

# DSNA Newsletter

Dictionary Society of North America

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## *Flexner Retires from Random House*

Stuart B. Flexner, editor-in-chief and editorial director of Random House Inc. Reference Book Department for nine years, took early retirement on November 1, 1989.

Flexner received his B.A. and M.A. in English Literature and Language from the University of Louisville, where he began his work in lexicography and linguistics under the sociolinguist and criminal argot specialist David W. Maurer. He began his teaching career there and then went on to Cornell University for advanced graduate work and to continue teaching course in English literature, creative writing, and the history of the English language.

In the mid 1950s, Flexner came to New York as Executive Editor and Senior Editor in college textbooks and trade books for Verlan Books and later, Macmillan. During that time he completed his own first book *The Dictionary of American Slang* (Crowell, 1960). Harold Wentworth had originally begun that book as a dictionary of American colloquialisms; when he became too ill to continue the work, the publisher asked Flexner to complete it. However, Flexner convinced the publisher to change it into a slang dictionary and used approximately 20 percent of Wentworth's files in its preparation.

Flexner then spent five years in Mexico City as founder and president of his own publishing house where he published basic books for adults who had only minimal reading experience and little reading material to take them further. He worked closely with the Mexican National Board of Education as part of the government's anti-illiteracy campaign.

In 1964, he returned to New York and became associated with Random House as a Divisional Vice President and Senior Editor for the next 25 years, becoming instrumental in developing and editing the modern line of Random House dictionaries. During his first eight years at Random House, he worked under Jess Stein as a Senior Editor on the original *Random House Dictionary of the English Language (Unabridged Edition)* and the original *Random House College Dictionary*, was Editor-in-Chief of the *Random House School Dictionary*, and also editor of a line of vest-pocket bilingual dictionaries in Spanish, French, German, Italian, and Russian. Flexner also edited other reference books and some of the firm's trade, college, and el-hi titles in language arts, history, and the humanities. During this period he also wrote the vocabulary-building and usage book *How to Increase Your Word Power* (Reader's Digest Books, 1968).

He then left Random House to write and lecture during a seven-year period in the 1970s, when he was a consultant for Random House, Columbia University Press, Abbeville Press, ABC-TV, the Voice of America, and Curtis Publishing Company. He was a founding member of The Hudson Group, a writers' cooperative and book packager, wrote *The Family Word Finder* (Reader's Digest

Books, 1975, which was later expanded into the *Random House Thesaurus*), and *I Hear America Talking* (Van Nostrand, 1976); revised the classic *March's Thesaurus and Dictionary of the English Language* (Abbeville Press, 1979), and served as Chief Lexicographer on *The Oxford American Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 1980).

Flexner was asked to rejoin Random House as Editor-in-Chief and Editorial Director of its Reference Book Department in 1980 (a position previously held by only two others: Clarence Barnhart and Jess Stein). He then was Editor-in-Chief of the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language (Second Unabridged Edition)* and responsible for updating the entire dictionary line: the *Random House College Dictionary*, the *Random House School Dictionary*, and many smaller English-language and bilingual dictionaries. In addition, he worked on the four-volume *Random House Library of Painting and Sculpture*, the second edition of the *Random House Encyclopedia*, helped develop a line of student guides to literature, and signed and worked with the authors of various books, such as a crossword puzzle dictionary, a bilingual Portuguese dictionary, and Jonathan Lighter's forthcoming major dictionary of American slang.

Flexner was also involved with joint ventures and contracting with Japanese, Chinese, and Korean publishers in translating and publishing various of the Random House dictionaries in those countries; brought the Random House dictionaries into the modern computer age by working to create and license electronic products based on various Random House reference books; and began to assemble an advanced computerized dictionary editing, data base, and production system for the company. His last work at Random House was on the completely revised *Random House College Dictionary (Third Edition)*, to be published in 1991.

During that period, Flexner also wrote *Listening to America* (Simon & Schuster, 1982, which was nominated for the National Book Award), served as the major American consultant for the *Japanese Dictionary of New English* (Shogakukan, 1985), and was the American consultant for the BBC/PBS MacNeil-Lehrer nine-part TV series "The Story of English."

