at Brigham Young University. The URL is http://humanities.byu.edu/humstudents/lillie/ads/index.htm.

Outgoing ADS President **Lawrence M. Davis** commended Maynor earlier this year in a letter that read in part:

"In addition to making communication easier among scholars interested in American English, the ADS-L and the web page have gained the American Dialect Society many new members. Your technical skills and your untiring labor have also earned international renown for the whole Society and for you personally as well.

"On a more personal note, allow me to express my admiration for the way you dealt with the occasional difficulties that arose during the past several years on ADS-L. You handled these difficulties with grace, tact, and a delightful sense of humor, and turned such difficulties into non-problems in very short order."

Contemporary Metropolitan France and the Outer Banks

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

Michael D. Picone. *Anglicisms, Neologisms and Dynamic French*. Lingvisticae Investigationes Supplementa, No. 18. Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1996. xii + 462 pages. Hardback. ISBN 1-55619-258-4 (USA), 90 272 3127 3 (Europe).—This comprehensive study of Anglicisms in the context of accelerated neological activity in Contemporary Metropolitan French opens up new vistas on issues of general linguistic interest: the effects of technology on language, the analyticity-syntheticity controversy, the lexical contribution to language vitality, the study of compound word formation, and the interplay between cultural and linguistic affectivity. The investigation includes integral borrowings, semantic calques, structural calques, the generation of pseudo-Anglicisms and hybrids, and graphological and phonological phenomena.

Walt Wolfram and **Natalie Schilling-Estes**. *Hoi Toide on the Outer Banks: The Story of the Ocracoke Brogue*. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, April 1997. 165 pages. Paperback $14.95, ISBN 0-8078-4626-0. Hardcover $29.95.—Based on interviews with more than 70 residents of Ocracoke Island, this book details the history and context of Ocracoke brogue, its relation to other dialects, and its likelihood of survival, as well as its vocabulary, sounds, and grammar. In addition, it offers a look at the role that language plays in a culture's efforts to define and maintain itself. Includes a glossary of 120 words, Ocracoke stories, a vocabulary quiz, 5 maps, 3 tables, and numerous photos of O'cockers and the authors happily in conversation.

Dictionary Days at *DARE* in Madison

Non, non! It was not just nonagenarian Allen Walker Read, who sat in the front with his wife Charlotte, nor near-nonagenarian Fred Cassidy, who was so recovered from last year's fall that he merrily danced to a folk tune, giving luster to the eleventh biennial meeting of the Dictionary Society of North America in Madison, Wisconsin at the end of May. No indeed; ludic lexicographical illuminati polished their prose at every presentation, and their plates at the picnic, a Wisconsin fish boil for which the clouds were rolled back and the sun gently coaxed out of hiding not a moment too soon.

Of 90 odd participants, those who make dictionaries explained how they make them, those who criticize dictionaries explained why they criticize them, and those who enjoy dictionaries—including most in the previous categories—demonstrated why they enjoy them. Most retired without attempting *mesonoxian* revels, but no one was seen to *latibulate* [Cockeram 1623, courtesy of Andrea Nagy].

On the other hand, at the Lucullan reception in the library, members did not hesitate to confabulate and congratulate E. Ward Gilman, prime mover of the adulated *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English Usage* (1989). For DSNA, John Algeo encapsulated and articulated Gilman's accomplishments.

DSNA XI was hosted by the staff of *DARE* (which, with the publication of Volume 3, is now halfway *DARE*), and *DARE* was on exhibit not only in the line of lexicographical succession in the Special Collections of the university library, but in its living embodiment at its offices in Helen C. White Hall. Joan Hall and Luanne von Schneidemesser were co-chairs, assisted by Catherine Attig, Roland Berns, Elizabeth Blake, Elizabeth Gardner, George Goebel, Mary Jo Heck, and Karen Krause, among others. Funds came from several sources at the University of Wisconsin and four publishers.

Mark That Calendar for May 1999: DSNA on the Bay

No need to make your own plans for the evening of Friday, May 28, 1999. It's all arranged: a dinner cruise on San Francisco Bay.