Since retiring from Random House, he has become a consultant for Oxford University Press and for a major commercial publisher, will be writing the introduction and footnotes to a collection of Peter Tamony's articles on language for Cambridge University Press, and is outlining a major book on the American language. He and his wife (they have two children in college) are living in Connecticut, thought then plan eventually to move to a university community where Flexner will continue his research and writing, and possibly teach.

## *Guralnik is Current DSNA President*

The DSNA officers for the term 1989-1991 are David B. Guralnik, Webster's New World Dictionaries (retired), President; Virginia G. McDavid, Vice-President and President-Elect; and Charles Blaney, Secretary-Treasurer.

Newly elected to the executive board (at large) are William Frawley and Ashley Crandall Amos (now deceased) and to the nominating committee, Thomas Creswell and Enid Pearsons. Two new Fel-

lows of the Society were elected: J. Edward Gates and David B. Guralnik.

Richard W. Bailey, University of Michigan, continues as editor of *Dictionaries: Journal of the Dictionary Society of North America*. Barbara Ann Kipfer is editor of the DSNA Newsletter.

## *EURALEX Fourth International Congress to Begin August 28*

The European Association for Lexicography, EURALEX, will hold its Fourth International Congress in Benalmádena-Málaga, Spain. It is the first EURALEX congress to be held in a southern European country. Arranged by Professor Manuel Alvar Ezquerra, meetings will begin on Tuesday, August 28 and end in the evening of Saturday, September 1. The new EURALEX Executive Board and other committees will meet Sunday morning, September 2.

Address for the organizer is: Professor Manuel Alvar Ezquerra, EURALEX-VOX Programme Organizer, CELEX, Sancha de Lara n 11 - 4 Derecha, 29015 Málaga, Spain. Deadline for submission of abstracts was December 30, 1989 and the acceptance/rejection letters were mailed on February 28. The Programme Committee included Antonio Zampolli, Manuel Ezquerra, Sue Atkins, Francis

Knowles, and Noël Osselton. A round table on the theme of the relationship between linguistics and lexicography, three workshops (on Dictionary Assessment and Criticism, Computational Lexicography, and Corpus Lexicography); two plenary lectures, parallel sessions of individual papers, poster sessions, and impromptu workshops are planned.

The address for the conference organizer, who will book accommodation in the Congress Hotel and provide information on travel and alternative accommodations is: EURALEX-VOX, c/o Viajes Iberia Congresos, Avda. Diagonal, 523, 08029 Barcelona, Spain.

The Third and Final Circular was planned for April publication.

## *Australasian Dictionary Society Proposed*

"A number of Australians and New Zealanders interested in lexicography are members of EURALEX or the DSNA, or both, and know something of what an individual can gain from the contacts and meetings available to members," W.S. Ramson writes.

"The possibility of an Australasian, or Pacific, grouping has been aired from time to time and, as a result of several informal meetings, a steering committee has been formed to engage in preliminary planning." Members of the committee are: David Blair, Macquarie University; Tamsin Donaldson, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies; Bill Ramson, Australian National Dictionary Centre; Roland Sussex, University of Queensland; and Darrell Tryon, Australian National University.

A draft constitution has been drawn up and the steering committee will prepare policy documents to be considered at a proposed inaugural meeting of the Society, timed to coincide with the end of conferences of the Australian Linguistic Society and the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, to be held at Macquarie in September.

For further information, write Bill Ramson, Australian National Dictionary Centre, Kingsley Street Cottage, Australian National University, GPO Box 4, Canberra ACT 2601 (telephone 062 49 2615).

## *Award Made to Text Encoding Initiative*

The Association for Computers and the Humanities, The Association for Computational Linguistics, and the Association for Literary and Linguistic Computing announced in October 1989 that the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a two-year \$100,000 grant to support the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI). The TEI, which is jointly sponsored by these three organizations, is a major international project to develop guidelines for the preparation and exchange of machine-readable texts, including dictionaries, for scholarly research and to satisfy a broad range of uses by the language industries.

The project is being undertaken in response to the pressing need for a common text encoding scheme, demonstrated by the present

chaotic diversity of formats now in use. The availability of these guidelines will make it possible for research groups to share data collections, which are both costly and time-consuming to develop.

Over 50 scholars from North America, Europe, and the Middle East are involved in TEI's effort to create sets of tags for marking features of texts. The tag sets, coded in the framework provided by the Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML), will provide the means to mark physical features of text such as character sets and page layout. They will also provide discipline-specific tag sets to mark the results of research on the text, such as analysis of

sentence syntax or the identification of the metrical structure of verse.

Representatives of 15 scholarly and professional organizations form an Advisory Board for the TEI, in order to ensure that all of the needs and interests of the research community are adequately addressed. Barbara Ann Kipfer is the DSNA's representative on the Advisory Board.

The planning phase of the project was inaugurated by a \$20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, which later

awarded a \$185,000 grant to implement the first two years of a four-year work plan to produce the encoding guidelines. The TEI has also received a \$100,000 grant from the European Economic Community.

The announcement was made by Nancy M. Ide, President of the Association for Computers and the Humanities. Her address is Department of Computer Science, Box 520, Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601.

## *The ERASMUS Project*

The University of Exeter Dictionary Research Centre, with the backing of EURALEX, submitted an application to the European Community for an ERASMUS project to develop a European network of professional training and accreditation in lexicography. In September 1989, a consortium of dictionary research centers at universities in five European Community countries was awarded a 12-month contract for this purpose. An "Action Plan," circulated widely in early October 1989, laid out the aims and some of the means that might help achieve them, and solicited critical comments from theorists and practitioners. The plan and comments received provided the basis for discussions at the first coordination meeting held on December 9 and 10, 1989.

The 12 participants representing seven European Community (EC) countries and lexicography courses were: M. Alvar Ezquerro, Henri Béjoint, S. Diamessis, Steven Dodd, Gwyneth Fox, Reinhard Hartmann, Henrik Holmboe, Robert Ilson, Francis Knowles, Hugo Marquant, Willy Martin, and Tom McArthur. The agenda, which was recorded, included information on the background of the project, a survey of existing courses within and outside the EC, debates on the component parts of training courses, possible approaches to syllabus planning, assessment and accreditation, and a discussion of the role of practical placements.

Dr. Hartmann reports: "Substantial agreement was reached on the nature and structure of a new training scheme for lexicography. Potential students would require at least a first degree and preferably competence in at least two EC languages. It should be

conceived as a one-year, three-term course at Master's level, with a) a "basic core" of c. 100 hours of taught modules in the autumn term, b) one term spent on placement with a dictionary project or publisher, and c) one term, likewise involving some 100 or so hours of modules, on specialization and/or a dissertation. Learning should be mainly by doing, not by studying, and parochialism in space and time should be avoided. Various possibilities of determining the basic core component of the course were put forward, but a decision was deferred until more is known about the specifics of existing courses.

"It was agreed to send out a questionnaire to all those who have expressed interest in the project so far in order to collect more data on which courses could be used as part of a unified European lexicography training program. A separate survey is planned to find out more about what dictionary publishers think about lexicographical training," Hartmann said.

The second coordination meeting will probably take place at Lille in France during May. It will again be a small workshop of about a dozen experts and priority will be given to the original co-applicants and those who have already made a significant input to the project. A third and final coordination meeting may be part of the 4th EURALEX Congress at Málaga in late August.

For project documents, questionnaires, or information, write to: Dr. R.R.K. Hartmann, University of Exeter, Dictionary Research Centre, Queen's Building, Exeter, England EX4 4QH.

## *The Verbatim Award*

The Executive Board of EURALEX announces that Laurence Urdang has generously provided funding for an annual Verbatim Award, open to EURALEX members, to be administered by EURALEX for the purpose of supporting lexicographical work of any kind, including training. The annual amount available is 1,500 sterling; an individual award may vary in size from the full amount to 250 sterling.

Applications will be screened and awards conferred by a Verbatim Award Selection Committee consisting of the president of EURALEX, currently Antonio Zampolli, and the two immediate past presidents of the Association, N.E. Osselton and G. Stein.

The key annual dates of the application process are:  
August 1...receipt of applications for the following year  
October 1...notification of results  
January 1...presentation of award(s)

Applications are now invited for the 1990 Verbatim Award and should take the form of a letter giving details of the amount applied for and the purpose to which this would be put, together with a curriculum vitae and a list of the candidate's qualifications. Applications should be sent simultaneously to each of the members of the selection committee named above and must reach them by August.

Addresses are: Professor A. Zampolli, Istituto di Linguistica Computazionale, Via della Faggiola 32, 56100 Pisa, Italy; Professor N.E. Osselton, Department of English Language, University of Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 7RU, England; Professor G. Stein, c/o Survey of English Usage, University College London, Malet Street, London WC1, England.