The boat has been engaged for our exclusive use. It has two decks, both enclosed, with an outside promenade on the upper deck. On the lower deck a buffet dinner will be served, and we already know that the menu will include chicken champagne and caesar salad. Next to the dinner tables is a dance floor. The committee in charge is deep in discussion about what kind of recorded music to play.

A special evening like this is a little pricey, so start saving now. The cruise will be $65 a person, not counting drinks at the cash bar.

And what brings us there? The biennial meeting of the Dictionary Society of North America, that's what, to be held May 26–29, 1999 at the University of California, Berkeley. By long custom we designate DSNA as the official ADS summer meeting. Nearly a hundred of the makers and scholars of dictionaries are expected to attend, as they did the just-completed DSNA meeting in Madison, Wisconsin this year (see previous page).

For the 1999 meeting, the host committee chaired by **Arthur Bronstein** has already made detailed plans. In addition to the cruise, highlights include:

• Wednesday, May 26: Pre-conference special session on the "Framenet" national lexical corpus being developed in England, and why America needs one like it. Speaker: **Beryl Atkins**, Oxford.

• Thursday afternoon, May 27: Discussion of the five major lexicographic projects in the linguistics department at Berkeley, followed by a reception.

• Saturday, May 29: Concluding session open to the public, panel chaired by **John Algeo**.

The first call for papers will come in 1988. Keep your eyes on this newsletter and you'll be able to read all about it. You might also want to join the Dictionary Society, at $30 a year. Write DSNA, RT 936-7, Cleveland State Univ., 1983 East 24th St., Cleveland OH 44115-2403; phone (216) 687-4830; e-mail l.milic@cushio.edu.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC LINGUISTS meets Sept. 5–8 at Duke University. Keynote speakers are Roger Shuy, Georgetown Univ., and Lawrence Solan, Brooklyn Coll. of Law. Write Charles Carson, IAFL Conference Coordinator, Duke University, Box 90018, Durham, NC 27708-0018; e-mail carson@acpub.duke.edu.

Regional Meetings, Fall 1997

Midwest Region

In association with MMLA, Nov. 6–8; Chicago, Ramada Congress Hotel.

12:30 p.m. Thursday Nov. 6 (tentative).

1. "Where Is the Midwestern Dialect Spoken?" **Donald M. Lance**, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia.

2. "Factors Influencing the Adoption of Language Change." **Matthew Gordon**, Purdue Univ. Calumet.

3. "Linguistic Individuation and Conformity among Suburban Chicago Adolescents." **Lisa Ann Lane**, Univ. of Chicago, and **David Durian**, Northern Illinois Univ.

Chair: **W. Thomas Beckner,** English Dept., Taylor Univ., 1025 W. Rudisill Blvd., Fort Wayne IN 46807; e-mail tmbeckner@tayloru.edu.

Discussant and ADS Regional Secretary 1997–98: **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.

Preregistration is $30 (includes 18 papers), students $15 (no papers); on-site $5 additional. 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; e-mail mmla@uiowa.edu.

Future meetings: 1998 Nov. 5–7 St. Louis, Regal Riverfront Hotel; 1999 Nov. 4–6 Minneapolis, Marriott City Center.

ADS at NCTE, November

ADS will sponsor a session on "Ebonics and Education: Reconsidering the Issues" at the 1997 convention of the National Council of Teachers of English in Detroit, Nov. 21–23. Panel includes **Walt Wolfram**, North Carolina State Univ.; **Jerrie Scott**, Univ. of Memphis; **Sonja L. Lanehart**, Univ. of Georgia; **Geneva Smitherman**, Michigan State Univ. See the January Newsletter for details.

South Atlantic Region

In association with SAMLA, Nov. 13–15; Atlanta, Westin Peachtree Plaza.

9:45-11:15 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 15.

1. "The Great War, Literary Tastes, and Political Correctness: The Strange Case of Charles Follen Adams, German Dialect Poet." **Geoffrey Orth**, Dept. of English, Philosophy, and Modern Languages, Longwood Coll.

2. "Ethnicity and Null Copula: Grammatical, Phonological, and Sociolinguistic Considerations." **Clare J. Dannenberg**, Dept. of English, North Carolina State Univ.

3. "A Comparative Look at the Copula in Gullah and AAVE." **Tracey L. Weldon**, Dept. of English, North Carolina State Univ.