EURALEX membership application forms may be had from Professor F.E. Knowles, Department of Modern Languages, Univer-

sity of Aston, Aston Triangle, Birmingham B7 7ET, England.

## *North American Reading Program for the Oxford English Dictionary*

Dr. Jeffery Triggs is the director of the new North American Reading Program for the Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford University Press opened an office at the Morris Research and Engineering Center of Bellcore, the research arm of the seven Baby Bell companies, in Morristown, New Jersey.

OUP considers the United States a major source of new language, so Dr. Triggs' pursuit is new words and new uses for old words. The researchers at Bellcore have been deeply interested and involved with the computerization of the OED by OUP, IBM, and the University of Waterloo. The offices of Bellcore offer the most sophisticated of computers and they are available to the group of keyboarders that Dr. Triggs has assembled.

Since 1983, OUP has been committed to producing machine-

readable dictionaries. The first edition of the OED already exists on CD-ROM; the second edition will be available shortly. The entire dictionary now exists in machine-readable form.

Dr. Triggs, a poet with a Ph.D. in English from Rutgers University, served a two-month apprenticeship at Oxford a year ago. In August 1989, Dr. Triggs began finding readers and buying books. Twenty-five readers, including many graduate students and others scattered about the U.S., highlight books in yellow marker. The keyboarders then decide on the part-of-speech, prepare the quotation, and enter the data on the computer. In a month keyboarders average 4,000 slips entered.

For information on the project, write to Jeffery Triggs, Bellcore, 445 South Street, Box 1910, Morristown, New Jersey 07962-1910.

## *Progress Reports on Book Projects*

In October 1989, the staff of the New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary reported having one group of editors working through "N" while two others were in "P", meaning "we have effectively reached *oick*". Joining the staff are John Sykes, Catherine Soanes, and Helen Liebeck. Sykes was in the English Dictionaries department from 1971-1981, working on the new editions of the Concise Oxford Dictionary and the Pocket Oxford Dictionary. He then worked in the German program at OUP before returning as General Editor on the NSOED team. Georgia Hole is Senior Assistant Editor of the project.



The story of the Margaret M. Bryant Collections of American Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings and the Dictionary of American Proverbs involves the work of the American Dialect Society members and its Committee on Research in Proverbs and Proverbial Sayings since before 1945. In that year, Ms. Bryant published directions for gathering proverbs in PADS, entitled "Proverbs and How to Collect Them." Major contributors over the years were Audrey Duckert, Harold B. Allen, Frederick G. Cassidy, T. Halpert, Wayland Hand, Louise Pound, Byrd N. Granger, Thom Pearce, James McMillian, Muriel Hughes, William Koch, and Randall V. Mills.

Ten years ago, Ms. Bryant turned over the collected ADS citation slips to Stewart Kingsbury, Northern Michigan University, to computerize and work toward a manuscript for the Dictionary of American Proverbs. Professor Kingsbury completed the listing of

over 150,000 citation slips, matched the variants to the main proverb entry (some have over 20 variants), and created a complete cross-referencing.

The database is stored on a computer at Northern Michigan University. Professor Kingsbury edits printouts, with assistance from Wolfgang Mieder, editor-in-chief, who deletes any sententious sayings or facetious proverbs. The research staff then finds appropriate page reference for the proverbs from six 20th-century references. The staff then checks the distribution of each proverb, labeling one as regional if it occurs less than six times in the ADS collections. Historical citations for the oldest British and oldest U.S. date, author, and title found in the six reference books are given. Kelsie Harder is editing the draft before final editing by Wolfgang Mieder.

There is a total of 37,300 records for A-Z and the page count is estimated to be 815 with dual columns. In 1987 a contract was signed with Oxford University Press to complete the dictionary by the end of 1990 and the editors report that the work is on schedule.



Roland L. Warren, professor emeritus of sociology at Brandeis University, is appealing for help in distributing a glossary of black prison and inner-city folk expressions written by a prisoner in Attica, New York. There are approximately 400 entries on 38 pages and is in computer form, also. For information, write R.L. Warren, RD1 Pingry Hill Corners, Andover, New York 14806.

## *News from the UW Centre for the New OED*

Copies of the Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Conference of the University of Waterloo Centre for the New Oxford English Dictionary, held in Oxford in September 1989, are available from the Centre or the Dictionary Department, Oxford University Press,

Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP, England. A list of the speeches was given in the Autumn 1989 issue of this newsletter.

Gaston Gonnet, co-director of the Centre, is now in residence at the

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology for a year from September 1989. Frank Tompa is assuming the major responsibility for the direction of the project and the Centre in his absence.

The Centre recently received a three-year NSERC Strategic Grant for a project to pursue fundamental research towards the flexible, yet efficient treatment of textual information, with eventual applications extending to the support of natural language processing. The on-going areas of research include text query, database manipulation, text transformation, and user interface.

Edmund Weiner, co-editor of the OED, spent October 1989-January 1990 in Waterloo working on the database and the software tools and conducting dialogue with the computer scientists about the collaboration. He gave a senior seminar in lexicography for honors and graduate students and was a guest speaker at some university functions.

The Centre began an on-campus electronic mail service to provide material from the database through use of the text searching tools such as PAT. Databases available include the Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, third edition, the Bible (King James Version including Apocrypha), the Complete Sherlock Holmes, the Canada-US

Free Trade Agreement, and William Shakespeare: The Complete Works.

A spinoff company, Open Text Systems Inc., has been formed to market the software tools that have been developed in working on the New OED Project. The company began operating on September 1, 1989, with two employees and is in the process of finalizing a number of contracts. Open Text is being formed as a complement to the Centre: the company's role is to customize and develop software tools while the Centre's is to facilitate and coordinate research on electronic text in all disciplines. Tim Bray, former Centre project manager, joined the company as Executive Director and will also be a part-time consultant to the Centre. Open Text's offices are 75 King St. S., Waterloo.

The Centre has produced a new brochure outlining its involvement with the New OED project, the activities of the Centre, and the text management software tools. Write to the UWCNOED at University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1, for a copy. Another publication, "Efficient Text Searching" by R. Baeza-Yates (CS-89-17) is available for \$5.00. George Townsend's Master's thesis, "Citation Matching in the OED," (OED-89-06) has been added to the list of publications and is available for \$2.00.

## *News from Exeter's Dictionary Research Centre*

Postgraduate students earning their degrees from the University of Exeter in 1989 included: Seyed M. Assi (Iran), Ph.D. on computer-aided English-Persian terminological lexicography; Turki A.A. Diab (Jordan), Ph.D. on the role of dictionaries in ESP learning, with particular reference to nursing students in Jordan; Ayfer Karaca (Turkey), M.A. on the treatment of cultural information in the bilingual dictionary; Barbara Ann Kipfer (USA), Ph.D. on automating the lexicographic process for diversified access, with a

baby-and-child care lexicon; Kokawa Takahiro (Japan), M.A. on usage labels in EFL learners' dictionaries; Li Lan (P.R. China), M.Phil on extending vocabulary skills among Chinese ESP learners; Seth C. Lindstromberg (Canada/U.K.), M.Phil on semantic iconicity in the English learners' dictionary; Sarah Rich (U.K.), M.A. on learner strategies in vocabulary acquisition; and Paul Wiseman (U.K./Australia), M.A. on etymology and basic core vocabulary for EFL learners.

## *Conference News*

The Sixth Annual Conference of the University of Waterloo Centre for the New Oxford English Dictionary will be held in Waterloo, Canada, on October 29-30. This year's conference, "Electronic Text Research," will focus on ways that text stored as electronic data allows information to be maintained and extracted (for example, text databases can be used to expand the information potential of existing text, create, and maintain new information resources, and generate new print information).

Papers presenting original research on theoretical and applied aspects of this theme are being sought. Typical but not exclusive areas of interest include computational lexicology, computational linguistics, syntactic and semantic analysis, lexicography, text corpora, lexical databases, machine-readable dictionaries, on-line reference works, and office applications.

Submissions will be referred by the committee: Robert Allen (Bellcore), David Barnard (Queen's University), Martha Evens (Illinois Institute of Technology), Roy Flannagan (Ohio University), Graeme Hirst (University of Toronto), John Simpson (Oxford

University Press), and chairman Frank Tompa (University of Waterloo). Authors should send seven copies of a detailed abstract (5 to 10 double-spaced pages) by May 23, 1990, to Frank Tompa, UW Centre for the New OED, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3G1 (or newoed@waterloo.edu).