4. "Upland Southern in Illinois: An Endangered Dialect?" **Timothy C. Frazer**, Dept. of English, Western Illinois Univ.

Meeting chair: **Connie Eble**, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Session arranged by **Natalie Schilling-Estes**, Dept. of Linguistics, Stanford Univ.

ADS Regional Secretary 1997–98: **Michael Picone**, Dept. of Romance Languages and Classics, Univ. of Alabama, Box 870246, Tuscaloosa AL 35406-0246; e-mail mpicone@ua1vm.ua.edu.

Nominating Committee: Crawford Feagin, Chair; Connie Eble, Peter Patrick.

Preregistration is $35, students $25. Membership in SAMLA is $20 for individuals, $10 for students until the convention; after that all dues increase by $5. Write SAMLA, Georgia State Univ., University Plaza, Atlanta GA 30303-3083; phone (404) 651-2693; e-mail engdjr@panther.gsu.edu (Deirdre Jorgensen Ralston).

Future meetings: 1998 Nov. 12–14 Atlanta, Hyatt Regency; 1999 Nov. 11–13 Atlanta, Hyatt Regency.

This issue of *Usage* is devoted to English in the age of the Internet as represented by *Wired Style* and its allied website. It contains two reviews, a list of websites of interest, a few book notices and a plea for help in compiling future issues.

Wired Style: A Review

Elizabeth Gibbens
Assistant to William Safire
The New York Times

The Washington Post recently reported that TV-viewing is on the decline-- Americans are becoming "netizens" with fingertips dancing as they relish their free e-mail chat. In her descriptive usage guide, *Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age*, Constance Hale, the editor of *Wired* , celebrates postmodern post-couch-potato speak. Instead of decrying it as the literati are wont to do, she gives credence to the Internet and e-mail. Published last fall, Hale's manual shows us that, far from abandoning the principles of rhetoric, cyber-conversationalists pursue a hybrid of speech and writing.

Wired Style announces itself: its shock-jock, fluorescent pink slipcase, its expensive wire-bound cover and its phosphorescent pages make it as inescapable as the Information Age itself.

The short glossary Hale gives in the chapter "Be Elite" neatly chronicles the Info Era and gives its iconography, including EPIC, the Arpanet, Alvin Toffler's "Future Shock" and Marshall McLuhan's *The Medium Is the Message*. Mentioning Gutenberg in her lexicon of cyberspace, she "conjures the birth of publishing and the rise of literacy and mass media." She reminds us, "Shared knowledge connects the writer and the reader. It forms a bridge from the type on the page (or the screen) to the deeper meanings and nuances of words." Hale colonizes cyberspeak by creating new allusions to replace the biblical and mythological ones that devotees of Harold Bloom mourn. She names the signs and promoters of our time, including Apple and Jobs, who, maybe by contrivance, became known to the world in 1984.

Describing wired style, Hale relates her experience on the frontiers, and her non-conformity recalls that of characters in Westerns. "Treat the institutions and players in your world with irreverence," she counsels. "Welcome inconsistency, especially in the interest of voice and cadence." Although Hale's advice is contextual, it is designed for the Web

and for e-mail, she may stretch her authority by asking us to use *Wired Style* in traditional settings.

Quoting a financial column Charles Platt began by writing, "I'm sitting with a guy named Jerry in Jim's I-29 Liquor & Lounge here in Sioux City, South Dakota," she says that we should mimic reporters whose written voices resemble speech. Even giving the financial news, "wired" voices imitate the vocal tones of fiction and the personal essay. On-line business reporters sound more like David Lynch than the pinstriped scriveners of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Delving into the mechanics of the cyber-fied voice, Hale asks us to buttress its visceral quality by mixing "the literary, the vernacular, and the precise." The Net's energy, and cyberians' "in-your-face" style, are what our language needed, Hale demonstrates. Net-bound voices feel liberating. "Anticipate the future," and "Screw the rules," Hale's new commandments, are good advice to computer journalists. Still, if "break the rules" is the rule, what happens? Do we all try to out-do each other's novelty? That is not a recent tendency, but giving mantras, Hale may be inviting insipidity.