One conference session will be devoted to a panel discussion of "Electronic Text for Casual Use: Tantalus Revisited." Panelists will be specialists in academic or professional fields who hold strong views on the challenges that must be met in preparing text and software for casual use. Anyone who has experience in providing such electronic text and who is interested in being a panel member is invited to submit an (approximately) 150-word statement before May 23. Authors and panel members will be notified of acceptance or rejection by July 13.



The 28th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics will meet at the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh,

Pennsylvania, from June 6 through June 9. The meeting will include a program of tutorials organized by Dan Flickinger, Hewlett-Packard Research Laboratories, Palo Alto.

Local arrangements are being handled by Rich Thomason, Intelligent Systems Program, Cathedral of Learning 1004, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260 (412 624 5791 or thomason@cad.cs.cmu.edu). For other information on the conference or ACL, contact Don Walker (ACL), Bellcore, 445 South Street-MRE 2A-379, Post Office Box 1910, Morristown, New Jersey 07960 (201 829 4312 or walker@flash.bellcore.com).



The Fifth International Symposium on Lexicography was held at Copenhagen University from May 3-5 and featured papers dealing with theoretical aspects of lexicography and some with specific dictionary problems.

The proceedings of the First Symposium on Lexicography, 1982, were published in *Germanistische Linguistik*, Heidelberg 1983 (ed. K. Hyldgaard-Jensen and A. Zettersten). Those of the Second, Third, and Fourth Symposia were published in *Lexicographica*, Series Maior, Max Niemeyer Verlag, Tübingen, West Germany. For information on the conference, write Arne Zettersten, University of Copenhagen, Department of English, 84 Njalsgade, DK-2300 Copenhagen S, Denmark.



The 35th Annual Conference of the International Linguistic Association was held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City on March 31 and April 1. A special session on "Lexicology, Lexicography, and Usage" was given by Stuart B. Flexner and John Algeo.

For more information, contact Alice Deakins, Conference Chair, Department of English, William Paterson College, Wayne, New Jersey 07470.



The Noah Webster House, West Hartford, Connecticut, sponsored "The Strange Case of the English Language," on Saturday, March

## *Publication Announcements*

A double issue of *The Barnhart Dictionary Companion* was published in October 1989, containing over 750 new words, new meanings, or changes in usage not covered by current dictionaries. This brings to over 1,500 the number of items reported in Volume V, over 125% of the projected coverage by Lexik House Publishers.

For new orders or renewals, write to David K. Barnhart, Lexik House Publishers, Post Office Box 247, 75 Main Street, Cold Spring, New York 10516 (or 914 265 2822).



Dinh-Hoa Nguyen, professor at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, published *Nhật Thiên Tu*, *The Book of One Thousand*

31. J. Bard McNulty began the day with a look at "How Did We Get Here?," focusing on the development of the language we speak today. Richard Lederer addressed the question of "What Do We Have Here?," an examination of some of the words and phrases people use without giving thought to their precise meanings.

Eugene Maleska provided a look at "What Can We Do With What We've Got?," as he discussed crossword puzzles and how they are made. The seminar was held at the Webster Hill School in West Hartford and was supported by the Connecticut Humanities Council.



The MLA Lexicography Discussion Group which met on December 29, 1989 in Washington, D.C. was very well attended. John Algeo, University of Georgia, presented "A Dictionary of Briticisms: Why?," Robert K. Barnhart, Barnhart Books, talked about "The Significance of Dating in an Etymological Dictionary," and Stuart B. Flexner, recently retired from Random House Inc., gave a talk on "Second Thoughts on the New Random House Unabridged."

The 1991 Executive Committee consists of Fredric T. Dolezal, Chairman; Thomas Creamer, David K. Barnhart, Garland Cannon, and Allan Metcalf. The 1991 meeting will be held in Chicago.



The 22nd International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics, was held at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii in October 1989. Dinh-Hoa Nguyen presented "Vietnamese Phonology and Borrowings from Chinese: The Book of Three Thousand Characters Revisited," a comparison of the 1905 and 1939 editions of *Tam Thiên Tu*, a Chinese-Vietnamese dictionary authored by 18th century scholar Ngô Thôi Nhiêm. The bilingual word list uses the native 4-word (*tu tu*) meter as a mnemonic device to teach 3,000 Chinese characters to Vietnamese schoolchildren.



In February, *An English-Hausa Dictionary*, edited by Roxana Ma Newman, was published by Yale University Press (Yale Language series, 344 pages, \$30, ISBN 0-300-04702-9). It is a comprehensive dictionary designed specifically to aid English-speaking users in acquiring everyday communicative fluency in West Africa's most widely spoken language.

The broad selection of headwords includes up-to-date technical vocabulary drawn from a range of fields, as well as generally accepted recent loanwords from English and French. Entries are divided into meaning groups and grammatical categories, each clearly marked by semantic and usage indicators. Numerous phrases, sentences, and common idiomatic expressions illustrate conversational usage and provide culturally informative contexts.

Special typography marks the lexical and grammatical distinctions of tone and vowel length for every Hausa word in the dictionary. The introduction provides concise information on various points of Hausa grammar, and guides to pronunciation of Hausa place names and personal names are included. The features of the book were designed to set a new standard for communicatively based learners' dictionaries of African languages.

Professor Newman's work was supported at Indiana University by a three-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education. It was compiled on-line on the VAX/SUN class of minicomputers running UNIX and formatted for publication with the TEX typesetting system.

Cambridge University Press has announced that it is preparing to publish the third editions of Morton Benson's *SerboCroatian-English Dictionary* and *English-SerboCroatian Dictionary*. The new editions will appear in July. Both dictionaries were last updated in 1988.

The *SerboCroatian-English Dictionary* first appeared in 1971. The Third Edition gives over 60,000 headwords, including current Yugoslav political and economic terminology, and provides a detailed description of the grammatical and accentual system of SerboCroatian.

The *English-SerboCroatian Dictionary* was first published in 1978. A large number of words and phrases used in current American and British English have been added: *ageism, air bag, airbus, artificial intelligence, basket case, biodegradable, byte, chat show, computer-aided instruction, credibility gap, data base, disk drive, diskette, DOS*, etc. The Third Edition contains approximately 60,000 headwords.



*Webster's New World Dictionary of Media and Communications* will be published in April by Prentice Hall Trade. Written by Richard Weiner, a renowned public relations practitioner, the dictionary includes over 30,000 slang and technical definitions from some 27 fields including advertising, broadcasting, computer graphics, film, journalism, newspapers, photography, printing, public relations, telecommunications, television, and theater.

The range of entries cover such technical terms as *digitizer tablet, electronic setup, gobo, low-noise amplifier* and *NEMO* and more colorful terms such as *baby kicker, banana plug, bastard amber, creepy peppy, dandy roll, dingadinga, French joint, guillotine, naked column* and *polecat*. The book lists organizations (ASC) awards (Emmy, Oscar, Edgar, Effie), lamps and lights (*ace, basher, FAX light*), British jargon (*advert, duckfoot quotes, leg cloth, panto*), and acronyms (*ADI, ROP*).

An editorial advisory board from organizations in communications helped Mr. Weiner during his nine years of research. The 592-page hardcover book is priced at \$29.95.

## *Publications on Lexicography*

The DSNA received Issue Number 11 of Dr. Henry G. Burger's news release on *The Wordtree*, entitled "New Times, New Verbs." For a copy, write 10876 Bradshaw, Overland Park, Kansas 66210-1148 (or 913 469 1010).



*Maledicta: The International Journal of Verbal Aggression*, Vol. 10 (1988-89) contains articles on medical slang of San Fran-

cisco and Milwaukee, linguistic taxonomy of offensive rock band names, cursing and swearing in Ulster dialect; ethnic, racial, religious, and sexual slurs in an American and an Australian dictionary; linguistic taboos, code-words, and women's use of sexist language, and folk criticism of religiosity in the graffiti of New York City (by Allen Walker Read). The 320-page volume may be ordered for \$19.50 (\$20.50 outside of US) from Reinhold Aman, Editor, *Maledicta* Press, 331 South Greenfield Avenue, Waukesha, Wisconsin 53186-6492.

## *Courses on Lexicography*

The Dictionary Research Center's fourth International Lexicography Course was held at the University of Exeter from March 19-23. The course combines practical experience in dictionary compilation with explanations of broad theoretical principles. The main tutors were Reinhard Hartmann and Tom McArthur.