Hale clearly relishes her electrified

aesthetic; she cautions against fusty rule-conformity, advising, "Don't sanitize and homogenize." As much as I enjoy reading the "Way-New Journalism," as she describes it (in honor of Tom Wolfe), if on-line literature were to overtake books, I would miss the tactile and olfactory sensations provided by snail-mail, coffee-stained librarians and books. Will libraries survive, or will they become transformed into computer images with virtual book-bindings that spew acid-paper dust? Hale doesn't say, but she, e-mail and the Internet have at least returned us to a semi-literate world.

Wired Style (http://www.hotwired. com/hardwired/wiredstyle/): A companion website to *Wired Style: Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age* (HardWired, 1996)

Daniel Kies
Department of English
College of DuPage

When people familiar with writing and reading documents on the internet and world wide web think about usage issues in the digital age, the first thought that often comes to mind is the common

The Newsletter of the
Committee on Usage
Charles Meyer, Chair

USAGE

American Dialect Society
May 1997   No. 2
Alan Slotkin, Editor
Page 3

practice of "netizens" to create neologisms, or disreguard konventional speling. others note the lack of capitalization after full stops, in proper nouns, or in acronyms like ibm. However interesting (or annoying) those traits of writing in electronic media may be, there is another set of usage problems that are not as obvious but (I would argue) even more serious.

Many of our colleagues in academe have long recognized the usage problems associated with HTML (hypertext markup language). HTML is the code that tells a web browser (like Mosaic, Netscape, or Internet Explorer) how to display the text on the screen. Quite simply, HTML has yet to evolve into anything like a full featured system for displaying text. For example, it is difficult to create a paragraph format with a hanging indent, a format so common to bibliographies and reference works alike. Similarly, writers on the world wide web have no standardized way to present a citation to a web page that may be used as a source in another work. Also, different computer operating systems display the same HTML code differently on different machines. These are just a few of what I think of as the 'serious' usage issues that remain for the new media.

Thus, when the editors of *Wired* -- that self-consciously hip magazine for the techno-elite -- produced *Wired Style*, as both a book and a website, claiming to examine the "Principles of English Usage in the Digital Age," those of us who use the internet regularly for business and academic purposes treat this as welcomed news. Furthermore, considering that Wired Style comes to us from editors who know and understand the technology as well as anyone, we might expect *Wired Style* (and especially its website) to be *the* reference work that convincingly demon-strates the potential of the new media that the editors of the magazine so voraciously defend from, and promote to, the techno-peasants.

Following in the footsteps of earlier examples of "simultaneous" publication -- such as *City of Bits* (MIT Press, 1995; http://mitpress.mit.edu:8000/City_of_Bits /index.html), perhaps the first book to be published simultaneously in print and electronic media -- Constance Hale chose to publish *Wired Style* both in print and electronic formats. Unfortunately, unlike *City of Bits* -- a fascinating exploration of electronic literacy by William J. Mitchell, Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at MIT -- *Wired Style* has a surprisingly poor presence on the web, a presence so informationally poor, in fact, that the website is not much more than a collection of short letters from *Wired*'s

The Newsletter of the
Committee on Usage
Charles Meyer, Chair

USAGE

American Dialect Society
May 1997   No. 2
Alan Slotkin, Editor
Page 4

editors making pronouncements on the usage of neologisms (*Wired Style* prefers *email* to *Email*, *e-mail*, or *E-mail*), supplemented by what amounts to a set of 'bookmarks' (hypertext links to other websites) that do offer more extensive usage advice. And that's too bad. The very people who advocate the significance of the new medium -- hypertext -- have not provided us with a site that demonstrates the potential of the medium.

Those of us familiar with the Help files of most Windows and Macintosh programs already realize the enormous potential of hypertext as a medium for handbooks and reference works. The Find function quickly lists for us all the materials in the text that match our query, and the hypertext links allow us to jump quickly from one place in the reference work to another or back again. The hypertext references will even track our search patterns, allowing us to see what we have been studying and compare it against what is still available in the reference work. The potential of hypertext has not been lost on technical writers. Maintenance manuals for complex mechanism such as aircraft, for example, have been published entirely in hypertext format. The technical writers realize that a paper version would be too cumbersome to use: if an emergency arises, one could more quickly access relevant information