The ten lectures given were: 1) information categories in dictionaries, 2) historical and cultural background of lexicography, 3) approaches to dictionary typology, 4) approaches to dictionary use, 5)

alternative dictionary formats, 6) alternative entry formats, 7) the computer in dictionary-making, 8) how lexicographers use corpus evidence, 9) the interlingual dictionary, and 10) a look at the future of dictionaries.

This seminar is one of a series of lexicographical events at Exeter: BAAL Seminar, 1978; Summer School, 1980; LEXeter '83 Conference, Seminar on the History of Lexicography, 1986; and three Lexicography Courses, 1987-1989.

## Report on the Cordell Collection

The Cordell Collection's inventory project begun in the summer of 1989 now contains in excess of 1,600 titles including nearly all the foreign dictionaries, word books, and grammars held in the collection. The work has been accomplished on an IBM-AT with a 20 megabyte hard disk using BiblioTech, a rare-books inventory program.

Each title is indexed by language, century, special topics, and selected added authors. Monolingual, bilingual, and polyglot or multilingual works have been differentiated from one another and subjects may be searched with "and" or "or," which broadens or narrows the results of a search. Searches may also be conducted on the last name of the author or on a word or a phrase in the title.

The inventory is being processed in Nota Bene, and a catalog is forthcoming. Nota Bene exports to WordPerfect, ASCII, and other software, so the catalog might become available on disk. A grant is being pursued to catalog the titles on OCLC.

The rarest dictionary acquired in 1990 is Ivan Norstedt's *Rossiiskii, s nemestskim i frantsuskim perevodani, slovar (1780-82)*. The collection is also acquiring *The Dictionary of Old English* on microfiche as the University of Toronto publishes it.

For more information on this year's acquisitions and the catalog, contact David Vancil, Indiana State University, Cunningham Memorial Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Terre Haute, Indiana 47809 (812 237 3700).

## News of Members

Robert B. Costello became Editor in Chief of the Random House Dictionaries in August, 1989. Before that he was Executive Editor and, during an earlier period with Random House, worked on the first unabridged edition.

Sol Steinmetz joined the Random House staff in January. Steinmetz was with Clarence and Robert Barnhart at Barnhart Books for many years and worked with Costello on Merriam-Webster's *Third New International*.

In December 1989, Professor Ladislav Zgusta gave several lectures on lexicography at the Telugu University in Hyderabad, India, and then participated in a seminar on lexicography organized by the Indian Institute of Technology in New Delhi, India.

## Notices

Lexi-Comp, 190 East Boston Mills Road, Hudson, Ohio (44236), has developed a software system for storing dictionary information in a database suitable for updating by lexicographers. It allows for production of typesetting for the printing of the book as well. Simon & Schuster used this system to prepare *Webster's New World Dictionary, Third College Edition* as well as other smaller dictionaries, a large-print version of the college edition, and a thesaurus. Williams & Wilkins is now starting to build a database for *Stedman's Medical Dictionary*. Contact David K. Ream, Vice President of Development at the above address (and 216 468 0744) for more information.

Harrap's, a line of foreign language books and dictionaries published in Britain since 1904, will be distributed in the U.S. by Prentice Hall Trade. The first books under the Prentice Hall aegis are expected to be in bookstores by early June.

By the end of 1990, Prentice Hall Trade will have 35 titles in distribution from Harrap's. The first will be *Harrap's French Dictionary* in French/English and English/French and *Harrap's Concise German* in German/English and English/German. The list will include Spanish vocabulary, grammar and verbs, and Harrap's phrase books in Greek, Spanish, German, and Portuguese. There will be more than 15 French language books including *Harrap's Tintin Illustrated French Dictionary* and *Harrap's Business French*.

Prentice Hall had been distributing the Collins foreign language dictionaries, but planned to discontinue doing so by April 2, 1990.

*Bill Palmer's Word Watching* subscriptions available from P.O. Box 386, Station Westmount, Montreal, Quebec H3Z 2T5, Canada.

## Calendar

Intl Symposium on Lexicography...May 3-5, Copenhagen  
ACL...June 6-9, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
EURALEX...August 28-September 1, Málaga, Spain  
Waterloo/New OED Conference...October 29-30, Waterloo, Canada

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