from a computer disk than from a 10,000+ page manual, and if maintenance crews find the manual difficult to use, then .... (See Joseph Devlin and Emily Berk, "Why Hypertext?" and H. Van Dyke Parunak, "Toward Industrial Strength Hypermedia," both in Emily Berk and Joseph Devlin, eds., *Hypertext/Hypermedia Handbook*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1991.) So the hypertext version of the manual allows a technician quick satisfaction to his/her query. Furthermore, hypertext reference works offer yet more advantages: not just static pictures, but also animated schematics, rotating 3D drawings, sound files, and full motion video to related information is but a click away (Robert E. Horn, *Mapping Hypertext : The Analysis, Organization, And Display Of Knowledge For The Next Generation Of On-line Text And Graphics*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Institute, 1989). All of those features supplement -- but do not replace -- the text. Those features are the elements that make text in the new media hypertext. By making the reference work both informationally richer and easier to use, hypertext is a suitable vehicle for manuals, handbooks, and reference works of all kinds. (To see an example of how hypertext can augment a reference work, see *http://www.cod.edu/cis/newsclas/ newsclas.htm* -- a tutorial in the use of News Readers, written by Cathy Rathke, a

technical writer and the webmaster at College of DuPage.)

Indeed, I would suggest that the enormous processing power of the ordinary 486 computer has already made some great scholarship even greater. Having the *OED* on cd-rom, for instance, not only makes searching the dictionary faster and easier, but now we can also search in ways that would be nearly impossible in print. The computerized version of the dictionary allows us to search by reverse spelling or search by definition or citation only. We can search the entire work in seconds for every instance of the word we wish to study. The machine never grows tired; it never misses a single citation. (Please do not misunderstand. I do not wish to appear as if I am denigrating text as we know and love it now. In fact, I am among those who would argue that all text is hypertext -- bibliographies and paren-thetical citations are the 'hot links' to related sources, and [thinking here of my earliest experiences with literacy] traditional text is potentially multimedia, capable of conveying both the written word and the illuminating illustration.)

However, the *Wired Style* site offers us very little. The site is composed of a welcoming screen and an index page that present a bit of background information about the

genesis of the *Wired Style* project. The site is then subdivided into six sections:

1. Picking nits. A collection of the editors' pet peeves, such as the editors' dislike of *user un-friendly*.

2. Picking brains. A collection of short pieces on usage by the "word-smiths" (such as Tim Barkow, an editor at *Wired,* Douglas Coupland, auth or of *Generation X, Shampoo Planet*, and *Life After God*, and Mary Beth Protomastro, editor and publisher of *Copy Editor* newsletter).

3. Ask E. Questions and answers with Constance Hale.

4. Outtakes and updates. A database of new words and acronyms in the digital world. (This I think is the most interesting feature of the website.)

5. Bibliofile. Largely a simple bibliography of reference works (e.g., *The Chicago Manual of Style*) and "grammar" handbooks (e.g., *The Transitive Vampire* by Karen Elizabeth Gordon). A second subsection consists of hypertext links to on-line reference works (e.g., the on-line

version of Strunk's 1918 **first edition** of *The Elements of Style* [www.cc. columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/ strunk/] -- incorrectly identified on the Wired Style page as the **Strunk** and White edition-- and Jesse Sheidlower's "Word of the Day" site at the Random House website [http://www. randomhouse.com/ jesse/].)

6. Talk back. A page on which we can read various 'threads' of on-going conversions about style and usage issues. The interactive nature of this page makes it very valuable.

Wired Style is not the only page on the world wide web that attempts to address usage issues in new media. There are several others already available. Many of them are more thorough and more informationally rich for writers who care about various usage issues. None of them are wide in scope however. For example, Andrew Harnack and Gene Kleppinger's site at Eastern Kentucky University (http://falcon.eku.edu/honors/ beyond-mla/) and the IFLA's "Citation Guides for Electronic Documents" (http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/ifla/I/training/ citation/citing.htm) offer much more discussion and usable information about usage issues related to the HTML problems

surrounding citations. One could also look at "Grammar and Style Notes" by Jack Lynch at the University of Pennsylvania (http://www.english.upenn.edu/~jlynch/ grammar.html) or "Links for Copy Editors" at the *Copy Editor* site (http:// www. copyeditor.com/Links.html) for a wealth of on-line usage information and resources. In fact, there is much already offered, and the best way to understand what is available is to explore for oneself. Therefore, I have prepared an on-line the version of this review, complete with these links and more to enable the reader to observe these sites first hand. The on-line review is available at http:// www.cod. edu/dept/kiesdan/wired.htm.

In sum, *Wired Style* lives up to its name only in part. It certainly is a handsome site, easy to navigate, and visually appealing. The website does have style in that sense. Unfortunately, however, writers in these new media most need to cope with the 'wired' part; in that, *Wired Style*, the website, does not help us learn how to get the most from the potential in hypertext. Writers still lack consistent, systematic ways of handling fundamental usage issues in the digital age.

The Newsletter of the
Committee on Usage
Charles Meyer, Chair

USAGE

American Dialect Society
May 1997   No. 2
Alan Slotkin, Editor
Page 7

Some Websites of Interest

Jesse Sheidlower's excellent review of *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage*, "Elegant Variation and All That," can be found at The Atlantic Monthly's site (http://www.theatlantic.com/atlantic/issues/96dec/fowler/fowler.htm).

Common English Errors by Paul Brians, Professor of English, Washington State University (http://www. wsu.edu: 8080/~brians/errors/index. html).

NCTE's Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (http://www.pct. edu/ateg/ateg.htm). To subscribe to ATEG's listserver, send an e-mail message to Listserv@miamiu.muohio. edu. In the message, type: SUB ATEG <your real name>.

FAQ--Gender-Free Pronouns (http://www.eecis.udel.edu/~chao/gfp/).

Lydbury (UK) English Centre's *English Grammar Clinic* (http://www.edunet.com/english/clinic-h. html).

Michael Bonner's *Proper Grammar Page* (http://www.geocities. com/Athens/3003/grammar.htm).

Anthony Hughes of the University of Bristol (UK) maintains *On-Line English Grammar* (http:// www.edunet.com /english/grammar/ index.html).

Bill Walsh, a copy editor for *The Washington Post,* maintains *The Slot* (http://www. theslot.com).

Jack Lynch of the University of Pennsylvania maintains the *Grammar and Style Guide* (http://www.english. upenn.edu/~lynch/grammar.html).

Randall S. Hansen of Stetson University maintains the *Indispensable Writing Resources Page* (http://www.stetson. edu/~hansen/writing.html).

Grammar Doctor (http://w3.one.net/ ~sparks25/gdoctor/html).

Grammar Queen (http://www.slip. net/~sfwave/GQ.html).

English Grammar Links for ESL Students (http://www.gl.umbc.edu/~kpokoy1 grammar1.htm).

Darling's *Guide to Grammar* (http:// webster.commnet.edu/HP/pages/ darling/grammar.htm).

Citation Style Guides for Internet and Electronic Resources (http://www. library/ualberta.ca/library_html/help/ pathfinders/style/).

Copy Editor site (http://www.copyeditor. com/Links.html).

Andrew Harnack and Gene Kleppinger's site at Eastern Kentucky University (http://falcon.eku.edu/honors/ beyond-mla/).

IFLA's *Citation Guides for Electronic Documents* (http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/ ifla/I/training/citation/citing.htm).

English Grammar Flipper (http://www. qtm.net/~guides/394.html).

Ohio University's *Grammar for English Language Learners* (http://www.tcom. ohiou.edu/OU_Language/ englishGrammar.html).

The UVic Writers Guide: Grammar (http:// www.maclab.uvic.ca/writersguide/ Grammar/GramFore.html).

Book Notices

The following books will certainly be of interest to anyone concerned with usage.

Allsopp, Richard. 1996. *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage*. Oxford: Oxford U.P.

Burchfield, R. W. 1996. *The New Fowler's Modern English Usage*. Oxford: Oxford U.P.

A Plea for Help

The editor actively needs, wants, and solicits your cooperation in submitting items -- articles, notes, reviews, book notices, etc. -- for the upcoming issues of *Usage*. Please send these in hard copy to Alan Slotkin, English Department, Box 5053, Tennessee Technological University, Cookeville, TN 38506 and/or via email in ASCII format to ARS7950@TNTECH. EDU.